

**CITY OF WARD  
ORDINANCE NO O-2024-03**

**AN ORDINANCE REPEALING AND REPLACING ORDINANCES 2014-07. 2014-07-1, 2019-09 AND 2023-02; PRESCRIBING A CHANGE IN THE RATES TO BE CHARGED FOR WATER AND SERVICES RENDERED BY THE WATER AND SEWER SYSTEM OF THE CITY OF WARD, ARKANSAS AND PRESCRIBING OTHER MATTERS RELATING THERETO.**

**WHEREAS, THE OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE** costs for the Ward Water and System has risen 25.8% since Ordinance 2014-07 was approved and implemented in 2014 as measured by the Social Security Administration (SSA) annual Cost of Living (COLA); and,

**WHEREAS, ACT 605 OR 2021 “WATER PROVIDER RATE STUDY”** requires a rate study be conducted every 5-years with the first one due for the Ward Water and Sewer System no later than July 1, 2026; however, water rates have not been reviewed or increased since 2019 so therefore it is imperative rates be adjusted now; and,

**WHEREAS,** fees charged for various services have not been updated since 2014.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WARD, ARKANSAS:**

**SECTION 1: DEFINITIONS:**

- a. **RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS** – all customers residing in each residential house, including mobile homes, apartments, and houses per unit, rooming houses per unit and Short-Term Rental (STR) facilities.
- b. **COMMERCIAL CUSTOMERS** – non-residential customers, including industries, schools, churches, lodges, etc.

**SECTION 2: WATER RATES FIXED:**

- a. That the following water rates be, and they are hereby fixed as rates to be charged for water to be furnished and services to be rendered by the water works system of the City of Ward, Arkansas.
- b. The water usage of each customer shall be determined each month by measurement.
- c. Fee for Federal Safe Drinking Water Act: A fee of \$.40 shall be charged to each water bill issued.
- d. None of the facilities or services afforded by the System shall be furnished without a charge being made therefore.
- e. Annual Rate Adjustment by Index: Effective January 1, 2025<sup>1</sup> and continuing every January thereafter, there shall be an automatic water and sewer rate adjustment of 3% on all rates and fees. In the event that the COLA adjustment as determined by the Social Security Administration exceeds three percent (3%),

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<sup>1</sup> Remaining water rates will increase by \$1.80 per 1,000 gallons on January 1, 2025 with no COLA increase

the proposed increase in water rates shall be presented to the City Council for approval. The automatic rate adjustment provided herein shall not preclude the City Council from increasing or decreasing the water rates as deemed necessary or appropriate at any time.

**MONTHLY WATER RATES**

**The amount to be paid by each residential and commercial customer shall be computed on the basis of the following schedule of rates:**

**RESIDENTIAL INSIDE CITY LIMIT RATES**

<b>Gallons</b>	<b>Size of Meter</b>	<b>Cost</b>
First 1,000 Gallons	5/8" or 3/4"	\$24.68
First 1,000 Gallons	1"	\$24.68
First 1,000 Gallons	1 1/2"	\$24.68
First 1,000 Gallons	2"	\$39.17
First 1,000 Gallons	3"	\$49.70
First 1,000 Gallons	4"	\$61.46
First 1,000 Gallons	6"	\$83.84
Remaining Usage	All	\$7.28 per 1,000 Gallons

**RESIDENTIAL OUTSIDE CITY LIMIT RATES**

<b>Gallons</b>	<b>Size of Meter</b>	<b>Cost</b>
First 1,000 Gallons	5/8" or 3/4"	\$24.68
First 1,000 Gallons	1"	\$24.68
First 1,000 Gallons	1 1/2"	\$24.68
First 1,000 Gallons	2"	\$39.17
First 1,000 Gallons	3"	\$49.70
First 1,000 Gallons	4"	\$61.46
First 1,000 Gallons	6"	\$83.84
Remaining Usage	All	\$8.93. per 1,000 Gallons

**COMMERCIAL RATES**

<b>Gallons</b>	<b>Size of Meter</b>	<b>Cost</b>
First 1,000 Gallons	5/8" or 3/4"	\$24.68
First 1,000 Gallons	1"	\$24.68
First 1,000 Gallons	1 1/2"	\$24.68
First 1,000 Gallons	2"	\$39.17
First 1,000 Gallons	3"	\$49.70
First 1,000 Gallons	4"	\$61.46

First 1,000 Gallons	6"	\$83.84
Remaining Usage	All	\$8.93 per 1,000 Gallons

**SPRINKLER OR GARDEN METER**

Gallons	Size of Meter	Cost
First 1,000 Gallons	5/8" or 3/4"	\$24.68
First 1,000 Gallons	1"	\$24.68
First 1,000 Gallons	1 1/2"	\$24.68
First 1,000 Gallons	2"	\$39.17
First 1,000 Gallons	3"	\$49.70
First 1,000 Gallons	4"	\$61.46
First 1,000 Gallons	6"	\$83.84
Remaining Usage	All	\$8.93 per 1,000 Gallons

