



## 2014 Annual Newsletter:

Para obtener una copia en español, por favor pase a 208 West Jefferson Street.

### Payment of Bills online

The Osceola Water Works would like to remind customers that in addition to making payments by mail, at the Water Works office located at 208 West Jefferson St. or at the drive up drop box located in the Water Works parking lot, we have an online payment option. This option is easy to use and is **free of charge** to our customers. You can go online to [www.osceolawaterworks.com](http://www.osceolawaterworks.com) to make your online payment. If you need assistance or have questions about our online payment service please contact the Water Works office at 641-342-1435.

Osceola Water Works offers the option for you to have your utility bill deducted from your checking or savings account automatically. To activate this free service please contact the Osceola Water Works and we can help you get this process setup. In addition, we can now send you your utility bill by email instead of it being mailed to you. If you are interested in this service, please fill out the attached form at the end of this newsletter and return it to the Water Works office.

### Water Works Rules and Regulations

The Osceola Water Works has updated their rules and regulation manual for the Water Works. This manual contains useful information for the public to use regarding policies and procedures pertaining to their water service. The new manual is available for viewing at the Water Works office or online at [www.osceolawaterworks.com](http://www.osceolawaterworks.com). If you have any questions regarding our rules and regulations please feel free to call or stop by our office.

### In 2014 the Osceola Water Works implemented a new meter pit rule

#### Old Rule:

Customer is responsible for their water service line from the dwelling to the Water Works main. Under this rule all repairs to the service line and curb box are the responsibility of the property owner.

Disadvantages of the old rule:

- Places significant cost burden on homeowner's requiring them to be responsible for repairs to water lines located under City streets.
- Confusion of who is responsible for what portion of the water line.
- Water personnel have to enter your home to service or replace the water meter.

### New Rule:

Outside meter pits are now required to be installed on all new or replaced service lines at the discretion of the Osceola Water Works as best. Instead of using a curb box for a water shut off the meter pit will be used. After the meter pit is installed and has been approved by the Water Works the Water Works will take ownership of the meter pit and the service connection to the water main. The customer will still be responsible for the service line from the meter pit to the dwelling.

The benefits the customer will see from this new rule:

- Places liability of repairs on the Water Works instead of the customer from meter pit to the Water Works main.
- Removes the meter out of the dwelling so crews don't enter your home or business to service or replace your meter.
- Makes a positive definition of who owns what. From the dwelling to the meter pit you own and from the meter pit to the water main the Water Works owns, which includes the meter pit itself.

The main differences between the new and old rule is this:

1. Meter pits will be used instead of the traditional curb boxes.
2. Once the meter pit is installed and inspected by the Water Works, the Water Works takes ownership of the meter pit to the water main. The old rule had the customer responsible for that portion.

**Below is a list of definitions in our new rule book that are included for your reference.**

#### Service connection –

1. A pipe with appurtenances owned by the Osceola Water Works used to conduct water from the main to and including a curb box or meter pit at or near the property line.
2. Service connections installed without the prior written approval of the Osceola Water Works are owned by the homeowner from the main to the existing curb box or meter pit. All maintenance and repairs are the responsibility of the property owner.
3. Service connections will not be approved if the meter pit or curb box is connected to a private service line. Osceola Water Works retains the discretion to deny service connections that do not have an approved meter pit or curb box installed

