



# City of St. Cloud Billing/Utility Services Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



## Contents

**Walk-in Center**..... 5

*What services are offered at the Customer Service Walk -In Center?*..... 5

**Payment Info** ..... 5

*How can I pay my City of St. Cloud (St. Cloud Utilities) bills?*..... 5

*How do I register for bank draft or automatic payments?*..... 6

*Will my St. Cloud Utilities statement provide information on how to pay my bill?*..... 7

*When will my payments be due?* ..... 7

*Do you have a drive-up payment drop box for customers on the west-end of the City Hall building?*..... 7

*Is there a payment drop box for customers in the City Hall lobby?*..... 7

*Can I pay my OUC bill (electric bill) at the St. Cloud Utilities customer service walk-in center in City Hall?* ..... 8

*Credit Card Payments at Customer Service Walk In Center*..... 8

*Credit Card Payment convenience fees*..... 8

*What electronic check payment and credit card payment options will St. Cloud Utilities customers have?*..... 8

*What should I do if I learn that one of my check payments is going to be returned for insufficient funds?*..... 9

<b>Billing Questions</b> .....	9
<i>Who is responsible for the repair if there is a leak in my meter box?</i> .....	9
<i>Why does my water bill run the same amount month after month?</i> .....	9
<i>Why does my water bill sometimes vary from month to month?</i> .....	10
<i>How much are the late fees and how can I avoid them?</i> .....	10
<i>Do you give discounts to water charges?</i> .....	10
<i>I am moving out of town, will my last bill be the final amount owed?</i> .....	10
<i>I just got married/divorced; can you change the name on my account?</i> .....	10
<i>I'm going away for 3 months; can I pay my bill in advance?</i> .....	10
<i>If I establish service in the middle of a billing period, will my monthly base rate be prorated?</i> .....	11
<i>Should I contact St. Cloud Utilities if I feel my billing is wrong, regardless of whose favor it is in?</i> .....	11
<i>Some months my water bill seems very high. Why is that?</i> .....	11
<i>When does my bill become delinquent?</i> .....	11
<i>When is my bill due?</i> .....	11
<i>Why are my monthly rates higher because I live outside the City?</i> .....	11
<i>Why do I have to pay my full balance before I can transfer my utility service?</i> .....	12
<i>What is a base charge?</i> .....	12
<i>How much are the water and sewer base charges?</i> .....	12
<i>What are water consumption/usage charges?</i> .....	13
<i>What are sewer consumption/usage charges?</i> .....	13
<i>What is the stormwater charge?</i> .....	13

