

# Northeast Oklahoma Public Facilities Authority

## *Customer Notice*

We welcome you as a customer of Northeast Oklahoma Public Facilities Authority and would like to acquaint you with some of the policies and procedures of our company. These policies and procedures have been approved by the Board of Trustees to assure the lowest natural gas rates possible to all of our customers.

### **Contact Information:**

- **Tahlequah Billing, Collecting & Administrative Operations:** 103 North College Avenue, Tahlequah, OK 74464 ♦ 918-456-6268- Monday-Friday (7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.) w/exception of holidays.
- **Tahlequah System Field Operations:** 1996 Airport Parkway, Tahlequah OK 74464 (918)456-5621 (24/7) Monday-Friday (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) w/exception of holidays
- **Stilwell-Westville System Field Operations:** 601 West Doyle Avenue, Stilwell, OK 74960 (918)696-4177 (24/7) Monday-Friday (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) w/ the exception of holidays
- **Stilwell Collections Office:** 81075 Highway 59, Stilwell OK 74960 (918)797-0069 Monday-Friday (7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.) w/exception of holidays
- **Emergency After Hours:** 918-456-5621 or alternate # for Adair County Customers 918-696-4177

### **Billing & Collecting Information:**

- New customer accounts (*or previous customers issued a new account number*) are billed a **\$12.00** connect charge. The connect charge increases to **\$50.00** on weekends, after hours or on holidays.
- **Utility bills are mailed each month and are payable on or before the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.**
- Failure to receive a utility bill through the mail is not a valid reason for nonpayment. If you have not received your utility bill, by the due date, please contact customer service for a duplicate copy.
- Accounts not paid by the due date are assessed a penalty charge and are subject to immediate disconnection of service.
- Customer Charge: This charge is to help recover the fixed costs of providing natural gas service. Fixed costs include bill processing, meter reading, meter equipment, service line maintenance and customer service personnel. The fixed charge is \$10.00 per month.

### **Meter Deposits:**

- The meter deposit requirement remains in effect for the life of the account.
- Can only be made by the person in whose name the account will be held. Identification is required.

### **Night Depositories:**

- Tahlequah \* 103 North College \* South side of building (@drive thru)
- Stilwell \* 81075 Highway 59 North (adjacent to NOPFA CNG Fueling Station)\* West side of building (@ drive thru)
- Westville \*221 South Williams St. \*Police Station Lobby

### **Refunds:**

- Refunds can be made to the account holder only. Identification is required.

### **Returned Checks:**

- A \$25.00 service charged is required for returned checks.

### **Suspension of Service for Nonpayment:**

- Balance due must be paid in full.
- If deposit does not meet the current required minimum deposit amount, it will be raised to meet the current rate.
- Active accounts will be assessed a \$ 50.00 reconnect fee.
- There will be no reconnects after normal business hours.
- Employees in the field are prohibited to accept payment for utility bill.
- Once the current deposit requirement has been met and the current account has 12 months of history available, an additional deposit may be collected per the *Suspension of Service Policy/Suspension of Service Fee Schedule* until such time as the deposit equals 3 months average billing based on the customer's previous 12 months history of service at the current location.

**Tampering:**

- A \$ 70.00 tampering fee is applicable if there is evidence of tampering, to cover cost of service & equipment.

**Transfers:**

- All transferring customers will be required to pay the account balance due. If the customer's deposit does not meet the current required minimum deposit amount, it will be raised to meet the current rate. A transfer fee of \$12.00 will be billed on the new account. The transfer period will be limited to 10 days.

**Work Orders:**

- All work orders given to this office pertaining to any transaction of a customer's account, must be given by the account holder only and a work order signed confirming the transaction. Identification is required.

# xpress BILL PAY

## ANNOUNCING THE EASIEST WAY TO PAY YOUR BILL

Our new online bill pay option saves you time and gives you more flexibility in how you pay your bill.