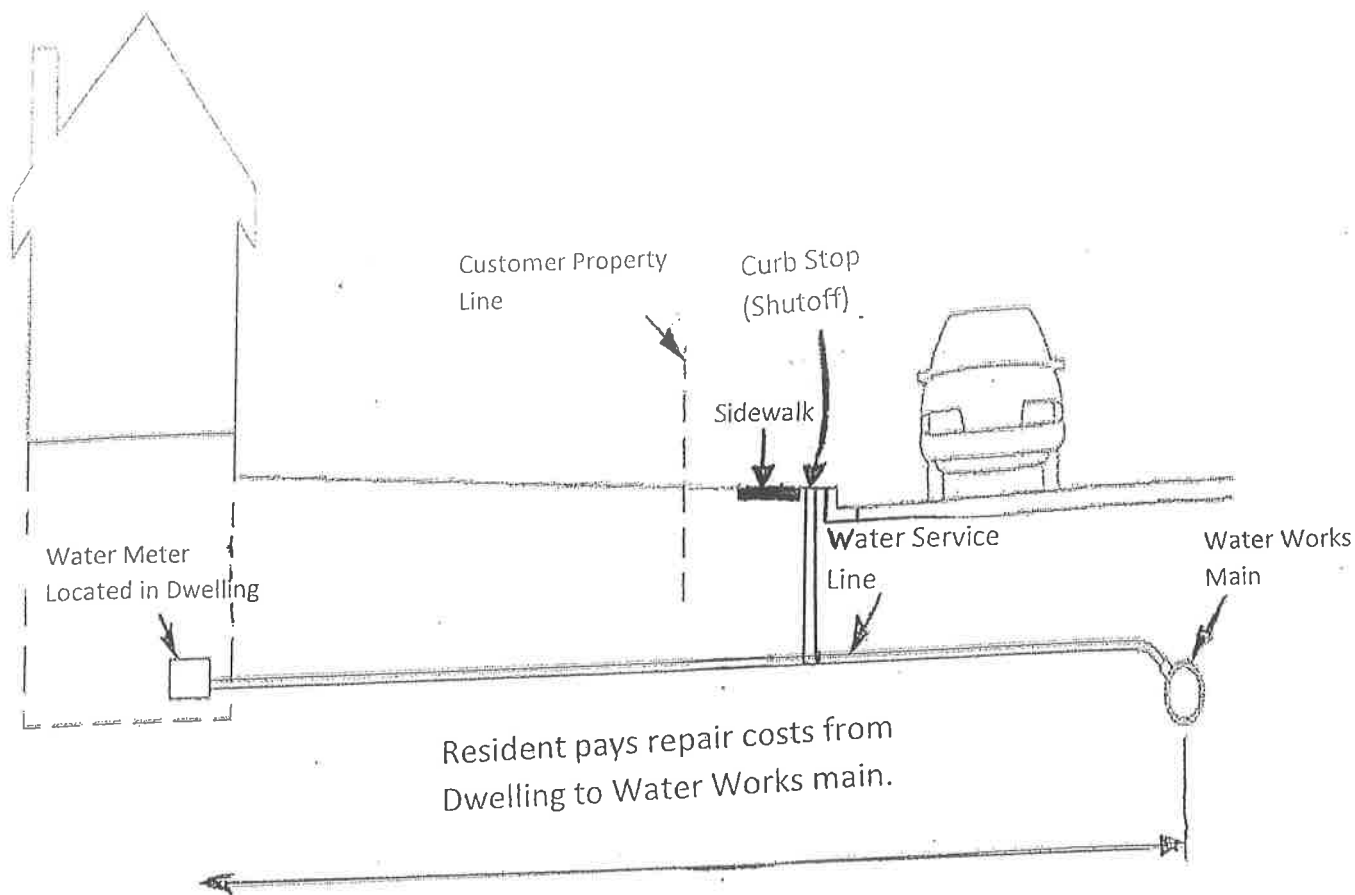
\*For any service line or service connection without a meter pit installed which complies with Osceola Water Works specifications, the customer shall be responsible for maintaining and repairing the service line from the premise to the main.

Customer service line - The service line between the curb box or meter pit at or near the property line and the structure(s) on the premises to be supplied. All expenses associated with the customer's service line shall be borne by the customer.