***What is the cross connection control charge?..... 14***

***What is the EMS (Emergency Medical Service) charge? ..... 14***

***What is the solid waste charge?..... 14***

***What is the service initiation charge?..... 14***

***What is a trip charge? ..... 15***

***What charges are assessed to properties located within city limits that are using a well?..... 15***

***Myutilities.stcloud.org Website Help..... 15***

***How do I sign up for the St. Cloud Utilities website? ..... 15***

***What information do I need to sign up at myutilities.stcloud.org?..... 15***

***How do I register when my name is the second name on the account?..... 15***

***What can I use as my Username?..... 15***

***What can I use as my password?..... 16***

***What if I forgot my password?..... 16***

***Can I make a one time payment without registering?..... 16***

***Can I sign up for paperless billing?..... 17***

***General Payment Questions..... 17***

***I am trying to make a payment online, but am unable to proceed. What's wrong? ..... 17***

***What is my Security Code?..... 17***

***What if the payment processing system seems delayed or slow while I'm making a payment?..... 17***

***Will I receive confirmation of my website payment? ..... 18***

<i><u>When will you know I paid on the website?.....</u></i>	<i><u>18</u></i>
<i><u>Do I have to pay the full amount of the utility bill?.....</u></i>	<i><u>18</u></i>
<i><u>Will paying online prevent service disconnection?.....</u></i>	<i><u>18</u></i>
<i><u>If my utilities are disconnected, will paying online turn it back on?.....</u></i>	<i><u>18</u></i>
<i><b>Water Quality.....</b></i>	<i><b>18</b></i>
<i><u>Dirty Water.....</u></i>	<i><u>18</u></i>
<i><u>Distribution System Causes.....</u></i>	<i><u>19</u></i>
<i><u>Private Plumbing System Causes.....</u></i>	<i><u>19</u></i>
<i><u>What should you do if you have dirty water?.....</u></i>	<i><u>19</u></i>
<i><b>Neptune (AMI) Meters.....</b></i>	<i><b>20</b></i>
<i><u>What is AMI?.....</u></i>	<i><u>20</u></i>
<i><u>How does the meter reading system work and how do I know you have my reading and not someone else's?.....</u></i>	<i><u>20</u></i>
<i><u>How do you know that my reading is accurate?.....</u></i>	<i><u>21</u></i>
<i><u>Is the AMI meter's radio transmitter a hazard in any way?.....</u></i>	<i><u>21</u></i>
<i><u>Does the equipment have any hazards in its interior?.....</u></i>	<i><u>21</u></i>
<i><u>Will the radio interfere with my television, cordless phone, or other electronic devices?.....</u></i>	<i><u>21</u></i>

## ***Walk-In Center***

### ***What services are offered at the Customer Service Walk -In Center?***

The St. Cloud Utilities Customer Service Walk-In Center on the first floor of Building A City Hall offers the following services:

Cashier Counter - Full Customer Service for St. Cloud Utilities billing questions, payments, adjustment requests, account establishment, transfer or termination, general customer service. Additionally, OUC payments are accepted with no convenience fee (OUC bill stub or account # is required)

Construction & R-O-W Permit Counter - Irrigation permits, Right of Way Permits, Driveway Permits, Hydrant Meters, Associated new meter installation

## ***Payment Info***

### ***How can I pay my City of St. Cloud (St. Cloud Utilities) bills?***

<b>Payment Option</b>	<b>City of St. Cloud - St. Cloud Utilities</b>
<b>Mail</b>	City of St. Cloud St. Cloud Utilities PO Box 31304, Tampa, FL 33631-3304
<b>Drop Box payments (no cash)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 24-hour drop box located on the west-end of City Hall. Payments are sent to the payment processing center in Tampa and are not processed on the same day (Allow 3-5 business days for processing).</li><li>• Drop box located in the main lobby of City Hall Building A. St. Cloud Utilities payments made in this drop box by 2pm will be processed the same day. Payments after 2pm will be processed the next business day. (Please allow 3-5 days to process OUC payments.)</li></ul>

<b>E-Check</b>	Please call 407-957-7344 (option 2) or visit <a href="http://myutilities.stcloud.org">myutilities.stcloud.org</a> to pay your bill with our electronic check service through Invoice Cloud, an independent service provider. E-check payments online are free. Your one-time payment will be deducted from your checking account. Invoice Cloud charges a convenience fee of \$.50 per transaction for all electronic check payments made by phone. <i>*Invoice Cloud is waiving this fee until 1/2018 as an introductory offer to our customers.</i>
<b>Credit Card</b>	Invoice Cloud, an independent service provider, processes all credit card payments made to City of St. Cloud. Call 407-957-7344 (option 2) or visit <a href="http://myutilities.stcloud.org">myutilities.stcloud.org</a> to pay your bill using Invoice Cloud. Payments may be made using your American Express, Visa, Mastercard or Discover Card. Invoice Cloud charges a convenience fee of \$2.95 per \$300.00. <b>Maximum payment amount is \$300.00 per transaction.</b>
<b>Authorized Location</b>	Payments can be made at any authorized third party location (a convenience fee may apply). Amscot is currently the only authorized third party payment location. Amscot charges a fee of \$1.25 per transaction.
<b>Automatic Withdrawal</b>	Register online at <a href="http://myutilities.stcloud.org">myutilities.stcloud.org</a> to automatically deduct the total of your St. Cloud Utilities bill from your bank account.
<b>Customer Service Walk-In Center</b>	Payments can be made in person at SCU Customer Service Walk-In Center in City Hall, Building A, first level from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (OUC) Electric Payments are accepted in our office if you have your OUC bill or account number.
<b>Pay by Text</b>	Register online at <a href="http://myutilities.stcloud.org">myutilities.stcloud.org</a> to pay your utility bill by text.