If you have an Internet connection and an email address, you can now pay your bill online. You are also able to “opt in” to paperless billing and receive an email notification when your bill is ready to view. It’s fast, it’s easy, and you no longer have to write a check each month or find a stamp when it’s time to send in your payment.

### HOW IT WORKS

We have partnered with Xpress Bill Pay, the premier provider for online bill payment.

When you sign up for online bill payment, you will create a secure password that you use to access your personal

account at [www.xpressbillpay.com](http://www.xpressbillpay.com). Every month we’ll send you a reminder email to let you know when your bill is online.

Then, just log in through your Web browser and view your bill. Select a payment type — credit card, debit card, or electronic funds transfer — enter the information, and you’re done! It’s that easy, and it only takes you a few minutes each month.

We’re offering this service at the request of customers like you. Sign up today and see why so many people consider this the best way to pay their bills.

### ONLINE BILL PAYMENT FACTS

It’s free to sign up for online bill payment at [www.xpressbillpay.com](http://www.xpressbillpay.com).

You can pay your bills with a credit or debit card, or you can transfer funds directly from your checking account.

You can pay your bill from anywhere. Users outside the U.S. can contact our Payment Center anytime to make a payment or to set up an Auto Pay.

No need to worry about late payments if you’re out of town when your bill is due.

After you complete the transaction, you can receive an email receipt to confirm that the payment went through.

You can view up to a year’s history of your account online, so you can compare your current bill to a year ago.

If you’d like, you can select the Auto Pay option and your bill will be paid automatically each month.

### WHAT TO DO NEXT

1. Go to [www.xpressbillpay.com](http://www.xpressbillpay.com). We have partnered with Xpress Bill Pay to provide you with online bill payment service.
2. Click on the “Sign Up” button on the top of the home screen. Fill in the email and password fields, then click in the “I’m not a robot” box and follow the prompts.
3. Complete the short registration form and click “Next.”
4. Go to your inbox and open the verification email and click “Verify Email.” Then select “Continue” to log in.
5. Select your billing organization and follow the prompts for linking your bill.
6. Once your bill is added to your account, you can add additional bills, view and pay your bill online, or setup a recurring auto payment schedule.

### AND THERE’S MORE!

Along with being able to make a payment online at any time, you can also call the payment assistance center to make a payment over the phone.

Call 1-800-720-6847 or 1-385-218-0338 (from outside the U.S.) to speak with a representative and make your payment today! A phone payment fee may apply.



# ***Northeast Oklahoma Public Facilities Authority***

## ***Suspension of Service Policy***

**WHEREAS**, the Northeast Oklahoma Public Facilities Authority Board of Trustees has adopted policies and procedures; in addition, to customer notices that address the processes concerning utility billing, charges, terms and condition of service, delinquency of service, and when service will be terminated as it relates to delinquency. In each of the aforementioned policies there contains a sentence or paragraph that addresses the triggering of termination of service based on time, charges, condition of service or meter tampering. This policy is intended to address all of the aforementioned sections pertaining to termination of service into one (1) policy and to ensure the customer/rate payers of the Northeast Oklahoma Public Facilities Authority the right of due process before service is terminated.

**Administrative Review:** Any customer having a “good faith” dispute as to the amount due by reason of billing error or other cause shall have the right to an Administrative hearing before the Administrative Manager, or in his/her absence the Office Manager or person designated by the General Manager. Such designated employees are authorized and directed to investigate such customer good faith disputes and are authorized by the Board and General Manager to make any adjustments in the customer’s billing that the facts warrant on the same or following business day after receiving the written request. All such customer request for Administrative review of a billing dispute shall be made in person at the Administrative office and reduced into writing on a form prescribed by the Board and signed by the customer. All such reports shall be presented to and reviewed by the Office Manager. Any customer dissatisfied with the decision may pay the amount of the bill under protest and submit a written request to the General Manger that the matter be placed on the agenda of the next regular Board meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Authority for review and possible action. All employees of the Board receiving billing dispute complaints from a customer shall advise the customer of this administrative review process and policy.

