



## Utilities

**Sewer Billed One Month Ahead & Deposit** – The Brownsville Municipal Code requires all accounts to pay for sewer one month ahead and establishes a \$100 deposit. Staff always explains the City’s billing process to new residents. Almost always, there is confusion when a new customer receives their first bill because it says, ‘past due’ and they of course did not live in Brownsville the previous month. Staff hands out flyers, it's on-line, in the Brownsville Municipal Code and Staff is very good about explaining this to every new customer. People simply forget and then, sometimes, get upset.

The City requires a \$100 deposit to establish a new account. The City holds the \$100 deposit for one year if the person is a homeowner. If the account is in good standing, the \$100 is returned to the homeowner after one year. The City holds onto the \$100 deposit in rental situations in the event people decide to “skip out” on paying their utility bill. This policy provides some relief to landlords who have gotten stuck with big utility bills in the past.

**Side Note:** Staff has been taking questions on the cost of utility bills. I have posted area rate comparisons on the City website, however, not everyone sees it. The City includes a monthly \$15 Sewer Debt Service Fee to retire the debt on the Wastewater Treatment Plants that was incurred in 2008. The fee is designed to share the cost between property owners and rate payers, otherwise property owners would pay for the improvements and rate payers would not. The City also includes a monthly \$2.50 Water Capital Improvement Fee for the impending Water Treatment Plant Improvements slated for 2025. The remaining charges are for water & sewer usage.