***How do I register for bank draft or automatic payments?***

Bank Draft is also known as Automatic Withdrawal, Bank Draft, Pre Authorized Payment (PAP), or Automated Clearing House (ACH). Please register your account online at [myutilities.stcloud.org](http://myutilities.stcloud.org) to automatically deduct the total of your St. Cloud Utilities bill from your bank account. Bank Draft will usually begin within 30-60 days after enrollment. You will know that the automatic withdrawal program is in effect when you receive a bill with the words "DO NOT PAY". Accounts will be drafted monthly by the due date shown on the bill.

***Will my St. Cloud Utilities statement provide information on how to pay my bill?***

Yes. The City of St. Cloud (St. Cloud Utilities) statement/bill will provide payment information, including continuous payment options, eCheck and credit card options, how to read your statement, and the St. Cloud Utilities customer service phone number (407-957-7344).

***When will my payments be due?***

City of St. Cloud (St. Cloud Utilities) payments will be due on a monthly basis by the 21st day after the bill date that appears on the bill. To ensure payments are received and posted in a timely manner, all due dates must be reviewed by customers on each City of St. Cloud (St. Cloud Utilities) utility billing statement.

***Do you have a drive-up payment drop box for customers on the west-end of the City Hall building?***

Yes. The City of St. Cloud currently offers St. Cloud Utilities and OUC customers a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week drop box for all utilities payment on the west-end of the City Hall building. City of St. Cloud will forward to OUC all OUC electric-only payments received in the drop box. One check must be made payable to St. Cloud Utilities (for water, wastewater, reclaim, sewer, stormwater, solid waste, and EMS services) and placed in a white St. Cloud Utilities return envelope. A second check must be made payable to OUC (for electric-only service) and placed in the green OUC return envelope (along with the payment stub) for transfer to OUC's payment processing center.

***NOTE:*** Drop-box payments are mailed to the payment processing center and are not processed on the same day they are dropped off.

***Is there a payment drop box for customers in the City Hall lobby?***

Yes. The City of St. Cloud offers St. Cloud Utilities and OUC customers a drop box for all utilities in the main lobby of City Hall Building A. This drop box will remain permanently for both OUC and St. Cloud Utilities customers' use. City of St. Cloud will forward to OUC all OUC electric-only payments received in the drop box. One check must be made payable to St. Cloud Utilities (for water, wastewater, reclaim, sewer, stormwater, solid waste, and EMS services) and placed in a white St. Cloud Utilities return envelope. A second check must be made payable to OUC (for electric-only service) and placed in the green OUC return envelope (along with the payment stub) for transfer to OUC's payment processing center.

***NOTE:*** St. Cloud Utilities payments inserted into the City Hall Lobby Drop-box by 2pm are processed on the same day they are dropped off. This applies only to the Drop Box located inside City Hall Building A.

***Can I pay my OUC bill (electric bill) at the St. Cloud Utilities customer service walk-in center in City Hall?***

Yes. City of St. Cloud (St. Cloud Utilities) does have staff available to take OUC bill payments (electric-use only) in the customer service walk-in center in City Hall. Customers must present two separate payments. One check must be made payable to St. Cloud Utilities (for water, wastewater, reclaim, sewer, stormwater, solid waste, and EMS services) and another check must be made payable to OUC (electric-use only). City of St. Cloud

will not charge customers a convenience fee when accepting OUC payments. To make an OUC payment, customers must bring their OUC bill stub, or have their OUC account number; payments will be processed and posted to your OUC account immediately.

### ***Credit Card Payments at Customer Service Walk In Center***

St. Cloud Utilities will accept credit card payments with a convenience fee at the customer service Walk in Center. Credit cards may not be used to make OUC payments at the St. Cloud Utilities Customer Service Walk In Center.