**Building Code or Code Enforcement Directives for Suspension of service:** The City of Tahlequah has adopted the National Electric Safety Code, Building Code, Plumbing Code and other codes and policies that give the Officers of each respective department within the City, the authority to direct the Northeast Oklahoma Public Facilities Authority to suspend service under certain conditions. In the event the Northeast Oklahoma Public Facilities Authority receives a directive from one or more of the Code enforcement officers of those respective departments. Northeast Oklahoma Public Facilities Authority will not suspend service of any customer whose account is in acceptable standing with the Authority until proof of due process has been provided by the City to the Authority.

Proof of due process will be defined as: The City shall show that the customer, resident and/or owner of the affected address or location being ordered by the City of Tahlequah Inspection Department to be disconnected have been served with a notice of non-compliance within a reasonable time frame and proof of service forwarded to the Authority. After the notice of non-compliance has been served and the parties involved have had a reasonable time frame to respond to the notice of non-compliance and have failed to do so, the affected parties shall have the right to appeal the notice of non-compliance before the City of Tahlequah’s appointed Boards or Judge and proof of said decision forwarded to the General Manager of the Authority; provided that there shall be an exception in an emergency if the General Manager of the Authority, or his designee, determines and is satisfied in their own right that the case involving the customer, resident or owners condition is and emergency, hazardous to the health or safety the public or parties concerned.

**Meter Accuracy:** Any customer disputing the accuracy of a utility meter may request in writing an accuracy check of the meter. The request shall be made on a form prescribed by the Board and shall specify the cost of the test of the meter as established by the Board from time to time, and the customer shall agree to pay the cost of the test which will be added to the next utility billing following the testing, if the meter accuracy is within standard tolerances of plus or minus 2 percent on natural gas meters. A written test report shall be furnished to the customer after the test results have been determined. If the accuracy of the meter is outside the standard tolerances, the Authority shall pay the cost of the testing and the Office Manager or General Manager shall instruct any billing adjustment in the customer's favor that is deemed reasonable and necessary. A customer's request for a meter check shall not be a cause for non-payment or partial payment on a customer's bill and shall not stay or cause a delay in suspension of service, unless it appears that a metering error does in fact exist.

**Restoration of Service:** On an active account, after suspension of service for non-payment there shall be a reconnect service charge as provided by the Suspension of Service Fee Schedule, during normal business hours in addition to the delinquent bill and penalty prior to the restoration of service. There will be No after normal business hours reconnects.

**Deposit:** The meter deposit requirement remains in effect for the life of the account. A meter service deposit of \$150.00 for residential and at least \$200.00 for businesses must be paid by the customer. These minimum charges may be increased up to 1.5 times the largest bill amount of similar establishment.

**Additional Deposit:** There will be an additional deposit as provided by the Suspension of Service Fee Schedule after service has been suspended for delinquent accounts or until such time as the deposits equal three months average billing based on the previous twelve (12) months history of service from this location.

**Suspension of Service Fee Schedule:** The Board of Trustee's shall establish a Suspension of Service Fee Schedule from time to time as they shall deem reasonable, setting the amount of the fees described in the policy, which shall be a part of this policy.

**Copies of Policy:** A copy of this policy shall be provided to all existing and future new customers of the Northeast Oklahoma Public Facilities Authority. All employees of the Authority having direct or indirect contact with the administration of this policy shall be orally advised of this statement of policy and furnished a printed copy. Any customer having a dispute with the Authority covered by this policy shall be advised of this written policy and copies shall be furnished to the customer upon request.