**SECTION 3 – MISCELLANEOUS FEES:** That the following rates be, and they are hereby fixed as rates to be charged for normal water system services to be rendered as requested by customers on the system, or by prospective customer for new water services.

a. **Installation Fees:**

3/4 Inch Single Meter Loop (Hard Set) <sup>2</sup>	\$1,085.00
3/4 Inch Single Meter Loop (Soft Set) <sup>3</sup>	\$303.00
3/4 Inch Double Meter Loop (Hard Set)	\$1,397.00
1 Inch Single Meter Loop (Hard Set)	\$1,336.00
2 Inch Single Meter Loop (Hard Set)	\$3,751.00
Road Crossing – Cut and Repair	\$1,050.00
Road Bore	\$400.00

b. **Tapping Fee:** \$100.00 per meter. This fee is imposed on all new construction or if a new service line is connected to the system.

(1) **Subdivision:** This amount must be paid by the developer after the Construction (Preliminary) Plat has been approved by the appropriate level and before any water utilities are installed.

(2) **Individual Lot:** This amount must be paid by the builder or owner at the time the Building Permit is issued.

c. **New Service Connection Fee:**

(1) A connection fee of \$100.00 shall be charged for each new water service on the system.

(2) This fee is paid by the homeowner or tenant upon activating a new account.

(3) **This is a NON-REFUNDABLE Fee.**

<sup>2</sup> Hard Set includes Meter Box and Meter Loop and setting of the Meter

<sup>3</sup> Soft Set includes setting of the Meter only

- d. **Reconnection Fee:** In the event any premise(s) is disconnected from the System for nonpayment, the customer concerned, prior to reconnection shall pay all delinquent charges together with a reconnection fee as set forth below for each reconnection of the premise(s) to the system.
- (1) If said reconnection shall be made during regular business hours (8:00 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday), the fee shall be \$25.00 for customers living with the city limits and \$50.00 for those customers living outside the city limits to reconnect the water service.
  - (2) If said reconnection shall be made after regular business hours (8:00 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday), on a weekend or holiday, the fee shall be \$100.00 to reconnect the water service regardless if the customer lives within the city limits or not.
  - (3) To reconnect a meter to the system that has been shut off for vacation, the customer shall pay a fee of \$20.00.
  - (4) **NOTE: No Service will be reconnected until the Reconnection Fee is paid.**
- e. **Requested Meter Reading Check:** Whenever any water personnel are called out to check for an accurate meter reading, and the reading is found to be correct, or if any water personnel is called out to check a meter to see if there is a leak and the leak is found to be the customer's responsibility, there shall be a \$25.00 charge for a service call to the customer making the request. This fee may be waived by the Water Office Manager for good cause.
- f. **Requested Meter Removal for Accuracy Check:**
- (a) When a water customer requests his/her meter to be removed and checked by Ward Water System for accuracy and upon so doing the meter is found to be in good working order, the customer shall be charged \$50.00 for the meter check.
  - (b) If the customer requests a 3<sup>rd</sup> Party check the meter for accuracy. The customer is responsible for all costs to include but not limited to shipping, testing, etc.
  - (c) If the customer requests that a meter in good working order be replaced, the cost for replacing the meter will be the cost of the meter plus 40%. If the meter checks bad, a new meter will be installed at no cost to the customer.
- g. **Hydrant Meter Fee & Reading:**
- (a) **Refundable Deposit: \$1,200.00**
    - i. This fee is fully refundable is the meter is returned undamaged
    - ii. If damage can be repaired, the cost of repair will be subtracted from the deposit.
    - iii. If damage cannot be repaired, the deposit is forfeited.
  - (b) **Connection Fee: \$100.00**
    - i. This is a one-time fee for a City of Ward employee to connect the meter, take an initial reading and ensure there is no existing damage to the unit.
  - (c) **Rent Fee: \$5.00 per day not counting the first day.**
  - (d) **Water Rate: \$7.11 per 1,000 gallons**
  - (e) **Hydrant Meter Reading:**
    - i. The customer is responsible for reading their meter and turning in the reading to the Ward Water Office no later than close of business of the

15<sup>th</sup> of the month. Sending a picture of the meter via text or email is preferred

- ii. The customer will also confirm the location of the meter when reporting the reading.
- iii. Failure to report the reading by the close of business on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, will result in a \$100.00 late fee.
- iv. Hydrant meter accounts not paid in full to include rent fee, water usage and late fee (if applicable) by the close of business on the 25<sup>th</sup> of each will result in the meter be pulled.

**(f) Final Bill:**

- i. Upon turning in of the Hydrant Meter, a final reading shall be recorded and the customer shall be charged for the water usage and rental fees not already paid.
- ii. If the Hydrant meter is not damaged, the deposit will be returned within five (5) calendar days.