### ***Credit Card Payment convenience fees***

St. Cloud Utilities will accept credit card payments. Our credit card provider will charge customers a convenience fee of \$2.95 per \$300.00. **Maximum payment amount is \$300.00 per transaction.**

### ***What electronic check payment and credit card payment options will St. Cloud Utilities customers have?***

**Electronic Check:** Please call 407-957-7344 (option 2) or visit [myutilities.stcloud.org](http://myutilities.stcloud.org) to pay your bill with our electronic check service through Invoice Cloud, an independent service provider. E-check payments online are free. Your one-time payment will be deducted from your checking account. Invoice Cloud charges a convenience fee of \$.50 for all electronic check payments made by phone. *\*Invoice Cloud is waiving this fee until 1/2018 as an introductory offer to our customers.*

**Pay by Credit Card:** Invoice Cloud, an independent service provider, processes all credit card payments made to City of St. Cloud. Call 407-957-7344 (option 2) or visit [myutilities.stcloud.org](http://myutilities.stcloud.org) to pay your bill using Invoice Cloud. Payments may be made using your American Express, Visa, MasterCard or Discover Card. Invoice Cloud charges a convenience fee of \$2.95 per \$300.00. **Maximum payment amount is \$300.00 per transaction.**

### ***What should I do if I learn that one of my check payments is going to be returned for insufficient funds?***

Contact our office immediately so that you may pay the needed fees to avoid service interruption. All payments for returned checks will need to be paid in cash and a fee will be assessed as follows:

Under \$50.00	- \$25 Fee
\$50.00-\$299.99	- \$30 Fee
\$300 & up	- \$40 Fee or 5% whichever is greater

**\*\*Payments that are returned for past due balances will be considered for disconnection upon processing**

## ***Billing Questions***

### ***Who is responsible for the repair if there is a leak in my meter box?***

The connection from the meter to your home is the customer's responsibility. Any leaks found between the meter and the home must be fixed by the customer. If a leak is on the City's side of the meter, the water is lost before the usage reaches the meter so the customer will not be charged for this. The City is responsible for repairing leaks on the city side of the meter. Please contact us if such a leak is discovered or if you need assistance determining who is responsible for the charges. St. Cloud Utilities should be contacted FIRST prior to contacting a plumber to evaluate if a plumber is necessary. If a plumber is contacted first, St. Cloud Utilities will not assume responsibility for incurred costs.

### ***Why does my water bill run the same amount month after month?***

Because we only bill per 1,000 gallons used, water consumption may fluctuate between 1-999 gallons without reflecting a change on the monthly water bill. For example, if 3,001 gallons are used during a billing period, the charge on the bill will be for 3,000 gallons. Likewise, if 3,999 gallons are used during a billing period, the charge on the bill will be for 3,000 gallons.

### ***Why does my water bill sometimes vary from month to month?***

This may be on account of additional water used during the billing period. In some cases, customers use a very small amount throughout the month and because we only bill per 1,000 gallons used, when the dial rolls over to 1,000 gallons, the charge will then appear on the monthly bill.

### ***How much are the late fees and how can I avoid them?***

Late fees equal 1.5% of the past due amount or \$3, whichever is greater. Late fees will not be generated if the entire bill is paid each month by the due date shown on the bill.

### ***Do you give discounts to water charges?***

We are sometimes asked to give discounts for large families or for people who have new lawns or swimming pools, but our policy is to charge for the amount of water used. We think that's fair to all our customers.

***I am moving out of town, will my last bill be the final amount owed?***

At the time service termination is requested, we will take a final reading. A final bill will then be generated from your last reading date through the date of your final reading. Any deposit on file will be applied to this balance due. The remaining deposit will be refunded or if a balance remains due a final bill will be mailed to the address given at the time service termination is requested.

***I just got married/divorced; can you change the name on my account?***

If you have recently been married or divorced we can change your last name on the account. However we cannot switch the primary account holder. At the time of service establishment, the account holder accepted full responsibility for the water service and placed a deposit on file with us. Because of this, we will not change the primary account holder unless the account holder is deceased and the spouse provides a death certificate or unless a divorce decree or marriage certificate is provided indicating who is responsible for all utility accounts and that they have assumed ownership of all deposits. We will, however, do our best to work with you to close the current account and set up a new account for you. This will allow us to refund the original deposit to the account holder.