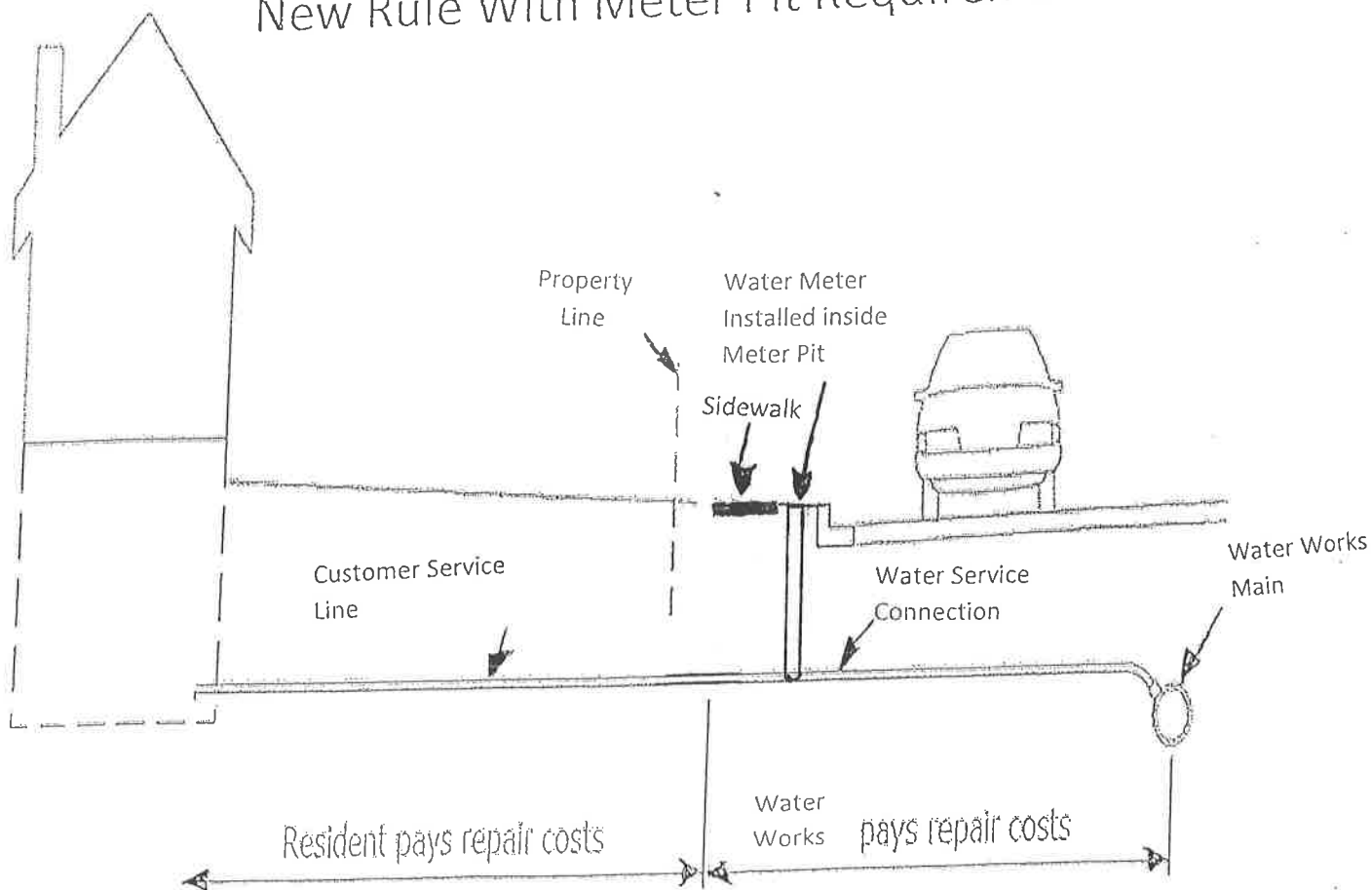
Water works main - The supply pipe, owned and maintained by the Osceola Water Works to which "Service Connections" are attached to supply water to one or more customers.

Please see the next page which shows a drawing illustrating line ownership.

### Old Rule:



### New Rule With Meter Pit Requirement:



## FAQ-

1. Will everyone be required to install a meter pit? The answer is no. This rule applies to new construction and replacement service lines. When the Water Works replaces Water Works mains in your area they will upgrade curb boxes to meter pits at no cost to you as part of the water main replacement project.
2. If I choose to have a meter pit installed at my expense, will the Water Works take ownership of my service connection to the Water Works main? The answer is yes. If the service connection and meter pit meet Water Works specifications, the Water Works will take ownership of the meter pit and service connection to the Water Works main. To determine if your line would be eligible to upgrade to a meter pit contact the Water Works office.
3. So I'm going to have a big meter pit in my yard? The answer is no. The meter pits have a flat cast iron lid that are 15" in diameter. The meter pits will be installed so the lids are flat with the ground. In most cases you won't even be able to see the meter pits unless you're standing on or right beside them.

### Water Bill or Utility Bill?

Every day we have customers entering the Water Works office to pay their bill. People often refer to this bill as their water bill, when in fact it is really a utility bill. They often ask us the question; why is my water bill so high? Why do you keep raising my water bill? Why do water rates keep going up? Every time a person asks, I explain to them that the bill they receive is much more than just a water bill. I thought it would be beneficial if I took the time to explain to consumers what is also included with their 'water' bill.

