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Pine Hills Mutual Water Company

Discontinuance of Water Service For Nonpayment Policy

This policy has been developed by Pine Hills Mutual Water Company (PHMWC) and is intended to comply with the California Health and Safety Code, Chapter 6, Sections 116900 et. seq., also known as Senate Bill 998 and includes the following components:

1. A plan for deferred payments
2. Alternative payment schedules
3. A formal mechanism for customers to contest or appeal a bill
4. A telephone number for customers to contact to discuss options to avoid discontinuation of water service due to nonpayment.

This policy will be posted on PHMWC's website: www.pinehillswater.org

Water Service Discontinuation for Nonpayment Policy:

Pine Hills Mutual Water Company (PHMWC) will make a reasonable, good faith effort to notify customers of amounts past due and the subsequent collection actions after a bill becomes past due. Customers can call the PHMWC billing office at (760) 765-1243 or send an email to pinehillswater@gmail.com for options to avoid discontinuance of water service for nonpayment under the terms of this policy.

PHMWC will not discontinue water service for nonpayment until the payment is delinquent for at least 60 days after the bill due date (90 days after the close of the billing cycle). PHMWC will post a final Shut Off Notice at the service property no less than 10 days or 7 business days (whichever is greater) before discontinuation of water service, with a shut off date at least 60 days after the bill due date.

In addition, PHMWC will not discontinue water service for nonpayment if all of the following conditions are met:

1. The customer or tenant submits certification from a licensed primary care provider that discontinuation of water service will be life threatening to or pose a serious threat to the health and safety of a resident of the premises where the water service is provided.
2. The customer demonstrates they are financially unable to pay for water service within the normal billing cycle by demonstrating that any member of the household is a current recipient of CalWORKS, CalFresh, general assistance, Medi-Cal, Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment Program, or California Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), or the customer declares that the household's annual income is less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level.
3. The customer is willing to enter into an amortization agreement or alternative payment arrangement with respect to the delinquent charges.

A customer may not have more than one amortization agreement or alternative payment arrangement in effect for the same water connection at the same time, and no such arrangements shall extend beyond 12 months.

Water service will be discontinued no sooner than 5 business days after PHMWC posts a final notice of intent to disconnect water service in a prominent and conspicuous location at the service property under either of the following circumstances:

1. The customer fails to comply with an amortization agreement or alternative payment arrangement for delinquent service charges for 60 days or more.
2. While undertaking an amortization agreement or an alternative payment arrangement, the customer does not pay the current service charges for 60 days or more.

Discontinuance of Water Service: If water service is discontinued, it will not be restored until the account is paid in full and a reconnection fee of \$100 is paid to restore service. For customers who demonstrate household annual income less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level the reconnection fee is \$50 (as required by SB 998).

Notice to Tenants/Occupants: PHMWC will make a reasonable, good faith effort to inform occupants of the service property, by means of posted written notice, when the water service account is in arrears and subject to disconnection at least 10 days before water service is shut off. Tenants have the right to become customers of PHMWC without being required to pay the amount due on the delinquent account, as long as they are willing to assume financial responsibility for subsequent charges for water service at that address. In order for the amount due on the delinquent account to be waived, the tenant must provide verification of tenancy in the form of a rental agreement or proof of rent payments.

Bill Review and Appeal: To initiate a complaint or to appeal charges shown on the water bill, customers must do so in writing to PHMWC PO Box 725, Julian CA 92036 or via email at pinehillswater@gmail.com. All complaints and appeals will be reviewed by PHMWC's Board of Directors. PHMWC will not disconnect water service while the appeal is pending.

Reporting Requirements: PHMWC will report the number of annual discontinuations of residential water service for inability to pay on PHMWC's website and to the State Water Resources Control Board.

PHMWC Billing and Collection Policy:

Water service charges are billed by PHMWC every two months, and payment is due by the last calendar day of the month after the close of the billing cycle. The bill due dates are:

January-February	bills sent March 1, due by March 31
March-April	bills sent May 1, due by May 31
May-June	bills sent July 1, due by July 31
July-August	bills sent September 1, due by September 30
September-October	bills sent November 1, due by November 30
November-December	bills sent January 1, due by January 31

Payment must be received by PHMWC by the bill due date otherwise the account is considered delinquent and will incur a 10% late charge. Upon request, PHMWC will waive late fees no more than once every 12 months per water service account. Accounts not paid in full by the bill due date will be sent the following notices*:

- Notice #1: A Delinquency Notice will be sent out 40 days after the bill closing date stating that the account is past due and has incurred a 10% late charge. The notice will include PHMWC's Water Service Discontinuation Policy and the standard payment plan offer.
- Notice # 2: A Shut Off Warning Notice will be sent out 60 days after the bill closing date stating that water service will be shut off in 30 days unless the past due balance is paid in full. The notice will include PHMWC's Water Service Discontinuation Policy and the standard payment plan offer.
- Notice # 3: A Shut Off Notice will be sent out 75 days after the bill closing date stating that water service will be shut off in 15 days (with a shut off date at least 60 days after the bill due date) unless the past due balance is paid in full. The notice will include PHMWC's Water Service Discontinuation Policy, the standard payment plan offer and information on how to restore water service.

Door Posting: A Final Shut Off Notice will be posted at the service property 80 days after the bill closing date (no less than 10 days or 7 business days, whichever is greater) prior to water shut off, with a shut off date at least 60 days after the bill due date. The notice will include PHMWC's Water Service Discontinuation Policy, the standard payment plan offer and information on how to restore water service.

*All Delinquency Notices will include the following information:

- The customer's name and address.
- The amount of the delinquency.
- The date payment must be made to avoid discontinuance of water service.
- How to apply for an extension of time to pay the delinquent charges.
- How to petition for bill review and appeal.
- How to request an alternative payment arrangement or amortization agreement.

Standard Payment Plan Offer:

- The payment plan requires payment of at least 10% of the past due balance on a monthly basis until the past due balance is paid off in full.
- During the payment plan term all future bills must be paid in full by the bill due date.
- Accumulated late charges will be waived if the customer agrees to and signs the payment plan agreement.
- If the customer defaults on the payment plan agreement or falls behind on a subsequent bill payment, then the payment plan agreement will be null and void and the past due balance will be due immediately with late charges reinstated.
- A 5 Day Shut Off Notice will then be posted at the service property at least 5 business days before water service is discontinued and will include PHMWC's Water Service Discontinuation policy and information on how to restore water service.

Payment plan agreements may be requested at any time, up until scheduled water shut off for nonpayment. Contact PHMWC's billing office at (760) 765-1243 or via email at pinehillswater@gmail.com to discuss payment options and set up a payment plan agreement.

A customer may not have more than one payment plan (alternative payment arrangement or amortization agreement) in effect for the same water connections at the same time, and no payment plan agreements will extend beyond 12 months. Failure to comply with the terms of an approved payment plan will result in a written 5 Day Shut Off Notice as detailed above.

Bill Payment Options:

- Pay with a credit card at PHMWC's website www.pinehillswater.org via the Customer Portal link
- Pay with a credit card over the phone by calling the billing office at (760) 765-1243
- Send a check or initiate a Bill Pay payment from your bank (referencing the account number) payable to:

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PO Box 725
Julian, CA 92036

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Contact Information: For questions or assistance regarding a water bill, please call the PHMWC's billing office at (760) 765-1243 or email pinehillswater@gmail.com or send a letter to:

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PO Box 725
Julian, CA 92036