

To the Readers' Forum

In regard to the recent article the "BPU Is Not Thinking Of Senior Citizens," I submit the following information:

The Board of Public Utilities business practice is to not have two due dates in the same month. However, in May 2006, the first cycle BPU customers had a due date of May 1 and May 31.

Thank you to Mr. George L. Carlson for pointing out this mistake that was caused by human error. The BPU has met with and discussed this error with all parties involved. On behalf of the Board of Public Utilities, I apologize for this error.

Fortunately, this error allows me to explain the Fixed Income Waiver that the BPU has instituted to assist all those on a fixed monthly income such as social security or disability.

The Fixed Income Waiver extends the time period to pay without penalty from 3 days to 30 days after the utility bill is mailed in order to permit customers on a fixed monthly income to pay their utility bills without a penalty attached.

The customer will still receive a disconnect notice and all shut off dates will apply if the payment is not received by the disconnect date.

Once applied for and received, the waiver is in our system and need not be asked for on a monthly basis. If the customer moves, the waiver follows the customer – not the address of the account.

In order to qualify, the customer must receive their money/check once a month. If there is more than one source of income, all must be received approximately at the same time of the month.

I hope this information will provide fair and suitable assistance for the senior citizens living on social security who are troubled by the fact their utility bill is due the 1st of the month and their checks are received the 3rd of the month.

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