

Tell the Newton City Council: Vote No on the Franchise Fee

Three ready-to-use emails for business owners, residents, and those on fixed incomes

How to Send Your Email

1. Copy the email below that best fits your situation.
2. Fill in the brackets with your own information. Even one personal sentence makes your email far more effective than a form letter.
3. Find council member email addresses at newtongov.org, or call City Hall at 641-792-2787 to request them.
4. Send to all council members and the mayor. One email, everyone copied.
5. Use your real name and Newton address. Anonymous emails carry no weight.
6. Keep it respectful. We want council members to hear us, not dismiss us.
7. Send before the next reading of the franchise fee ordinance.

Newton City Council Contacts

Mayor Randy Ervin: (641) 521-8700 | randye@newtongov.org

Ward 1 Mark Hallam: (515) 205-6149 | markh@newtongov.org

Ward 2 Melissa Dalton: (515) 650-3151 | melissad@newtongov.org

Ward 3 Stacy Simbro: (641) 792-1239 | stacys@newtongov.org

Ward 4 Amy Roth: (630) 229-5525 | amyr@newtongov.org

At Large Joel Mills: (319) 290-3873 | joelm@newtongov.org

At Large Jeff Holschuh: (641) 521-3755 | jeffh@newtongov.org

Email 1: From a Business Owner

Subject: Please Vote No on the Franchise Fee

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

I own [business name] here in Newton. I'm writing to ask you to vote no on the proposed 5% franchise fee on gas and electric bills.

Energy is one of my largest costs. A 5% surcharge on every utility bill means thousands of dollars a year for a business like mine. That money comes out of wages, prices, or plans to grow. I can't pass it along without hurting my customers, who are my neighbors.

Newton already carries the highest city levy rate in Jasper County. Adding a new fee on top of that sends the wrong message to anyone thinking about starting or expanding a business here.

Please look for savings in the budget before reaching deeper into our pockets.

Respectfully,

[Name]

[Business name]

[Address]

Email 2: From a Resident

Subject: Vote No on the Utility Franchise Fee

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

I'm a Newton resident at [address], and I'm asking you to vote no on the proposed franchise fee on our Alliant and Black Hills bills.

This is a new tax on something none of us can do without. Heating our homes in January isn't optional. A 5% fee hits every household, every month, on top of property taxes that are already the highest city rate in the county.

Families in Newton are stretched thin as it is. Before adding a new charge, please show us that every other option in the budget has been exhausted.

Thank you for your service to our community. I'm asking you to stand with the people paying the bills.

Respectfully,

[Name]

[Address]

Email 3: From Someone on a Fixed Income

Subject: The Franchise Fee Will Hurt Those Who Can Least Afford It

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

I'm a Newton resident living on a fixed income. I'm writing to ask you to vote no on the proposed franchise fee.

My income doesn't go up when my bills do. A 5% fee on gas and electric may not sound like much at City Hall, but for me it means real choices about groceries, medicine, and keeping the house warm.

Utility fees are the hardest kind of increase for people like me because there's no way to avoid them. I can cut back on many things, but not heat and lights.

Please don't balance the city budget on the backs of seniors and others on fixed incomes. Find the savings elsewhere.

Respectfully,

[Name]

[Address]