***I'm going away for 3 months; can I pay my bill in advance?***

Should you choose to pay in advance, you will see a credit on your monthly bill and current charges will still be detailed on each monthly statement and deducted from the credit remaining

***If I establish service in the middle of a billing period, will my monthly base rate be prorated?***

Yes, your base rate will be prorated for the number of days service was provided. To calculate this amount, divide the appropriate base rate by the number of days in the month then multiply that amount by the number of days that service was provided.

***Should I contact St. Cloud Utilities if I feel my billing is wrong, regardless of whose favor it is in?***

Absolutely, St. Cloud Utilities works hard to ensure that all billings are 100% accurate. However, on occasion, mistakes in the billing process can occur. If you have any question regarding your billing amount, please [contact us](#) immediately so that we may take measures to ensure that your billing is accurate.

In the unfortunate event that we find that your bills have been inaccurate, the City will back bill (not to exceed a period of 12 months) or back credit (not to exceed a period of 4 years) your account.

***Some months my water bill seems very high. Why is that?***

There are many possible reasons. Household guests or additional residents increase water consumption. Filling a swimming pool takes a tremendous amount of water. A hose left running on the lawn can waste hundreds of gallons. So may a constantly running toilet. Just a leaking faucet can waste 500 gallons of water per week!

***When does my bill become delinquent?***

Bills become delinquent and late fees are applied when the balance is not paid within 1 day past the due date.

***When is my bill due?***

All utility bills are due when rendered.

***Why are my monthly rates higher because I live outside the City?***

City water and sewer service was established to benefit City residents. We have extended our service area beyond City limits but there is a cost to doing this and rates for service beyond City limits have been established higher than those services within City jurisdiction to pay for the additional cost.

In addition, larger horsepower pumps, additional storage, and larger water transmission lines are required to provide adequate water and water pressure to commercial and residential services in the outlying areas of the City. That added cost is why a surcharge is added to customers outside City limits.

***Why do I have to pay my full balance before I can transfer my utility service?***

Although a utility deposit is required for all active accounts, we will allow you to transfer your deposit from one location to another within a 7-day period without paying an additional deposit for the secondary service. However, any amount due on the current account must be paid in full so that there is a sufficient deposit on file to cover the charges to be generated on the new account.

***What is a base charge?***

This is a monthly facility charge that represents an availability charge for each meter connected to the City's water line, whether or not any domestic water is used. This is a non-variable amount collected to offset fixed costs of running the water and wastewater system. Such costs include running

the St. Cloud Utilities Customer Service Walk-in Center, operations, and paying for a portion of the fixed operating costs of the water system, including routine maintenance and replacement of facilities (such as water or wastewater treatment plants).

**How much are the water and sewer base charges?**

Water and sewer base charges are determined by meter size. This does not include costs associated with the water usage or consumption at the property for the period covered, but rather for the cost of the system that provides the service to the property.

Current Rates	Potable Water		Sanitary Sewer	
	Inside City	Outside City	Inside City	Outside City
¾"	\$13.79	\$17.23	\$17.13	\$21.41

**What are water consumption/usage charges?**

This is a variable/tiered fee based upon the amount of water consumed/used. This is in addition to the base charge for providing the water service to the property. Water consumption is measured in tgals (thousand gallons).

**What are sewer consumption/usage charges?**

Single-family domestic customers have an individualized sewer rate based upon the amount of water consumed/used. This is in addition to the base charge for providing the sewer service to the property.

**What is the stormwater charge?**

The stormwater utility fee went into effect October 1, 2007. Monies collected from this fee help City of St. Cloud meet the unfunded state and federal mandates, improve the maintenance of the publicly maintained stormwater system, improve stormwater quality prior to discharging into the lakes, and provide more public education that promotes cleaner stormwater. The current stormwater rate is \$6.35 per ERU.

