

Effingham to Re-Examine Utility Delinquency Policy

(KAIR) -- The Effingham City Council are planning to re-examine their utility policy when it comes to delinquent billing.

City Clerk Pat Strine says it's gotten to the point that 20 to 25 percent of water customers aren't paying on time.

She said it's been an off and on trend for many years but the city has seen a steady increase in the past four or five years.

Currently there are roughly 250 customers in Effingham and Strine says the number of delinquent customers have consistently been above 50.

Current policy states that the late fee is a three percent upcharge on their bill, along with a 10 day disconnection notice.

However, Strine says if customers still fail to pay, an employee will hand deliver a two to three day extension, which usually prompts the customer to pay.

As a result of this problem, the city commonly sees a shortfall of several thousand dollars monthly.

Strine says a majority of these customers are not on fixed incomes, either.

She adds that the council is currently looking into options of raising the delinquency rate and removing the two or three days of additional grace.

Strine says the council may still be a month or two away from receiving a proposal to take any potential action on the matter.

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