If you look at your bill you will see it's broken down into 4 categories: See a minimum residential utility bill below:

- GB- Garbage \$19.78
- SS- Sewer Surcharge \$18.31
- SW- Sewer \$3.26/1,000 gallons 1,000 gallon minimum = \$3.26
- WA- Water \$5.11/1,000 gallons 2,000 gallon minimum = \$10.22 + .71 tax = **\$10.93**

Total = \$52.28

Of a minimum utility bill **\$10.93** is for water. The other utilities included on the bill are charges for additional City services. The Osceola Water Works provides the billing for the City of Osceola for the sewer and garbage services you receive. This keeps everything included on one bill. Osceola Water Works has an agreement with the City of Osceola to provide the billing of sewer and garbage services. The Water Works takes care of billing issues only pertaining to the sewer and garbage. All other issues pertaining to sewer and garbage are controlled by the City Council and handled by City Hall.

## Water Rates

Water rates are controlled by the Water Board of Trustees and were not increased in 2014. The water rates you currently pay were last increased in **January 2009**. The Osceola Water Works has been able to control rate increases through operation efficiencies instead of rate increases passed on to our consumers. Below is a list containing some of the efficiencies we have implemented to help us be successful in controlling water rate increases. It's because of these efficiencies we haven't had to raise your water rates.

- Successfully combined the water treatment and water distribution departments into one department under one Superintendent.
- Cross trained employees to work both at the water plant and in the water distribution system. This training allows us to be more efficient and utilize staff in multiple areas.
- Successfully sold the East water tower and 5 miles of water line to SIRWA. This transaction saved the water utility significant repair and future maintenance costs.
- Transitioned the Water Works administration and distribution operations into one location allowing us to serve our customers more efficiently.
- Implemented preventative maintenance programs at our water treatment plant and in our water distribution system to help reduce the potential for expensive failures or shut downs.
- Adjusted the hours of operation of the water treatment plant to reduce staffing costs and optimize plant run times.
- Utilized staff on hand and purchased equipment to successfully repair our own water main breaks and start the process of repairing and replacing our own water infrastructure.

The Osceola Water Works has done a great job keeping water rates low. Unfortunately, because of increased chemical costs, rising energy costs and increases to employee healthcare benefits the Water Works is no longer able to absorb all the increased costs. We know that in these tough economic times everyone needs a break, and providing you with safe quality drinking water is our number-one priority. Osceola Water Works prices have remained the same since 2009 despite very substantial cost increases. We now find it necessary to adjust our prices to keep providing the outstanding quality service we strive to give you. After long and careful consideration the Water Board of Trustees has decided that after 6 years without a rate increase a water rate increase is required. The Osceola Water Works will implement an 8% water rate increase that will take effect on the utility bill dated February 1, 2015. We will continue to work hard and provide you with the best quality service.

Below is an example that will show you the effect the rate increase will have on a minimum residential utility bill.

| MINIMUM RESIDENTIAL BILL: | CURRENT RATES | 8% INCREASE |
|---------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| WATER                     | \$10.22       | \$11.04     |
| SEWER                     | \$3.26        | \$3.26      |
| SEWER SURCHARGE           | \$18.31       | \$18.31     |
| GARBAGE                   | \$19.78       | \$19.78     |
| TAX                       | \$ .71        | \$ .77      |
| TOTAL MINIMUM BILL        | \$52.28       | \$53.16     |

A minimum residential bill will see an increase of \$.88/month which calculates to \$10.56/year.

We greatly appreciate your understanding and will continue to work hard to provide you with the best quality service. If you have any questions please call Osceola Water Works at 641-342-1435 and our staff would be happy to assist you.

#### Water Board Meeting Location and Time

Board meetings are held the first Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m. at the Osceola Water Works building located at 208 West Jefferson St. Board meetings are open to the public and the board encourages the public to attend. Please enter through the North entrance to attend the meetings.

Regular and Special Board meeting agendas will be posted at the Water Works office.

#### Osceola Water Board Members

Ryan Rychnovsky: **Chair**  
MacKenzie O'Hair: **Vice-Chair**  
Alisha Kale  
Dave Neas  
Laura Castro

#### Water Works Employees

Brandon Patterson: **Superintendent**  
Carrie Benda: **Utility Office Manager**  
Steve Aldridge: **Foreman**  
Kim Allard: **Administrative Assistant/GIS Specialist**  
Jeff Werner: **Plant Operator/Distribution Laborer**  
Fred Brandt: **Plant Operator/Distribution Laborer**  
Gene McKnight: **Plant Operator**  
Royce Robertson: **Distribution Laborer**

We value your business and would like to wish you and your family a Happy Holiday Season.

Sincerely,



Brandon Patterson  
Osceola Water Superintendent