
**AUGUSTA COUNTY SERVICE AUTHORITY
OPERATING PROCEDURES AND POLICY MANUAL**

Approved By: Board of Directors
Effective Date: September 9, 2014

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Water and/or Sewer Connections

1.0 General

The Augusta County Service Authority provides water and sewer service for customers within the Authority's Charter boundaries. Provision for new service may not be possible in all areas due to limitations such as system availability, availability of space for system installation, inadequate system pressure, etc. The Authority reserves the right to refuse service or require additional payment from the customer to accommodate non-standard installations.

The customer's installation may require additional private equipment and/or engineering to accommodate physical limitations due to topography or distance from an Authority main.

Connections made by the Authority are associated with the property for which payment is made, and may not be transferred to another property.

2.0 Requirements

The owner of any new house, building or other structure used for residential, commercial or industrial use in the County shall connect to existing public water and/or sewer systems in accordance with Chapter 24 of the Augusta County Code.

This requirement does not apply to structures on a single family lot that are not dwellings, such as garages and storage sheds.

Existing houses, buildings or other structures must comply with this policy at such time as their existing well or other water supply, or existing septic system or other sewage disposal system is condemned by the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), or its use is otherwise discontinued.

Once connected to Authority service, no other sources of water supply for domestic or any non-agricultural use or any other method for the disposal of sewage may be used, in accordance with Chapter 24 of the Augusta County Code.

Each house, building or other structure receiving service must have a separate paid water and/or sewer connection, except in the case of a "Temporary family health care structure" as defined in Augusta County Code Section 25-4, maintained by the Authority up to and including the water meter or sewer clean out, and the meter box or vault. The connection, up to and including the water meter or sewer clean out, and the meter box or vault is the property of the Authority.

Service may be available to concentrated users through a single connection, on a single parcel, based on an evaluation by the Authority Engineering Department. Each single-family residential unit in a concentrated residential user building will be equal to one equivalent residential connection (ERC). Other residential units may be assigned a proportionate ERC factor as determined by the Authority and adopted as a part of its

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published Rate Schedule. Mixed residential use facilities will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis on the basis of both ERCs and meter size, with connection charges to be determined by the Authority in accordance with its current prevailing Rate Schedule.

At the time a connection is installed, it will serve only the house(s), building(s) or other structure(s) requiring service, identified as lying within the property boundaries at the date of the application for service. Any subsequent subdivision of the original parcel where a house, building or other structure will now be located within the boundaries of a new parcel will be required to pay the prevailing Connection Fee(s) for a new service connection for the new parcel and building(s) contained therein. A new connection, even when the result of a subdivision or re-parceling of the original property and its connection, will require that an Authority Meter Sizing Form be completed, and the meter size evaluated by the Authority Engineering Department prior to the issuance of a work order for making the new connection. A separate service line must be run to the new connection at the customer's expense.

All outstanding charges and liens must be satisfied prior to new service being made available, for new or existing customers in accordance with **Policy 5.3 - Billing and Collection**.

All customers will be subject to all established fees, charges, rates, and policies of the Authority.

3.0 Easements

Customers are responsible for obtaining all easements, which will remain private, to connect from their property to the Authority system, particularly for the identification of any preferred connection location indicated by use of Authority supplied marking flags. If the Authority determines that the flagged location has an obstruction, the owner will be consulted to either select an alternate location, or assist with resolving the obstruction. Additional customer costs may apply.

Customers may also need to consult the Augusta County Community Development Department prior to applying for service in cases where off-site piping is required. See **Policy Section 10.6 Plan Review and Project Acceptance for Water and Sewer Services** for additional information.

4.0 Connection Relocation

In the event that a water and/or sewer connection is to be relocated for the convenience of the property owner, any relocation will be evaluated by the Authority Engineering Department for determination of a cost estimate of the relocation and removal of the original connection. The estimated cost for this relocation will be sent to the property owner in a letter, advising them of the estimated costs and requiring their acceptance of the responsibility for the actual costs, plus administrative costs. Once this letter is signed by the owner, the work will be scheduled and upon completion will be billed to the

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property owner, separately from their bi-monthly water and/or sewer bill, and due within thirty (30) days of the billing date. Payment must be received in the Authority's Customer Service office by the due date on the bill to avoid a 10% penalty.

Connections may only be relocated within the boundary of the current property. Once made, a connection is considered attached to the property, and may not be moved to a separate property.