Adopted this: \_\_\_\_\_, day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2016

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Steve Turner, Chairman

***Suspension of Natural Gas Service  
Fee Schedule***

<b>1. Additional Deposit</b>	<b>\$50.00</b>
<b>2. 2<sup>nd</sup> Trip Connect</b>	<b>\$50.00</b>
<b>3. Meter Accuracy Test</b>	<b>\$50.00</b>
<b>4. Reconnect:</b>	<b>\$50.00</b>
<b>5. Tampering Fee</b>	<b>\$70.00</b>
<b>6. Transfer:</b>	<b>\$12.00</b>





## Public Awareness & Damage Prevention

### PARTNERS IN PIPELINE SAFETY

America's pipeline industry maintains an enviable record of safety and reliability. Pipelines are by far the safest means of transportation today. The purpose of our pipeline is to provide safe, dependable, natural gas to your gas burning appliances 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. However, despite strict federal oversight and the conscientious efforts of the NOPFA, hazards do exist and emergencies, though infrequent, can occur. Statistics show that the majority of pipeline damage is caused by third parties (construction contractors, property owners, excavators, etc.) digging near buried pipelines. Damage to a pipeline, such as scratches, gouges, creases, dents, and the cutting of tracer wire or tracer tape installed along with polyethylene plastic should be reported to the NOPFA. Third-party damage can be prevented by using a local excavation notification system known as OKIE One-Call and it's **FREE!**

In Oklahoma, the law requires anyone planning to dig or excavate near an underground pipeline to notify OKIE One-Call Center two working days (48 hours) prior to beginning excavation activities. The OKIE One-Call center will notify member utilities that operate buried facilities in the area. A utility representative will determine if the project is near underground facilities and dispatch someone to the work site to clearly mark the route and location of buried cables and/or pipelines. Call 811 or 1-800-522-6543 and remember it's **FREE!**



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**

#### Information for Emergency Officials

- 1. Secure the area around the leak.**
- 2. Take steps to prevent ignition of a suspected leak.**
- 3. Contact: Adair County:  
918-696-4177  
Or Cherokee/Muskogee Counties:  
918-456-5621  
After hours & weekends: 918-456-5621**

## NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA PUBLIC FACILITIES AUTHORITY

For information regarding  
pipeline safety:

Call us @

**Adair County: 918-696-4177  
Cherokee & Muskogee  
Counties: 918-456-5621**

Or write to us @

**601 Doyle Avenue, Stilwell, OK  
74960  
Or 1996 Airport Parkway,  
Tahlequah, OK 74464**



### PIPELINE MARKERS

For public-safety reasons, most pipelines are buried several feet underground. To make pipelines easier to locate and identify, NOPFA installs markers near roads and highways, at railroad and river crossings, above ground piping and at other locations along our rights of way. These markers show a pipeline's **approximate** location and provide emergency-contact telephone numbers and product transported. Not all buried lines have markers. Therefore, prior to performing excavating activities as simple as planting a tree, installation of landscaping, building a fence, installing a swimming pool or installation of a mailbox, contact OKIE One-Call at 811 or 1-800-522-6543.

## Public Awareness & Damage Prevention

Fortunately, pipeline accidents are extremely rare, but they can occur. Natural Gas is flammable and potentially hazardous and explosive under certain circumstances. NOPFA undertakes many prevention and safety measures to insure the integrity of its pipeline system. Some preventive measures include gas leakage surveys, corrosion control, and continuing

PHMSA guidelines requires NOPFA to make you aware of certain recommendations regarding your underground natural gas piping. NOPFA does not maintain the gas piping past the customer's meter. Piping beyond the meter is the responsibility of the consumer. Buried customer piping may be subject to corrosion and/or leakage. Your buried piping should be checked periodically to ensure safe operation. You are advised to contact a licensed plumber or contractor to assist you in locating and inspecting your buried gas piping. Should an

## PIPELINE SAFETY IS BUILT IN

PHMSA(Pipeline & Hazardous Material Safety Administration) imposes rigorous standards for pipeline design, construction, maintenance, testing and operation. NOPFA's policies and procedures are designed to meet and, in most cases, exceed these standards. Our commitment to safety begins before a pipeline is built or expanded. We build safety into our system by:

- carefully researching and planning the safe construction of each project;
- using pipe that is inspected and tested at the factory to comply with both federal and industry standards;
- providing steel pipe with a coating and other measures that protect it from external corrosion, the use corrosive resistant polyethylene plastic
- inspecting the integrity of the pipe during construction;
- testing the finished pipeline at pressures higher than normal operating pressure before it's placed into service.