**1. *What is a stormwater ERU?***

An ERU is an Equivalent Residential Unit. An ERU rate for the city is calculated to be 2,664 square feet of impervious surface and is defined as the average amount of impervious surface per residential household. A residential household (single family home, town home, apartment, etc.) pays one ERU per month. A commercial property (business, hospital, church and publicly owned facility such as school and city / county / state / federal property) pays a fee based on their ERU rate. If a commercial property has 9,590 square feet of impervious surface, it would be charged for 3.6 ERUs ( $9,590/2,664=3.6$ ).

**2. *What is an impervious surface?***

Impervious surfaces are defined as roofed and paved areas, including, but not limited to, areas covered by roofs, roof extensions, swimming pools, patios, porches, driveways, sidewalks, parking areas and athletic courts.

**3. *My property has less than 2,664 square feet of impervious surface. Why am I being charged 1.0 stormwater ERUs?***

Ordinance 2007-49 established the minimum ERU rate charged is 1.0 ERU for all developed commercial properties.

**4. *Multiple units exist within the commercial building my business is in. How was the stormwater ERU calculated for my business?***

The ERU rate was established for the entire property. The total ERU rate was divided among the different units. If the property is assessed 10 ERUs and has five units, each unit will be charged 2.0 ERUs.

**5. *Who is required to pay the Stormwater Utility Fee?***

Every developed property within the city limits is required to pay the Stormwater Utility Fee.

## **What is the Cross Connection Control charge?**

Pursuant to Section 78-258 of said ordinance, there is a monthly charge established to pay for the required annual backflow testing, repair and certification for single family potable water customers requiring a backflow prevention device per the City's Cross Connection Control Manual. The rate for these inspection and repair services has been set in accordance with Resolution #2008-239R.

## **What is the EMS (Emergency Medical Service) charge?**

In 1990, City of St. Cloud initiated an EMS availability fee to ensure a high level of emergency medical care within the city. EMS charges are City-ordained fees to maintain buildings, medical equipment, vehicles, and tools. The current EMS availability fee is \$3.00.

## **What is the Solid Waste charge?**

The Solid Waste charge is the monthly fee for the curbside collection of residential municipal solid waste, single-stream recyclables, and yard waste one time each per week in City-owned 96- gallon, fully automated carts. This \$17.85 fee covers the cost of collections, disposal fees, truck maintenance, fuel, and personnel costs.

## **What is the Service Initiation Charge?**

The service initiation fee covers all costs incurred when activating a service, such as retrieving the initial reading from the field or Neptune software, set-up of the account in the billing system, and any other internal costs associated with this service.

## **What is a Trip Charge?**

This charge is applied when the City makes a requested trip to a property for any purpose not related to regular operations.

## **What charges are assessed to properties located within city limits that are using a well & Septic?**

These properties are charged stormwater, EMS, and solid waste fees. **\*Properties without a septic system are subject to sewer charges.**

## **[Myutilities.stcloud.org](http://myutilities.stcloud.org) Website Help**

### ***How do I sign up for the St. Cloud Utilities website?***

It's easy! Simply go to our web site at [myutilities.stcloud.org](http://myutilities.stcloud.org) and complete the registration page to set up your personal account. Your registration will be processed immediately, and a verification email with a link to complete your registration will be emailed to you. You may begin making online payments with your first login.

### ***What information do I need to sign up at myutilities.stcloud.org?***

You will need to enter your account number and your customer number. Please enter all numbers, including the zeros.

### ***How do I register when my name is the second name on the account?***

Two or more people can register your account using unique Username and Password combinations. You will just need to know your account and customer numbers.

### ***What can I use as my Username?***

Your Username can be anything you want. We do not require any specific combination of letters, numbers or special characters. You will use this Username every time you login to My St. Cloud Utilities.

The Display Name is a field required for internal purposes. We do not require any specific combination of letters, numbers or special characters. You may use your Username if you choose.

### ***What can I use as my Password?***

Your password must be at least 7 characters long, but it can be anything you want.

### ***Does the Password require a combination of letters and numbers?***

We do not require any specific combination of letters, numbers or special characters. The password is case sensitive.