5.0 Connection Removal

Whenever an owner wishes to discontinue service permanently for the demolition or removal of a building being served, written notice shall be given to the Authority at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance for removal of the facilities (includes proper removal of water meter and/or sewer clean out). The owner will be held responsible for the meter until its removal by Authority staff, and if lost or missing, the owner will be required to pay the replacement cost of the meter. Removal of the connection from the main to and including the water meter and/or sewer clean out by the Authority will be done at no cost to the customer.

Otherwise, connections may only be removed in cases where the property can no longer meet the requirements of Augusta County Code permitting construction of a structure or the use of the property has changed and a connection is no longer required by the Code (i.e. utility substation, barn).

To re-establish a connection for the property in the future full Connection Fees must be paid at the prevailing rate.

No refunds are given for removed connections.

6.0 Increasing Meter Size

If the Authority Meter Sizing Form indicates that the current meter is insufficient to meet the customer's need, the customer must increase the size of the meter by paying the difference in Availability Fees, at the prevailing rates, between the current meter size and the required meter size. The customer must also pay the cost of installing the new meter. An estimate of the cost will be provided, and must be agreed upon in writing prior to any work being completed. If the Authority encounters any unforeseen conditions, and the cost will increase over the estimate given, work will be stopped and the customer will be given a new estimate, which must be agreed upon in writing prior to work resuming.

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7.0 Decreasing Meter Size

If a customer requests that their meter be downsized, and the Authority Meter Sizing Form indicates that the current meter is oversized, the customer may decrease the size of the meter by paying the cost of installing the new meter. An estimate of the cost will be provided, and must be agreed upon in writing prior to any work being completed. If the Authority encounters any unforeseen conditions, and the cost will increase over the estimate given, work will be stopped and the customer will be given a new estimate, which must be agreed upon in writing prior to work resuming. Decreasing meter size will not result in any refund of fees previously paid.

8.0 Combining Adjacent Meters for Connections other than Single Family Use

If a customer owns adjacent properties, both of which have existing connections, the customer may combine and exchange the existing meter connections for a larger meter connection only in the event that the parcels are combined and recorded as one parcel. This applies only to connections other than single family use. Depending on the size of the new connection, the existing connections, and an Authority Engineering assessment, additional Fees may apply. If a property's connection is exchanged towards another connection, the exchanged connection will be permanently removed, and can only be re-connected after payment of full Connection Fees at the prevailing rates.

9.0 Commercial & Industrial Connections

Customer must identify any conditions potentially detrimental to the Authority water and/or sewer systems. The Authority reserves the right to disconnect the customer until the customer corrects any detrimental conditions. The customer will be responsible for resulting damages to Authority systems.

For wastewater pretreatment requirements, see "Rules and Regulations For Wastewater Discharge" in Appendix 3 of the Authority Design and Construction Standards for further requirements.

10.0 Temporary Water Service

Temporary water service will be provided for builders and developers, subject to the following conditions, as well as **Policy 18.8 Rules and Regulations: Cross Connection Control and Backflow Prevention in the Waterworks System of the Augusta County Service Authority.**

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In - Ground

At construction sites after all water mains are tested, dedicated to and accepted by the Authority under the following conditions:

The Authority will provide the customer with a cost for installation, equipment and removal of the temporary connection. Upon payment, the temporary service will be installed.

The applicant for temporary service must complete an **Authority Temporary Service Agreement** stipulating the temporary nature of the service and pay the charge to cover the costs of servicing this special account as described in the current prevailing Fee Schedule. If the applicant wishes to extend the temporary service beyond ninety (90) days, they must pay an additional charge, as described in the current prevailing Fee Schedule for each additional quarter. The additional charge must be paid before the end of the existing service period. Failure to pay in accordance with **Policy 5.3 – Billing and Collection** will result in temporary or permanent removal of the service at the discretion of the Authority.

Water consumption will be billed in accordance with the current prevailing Fee Schedule.

The temporary connection will be removed when requested by the customer.

Above-Ground (Hydrant)

The Authority will provide a ¾” Combined Hydrant Meter Backflow Prevention Assembly Unit per Authority Standards and Specifications, within 2 business days of request and completion of an **Authority Temporary Service Agreement** and payment of required fees, including security deposit as outlined in the current prevailing Fee Schedule. The Authority also has a 3” backflow preventer and/or meter available for larger connections. The customer may also use a customer supplied backflow preventer assembly or air gap.

Prior to use, all installed backflow prevention units shall comply with **Policy 18.8 - Rules and Regulations: Cross Connection Control and Backflow Prevention in the Waterworks System of the Augusta County Service Authority**.