**SECTION 4: AUTHORIZED ADJUSTMENTS**

- a. **Leak Adjustment:** Each customer is allowed one (1) leak adjustment per calendar year. See the Water Office for details.
- b. **Pool Adjustment:** Each customer is allowed one (1) pool adjustment per calendar year to account for water not treated by the Wastewater Treatment Plant. See the Water Officer **PRIOR** to filling your pool.

**SECTION 5: PROHIBITION AGAINST TAMPERING AND BYPASSING.**

- a. No person shall install or cause to be installed any Jumper for the purpose of accessing water from the City of Ward Water Supply that results in access to the City water without passing thru an operating Proper Metering Device.
- b. No person shall, without authority from the City of Ward Water Department, turn on or off any portion of the City's Water System, destroy any part of the System (to include individual meters, meter loops or meter locks), or otherwise change or damage the System.
- c. Upon discovery of a Jumper or any form of tampering with the Water System, the City of Ward Police Department or the Lonoke County Sheriff's Department may be notified and shall have the ability to issue a citation for violation of the Ordinance to the person or entity who has caused such violation and to the owner of the property where the violation occurred.
- d. The owner of the property where the violation of the Ordinance occurred shall be responsible for any and all fines, penalties and/or damages resulting from the violation.
- e. This Ordinance shall apply to the entire City of Ward Water System both inside and outside of the corporate limits of the City.
- f. Any person who violates this Ordinance may be fined not less than \$100.00 or more than \$300.00 for the first offense. For the second and all subsequent offenses, the fine shall be not less than \$250.00 or more than \$1,000.00 for each offense. A separate

offense shall be committed for each parcel of real estate owned by the owner on which a violation occurs.

- g. In addition to the penalty provided for in paragraph (f) above, any person violating this Ordinance may also be required to pay all damages to the City Water Department as a result of said violation and for the value of the water used as a result of such violation.

**SECTION 6 – WARD WATER SYSTEM:** The operation of the system shall be fully metered basis, with a meter installed for each water connection and there shall be only one user on a single meter with the exception of “Master Meters” installed at apartment complexes and other such facilities. All bills for water service shall be rendered in the net amount due and are due upon receipt.

**SECTION 7: WATER BILLS: \*WATER BILLS ARE DUE UPON RECEIPT\***

- a. Water bills are considered late if not paid by close of business on the 15th of each month (grace period) and a 10% late penalty shall be added to the bill total. Any water bills not paid by the close of business on the 24<sup>th</sup> of each month will be disconnected.
- b. The City of Ward, nor the Ward Water and Sewer System, is not responsible for payments lost in the mail, delivered late, or not otherwise received by the Water Office after the date(s) described above. The following is provided for clarification.
  - (1) **WATER BILLS SENT OUT:** On or about the last day of the month.
  - (2) **DUE DATE: BILLS ARE DUE WHEN RECEIVED.**
  - (3) **GRACE PERIOD:** Bills must be paid by the close of business on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month to avoid a 10% late penalty.
  - (4) **LATE BILL/DISCONNECT NOTICE:** Sent out on the 16<sup>th</sup> of each month
  - (5) **DISCONNECT/CUT-OFF DATE:** Any account not paid in full to include any late fees by the close of business on the 24<sup>th</sup> of each month will be disconnected the next business day.

**SECTION 8 – CUSTOMER RESPONSIBILITY:**

- a. The customer is responsible to any and all water the flows through the meter; and,
- b. The customer is responsible for all water lines (service lines) from the meter box to the residence.

**SECTION 9 – SEVERABILITY:** If, for any reason, any portion or portions of this ordinance shall be held invalid, such invalidity shall in no way affect the remaining portions.

**SECTION 10 – REPEALING AND REPLACING:** This Ordinance repeals and replaces Ordinances 2014-07, 2014-07-01, 2019-09 and 2023-02.

**SECTION 11 – EFFECTIVE DATES:**

- a. The water and sewer rates listed in **SECTION 2** will become effective for water usage billed on or about April 30<sup>th</sup>.<sup>4</sup>
- b. The rates for the fees listed in **SECTION 3** will become effective May 1<sup>st</sup>.

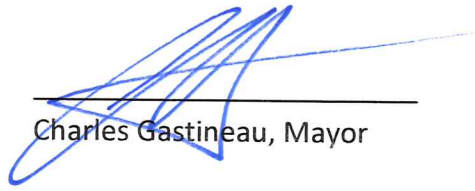
SAID ORDINANCE WAS ADOPTED ON 3/19/24.

Brooke Y, Chapman Y, Hall Y, Hefner Y, McMinn Y, Ruble Y

YEAS: 6      NAYS: 0      Mayor (if needed) \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Charles Gastineau, Mayor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Krystal Rummel, City Clerk



<sup>4</sup> Due upon receipt but not later than May 15<sup>th</sup> to avoid late penalty.