## SAFETY IS MAINTAINED DURING OPERATION

Once a pipeline is built, tested and placed in service, NOPFA controls and monitors the safety of its system in several ways, including: routinely patrolling our pipeline route on the ground to inspect for leakage and identify potential problems and assist in preventing third-party excavation damage. Other maintenance of facilities including:

- over-pressure protection devices inspections
- cathodic protection inspection (a means of adding negative DC current to steel pipelines to slow corrosion)
- advising periodically, state and local emergency officials to review accident-prevention and emergency-response procedures
- posting markers with emergency telephone numbers along our rights of way, at highway, railroad crossings to inform the public of an buried pipeline in the area or an above ground piping

For additional information about other pipelines in your area you may contact NPMS at

[www.npms.phmsa.dot.gov](http://www.npms.phmsa.dot.gov)

For other helpful resources contact:

[www.ops.dot.gov](http://www.ops.dot.gov)--PHMSA

[www.commongroundalliance.org](http://www.commongroundalliance.org)

**Common Ground Alliance**

[www.occeweb.com](http://www.occeweb.com) –Oklahoma

**Corporation Commission**

## NATURAL GAS LEAKS:

### RECOGNITION AND RESPONSE

Natural gas pipeline leaks or failures are rare, but an informed public can help prevent emergencies and minimize potential damage or injury in the unlikely event of an accident by knowing how to recognize and report pipeline problems.

### HOW TO IDENTIFY A LEAK

The following signs may indicate a natural gas pipeline leak or failure:

**SIGHT—A dense fog, mist, or white cloud. Bubbling in water and creeks or blowing dust and discolored or dying vegetation.**

**SMELL—Natural Gas is naturally odorless, so a rotten egg odor is added to aid in leak detection.**

**SOUND—Whistling, hissing, or roaring noise.**

## What NOT to do...

**Do NOT** touch, breathe, or make contact with the leak.

**DO NOT** light a match, turn on or off light switches, use a home phone or cell phone or do anything that may create a spark.

**DO NOT** attempt to extinguish any natural gas fire.

**DO NOT** attempt to operate any valves.

## What to DO...

**DO** leave the home, building or area of any suspected leak.

**DO** call NOPFA or 911 once safely out of the area.

**DO** Warn others to stay out of the area

# Natural Gas Leaks!

Natural Gas leaks are our #1 priority

If you suspect a natural gas leak in your home or outside:

- Leave the area immediately and tell others to leave too.
- Do not turn any lights on or off, smoke or use a cell phone, or operate any vehicle or equipment that could cause sparks.
- Do not call 911 or NOPFA until you are at a safe distance.
- Do not attempt to turn natural gas valves on or off.
- NOPFA does not soap test or air test for leaks in a house or customer side plumbing of a meter.
- NOPFA does not repair customer side plumbing if there is a leak.
- NOPFA will tell you whether the leak is natural gas or not.
- NOPFA will shut the customers' gas off and lock if there is a leak.
- A certified plumber must repair the leak in city limits, if pipe is replaced, an inspection by a building inspector must be performed before NOPFA can unlock and turn back on.
- If leak is outside of city limits there is no certified plumber or inspection required but it is suggested.

**NOPFA will send a trained service technician immediately to investigate any emergency leak call.**

**NOPFA TAHLEQUAH 918-456-5621 OR 918-456-6268**

**NOPFA STILWELL 918-696-4177 OR 918-797-0069**