Permits will be provided for individual construction projects within the Authority water service area. The Authority reserves the right to deny a location based on water quality, system pressure, or other concerns related to health, safety and the protection of the water system.

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Upon notification of a request for removal, the Customer will be billed by the Authority for any unbilled usage. All accounts must be paid within thirty (30) days of the billing date and must be received in the Authority's Customer Service office by the due date on the bill to avoid a 10% penalty.

Early termination of a permit will not result in any refund of fees previously paid.

The Customer is liable for any damages to the Authority supplied Meter or Backflow Assembly and/or the fire hydrant during the period of use. This includes, but is not limited to, lost, broken or stolen fittings, valves, meters, backflow assemblies, case parts or pieces.

The Customer may not use or attach any equipment to the remaining ports on the fire hydrant. These ports must be accessible at all times for fire protection.

11.0 Fire Service

Fire services utilizing double check detector assemblies shall include an Authority owned meter which will be read by the Authority to monitor for leaks or other usage. The Authority reserves the right to bill for these leaks or other usage in accordance with the current prevailing Rate Schedule. Fire services are not currently charged a bi-monthly fixed fee or Connection Fee.

12.0 Sewer Deduct Meters

Sewer deduct meters may be installed by commercial business customers who use water that does not enter the sanitary sewer. Customers are responsible for the purchase, installation, maintenance, and accuracy of their own deduct meters and equipment.

Customers must submit drawings or plans to the Authority Engineering Department showing meter placement prior to approval/installation. Account changes will not be made until Engineering Department approval is received.

Readings must be provided, in writing, to the Authority Customer Service Department prior to billing to receive credit. Readings are subject to verification by the Authority. Failure to provide readings prior to the billing will result in credit being deferred until the following bill.

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13.0 Additional Water Only Service

An additional water only connection may be installed at a location with existing service for purposes of water use where there will be no sewer discharge; for example, irrigation, animal watering, landscaping, etc. Full Connection Fees will apply and consumption will be charged at the rate given in the current prevailing Rate Schedule. An Authority Meter Sizing Form and/or design information will be required.

14.0 Sewer Effluent Pumps

Sewer effluent pumps for residential connections are not regulated by ACSA and are under the jurisdiction of Augusta County as defined in **Augusta County Code, Chapter 11, Article II § 11-12.**

15.0 Connections to Force Mains

Direct connections to the Authority's force mains are prohibited. Private force mains may only be connected to the Authority's gravity collection system with Engineering Department approval.

16.0 Violations

16.1 Connections

Illegal connections may be a violation of VA Code §18.2-162 and 18.2-163, and anyone found guilty shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor, Class 3 misdemeanor or Class 4 felony depending on the act.

In the event a connection is found to exist that is in violation of this policy, the customer will be sent a certified letter to their address of record notifying them that they have thirty (30) days to pay the current Connection Fee(s) for the type of connection found to exist or to disconnect the improperly made connection. If the appropriate Connection Fee(s) have not been paid within the thirty (30) day period, all service will be discontinued until the current Connection Fee(s) are paid. Any costs associated with discontinuing or disconnecting service will become the responsibility of the property owner including, but not limited to terminating water service and plugging sewer laterals.

At the discretion of the Executive Director, in circumstances where a second connection is found to be illegally made on a single parcel, the connection may be permitted by upsizing the connection to the Authority main to a ¾" meter, contingent upon the customer paying the appropriate fee as described in **6.0** above for upsizing a meter and paying the adjusted bi-monthly fixed fee going forward.

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16.2 Meter/Hydrant Tampering or Damage to Authority Facilities

Meter and hydrant tampering or damage to Authority Facilities may be a violation of VA Code §18.2-162 and 18.2-163, and anyone found guilty shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor, Class 3 misdemeanor or Class 4 felony depending on the act.

In the event that the Authority makes a determination of Meter Tampering, all service may be discontinued until any costs associated with correcting the result of the meter tampering, up to and including meter replacement and any costs incurred by the Authority for discontinuing service, including, but not limited to terminating water service and plugging sewer laterals are paid. In every case, these costs are the responsibility of the property owner.

The Authority may file criminal complaints with the Augusta County Sheriff's Department in cases of suspected meter tampering.

16.3 System Threats

The Authority reserves the right, by unilateral act in its sole discretion, to refuse service or to terminate service temporarily or to discontinue service in all instances when conditions exist that would constitute an emergency, public concern, presents a technical issue for the system(s), or when providing any service would constitute a threat to the safety, health, or welfare of customers.