### ***What is my Verification Email?***

A Verification email is necessary for your initial login to My St. Cloud Utilities. When you successfully register your account, a Verification email with a link to complete your registration will be sent to your email address. If you do not see this email in your Inbox, please check your Junk Email folder. Your Internet Service Provider or Email Provider may have automatically flagged the email as Junk. If you did not receive the email, you may have mistyped your email address during registration. Please email Customer Service at [customerservice@stcloud.org](mailto:customerservice@stcloud.org) and we will provide you

with your Verification Code.

***I can't log in/my password doesn't work.***

Your password is case sensitive. Please be sure to type the password using upper and lower case characters as needed

***How do I change my password?***

You can change your password any time by clicking on Change Profile and then Manage Password.

***What if I forget my password?***

You may request a password reminder by selecting "Forgot your password" on the login page. Enter your username, and then click on Send Password. Your password reminder will be sent to your email address saved in My St. Cloud Utilities.

***Can I make a one time payment without registering?***

Yes, St. Cloud Utilities customers can make a "Quick Payment" to pay bills online without having to register for a My St. Cloud Utilities account. All that's needed are the customer and account numbers plus a valid American Express, Discover, Visa or MasterCard. A debit card with the Visa or MasterCard logo is also accepted. E-check is also accepted as a one-time payment.

***Can I sign up for paperless bills?***

Yes, you may sign up for paperless billing, please visit [myutilities.stcloud.org](http://myutilities.stcloud.org) to enroll.

## ***General Payment Questions***

***I am trying to make a payment online, but am unable to proceed. What's wrong?***

Once you select your payment method and click the submit button, you will be directed to a 3rd party site in order to complete your payment. Be sure to click the OK on the message notifying you that you are being redirected. If you still don't see another window with your payment options, your pop-up blocker may not be allowing the payment site to open. Adjust the settings on your pop-up blocker to allow pop-ups from St. Cloud Utilities.

***What is my Security Code?***

For your protection, credit card Security Codes are required. This is the 3-digit code on the back of the credit card on the signature line.



### ***What if the payment processing system seems delayed or slow while I'm making a payment?***

Payment processing should be a smooth, quick transaction. However, in the event that it seems slow, it's important to click the Submit button only once. Your payment will be processed, and you will receive a confirmation. Clicking the Submit button multiple times may generate multiple payments, in which case your Financial Institution may choose to hold your funds temporarily.

### ***Will I receive confirmation of my website payment?***

After you make a payment, a screen confirming successful payment will show the payment, date, time and amount. You may print a copy of this confirmation screen for your records. You will also receive a confirmation email from our payment vendor Invoice Cloud. \*Confirmation numbers are for tracking purposes ONLY, and do not guarantee payment from your financial institution.

### ***When will you know I paid on the website?***

All payments are posted as pending immediately on your account. Payments will be updated by 12 p.m. CST Monday - Friday. Payments submitted after business hours or on a City of St. Cloud holiday will be posted the following business day.

### ***Do I have to pay the full amount of the utility bill?***

Partial payments are accepted. \*However, if the total amount due is not paid by the due date, the bill is considered delinquent and will be subject to late fees and possible disconnection.\*

### ***Will paying online prevent service disconnection?***

Yes. **Payment must be made by 5:00 p.m. Monday - Friday** the day prior to disconnection. Please contact Customer Service for past due payments that are made after 5pm.

### ***If my utilities are disconnected, will paying online turn it back on?***

If you would like to make a payment to restore your utility service, please contact Customer Service Monday - Friday between 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. at 407-957-7344.

## ***Water Quality***

### ***Dirty Water***

It is a rare event when discolored water appears at your home or work, but it does happen. There can be many reasons, but discolored water usually originates in the water distribution system or private plumbing systems. Corrosion or rusting of the interior surfaces of metal pipes is a primary source of discoloration and particles that can appear in your water. There are several possible situations that can cause this material to be dislodged. The most probable of these causes are listed below along with the steps you can take to deal with a temporary problem.

### ***Distribution System Causes***

***Main Breaks:*** water is delivered to your home or business through a network of underground pipes referred to as the distribution system. The principal pipe or conduit is called a main. Water mains in this distribution system can fail due to age, corrosion, high pressure surges, defective materials, or damage by construction work. Fire hydrants can also be broken off by vehicles. When a main breaks, the increased velocity of the water can pick up dirt and other materials that normally settle to the bottom of the pipes.

***Dead Ends:*** every distribution system has mains that must be ended due to physical obstructions (rivers, roads, etc.) or city design features (sports complexes, cul-de-sacs etc.). This results in a "dead end" that does not connect back with another main. Low usage in these areas results in sediment accumulation. Over time the lack of circulation can result in the appearance of discolored, foul tasting stale water.

***Fires and Fire Hydrants:*** the high velocity of water used to fight fires and to test fire hydrants can pick up sediment as described under Main Breaks.

*Construction Activities:* sometimes mains must be replaced or cleaned. Also, new buildings require connection to the existing water main. These and other similar activities may disturb the accumulated sediment and result in temporarily dirty water.

### ***Private Plumbing System Causes***

*Hot-Water Systems:* dirty water often originates in the hot-water tank. Hot water tanks can accumulate sediment and therefore need to be flushed clean.

*House Piping:* defective plumbing can lead to many dirty water conditions. Pieces of rubber or plastic washers that age and crumble can result in particles in the water. Improperly joined dissimilar materials (such as iron and galvanized, or copper and iron) can accelerate corrosion and turn water red or green. Rapid shut-off of faucets or automatic valves in washing machines can cause tremendous pressure surges that dislodge material from pipe walls.

### ***What should you do if you have dirty water?***

**Step One:** Determine the source of the dirty water- is it the hot or the cold water?

First try flushing the toilet, and look into the bowl. Since the toilet uses only COLD water, if the bowl is clear, then the problem is with the hot water. If the bowl water is dirty, then the cold water is affected, and activities outside your home should be considered as the cause.

If the hot water is the source, the hot water tank must be flushed clean, according to the manufacturer's recommendations. If the cold water is the source, the cold water needs to be flushed. Don't continue to flush the toilet after the initial test. Don't use the hot water. Prevent further accumulations of sediment in the hot water tank by not using the hot water. If the dishwasher or clothes washer is running, stop it mid cycle until the water is cleared up.

**Step Two:** Look outside.

If distribution system repair or maintenance is under way, this may be the cause. Also look for street sweepers or anyone else using a fire hydrant.

**Step Three:** Flush your plumbing.

Open the cold-water faucet in the bathtub all the way open, full force, with the drain open, for about 15 minutes. Most dirty water situations will clear up in this time. If not, turn the water off, wait 10-15 minutes, and repeat the flushing again.

If the above procedures do not remedy your water color, please contact us for additional assistance 407-957-7344.

## ***Neptune (AMI) Meters***

### ***What is AMI?***

Automated Metering Infrastructure (AMI) is a meter replacement program. The City of St. Cloud Public Services Department will be upgrading all meters to effectively obtain meter readings using radio frequency technology.

### ***How does the meter reading system work and how do I know you have my reading and not someone else's?***

The radio-frequency (RF) transmitter device to be installed on your property is programmed to automatically send the meter reading once a day. The signal will be sent to a data collector and the collector will send the meter readings to the host computer daily. Each meter and transmitter has a unique identification number that will ensure that only your reading is assigned to your account. The meter reading information will be delivered into the City of St. Cloud data system for customer service and billing.

### ***How do you know that my reading is accurate?***

The AMI meters have electronic digital registers that send a meter reading signal to the radio-frequency (RF) transmitter device. This system reduces any human error.

### ***Is the AMI meter's radio transmitter a hazard in any way?***

No. The radio signal is on for less than one second when it transmits. The reading device meets all Federal Communications Commission requirements; the power level is far below a level of any risk.

### ***Does the equipment have any hazards in its interior?***

No, only standard electronics and batteries are inside the equipment.

***Will the radio interfere with my television, cordless phone, or other electronic devices?***

No, only standard electronics and batteries are inside the equipment. No, the radio transmissions will occur on a licensed frequency very different from those used by television signals, cordless phones, and other electronic devices. In addition, the transmissions last less than a few seconds each month.