



Conservation News



Environmental News and Information from the City of Melbourne Utilities Department

Variety of payment options available for Melbourne utility customers

The City of Melbourne now has a variety of different payment methods available to make it easier and more convenient for many customers to pay their utility bills.

Options include cash, checks and money orders payable to the City of Melbourne, along with Visa and Mastercard payments which are accepted at City Hall during regular operating hours.

A popular option that began last June is that of automatic debits from customers' checking accounts.

According to City Financial Systems Administrator Wayne Rosser, this program has been growing steadily since it was first offered last June.

"Right now, we have 2,817 customers signed up," Rosser said. "It has gradually been

increasing by about 100 to 120 a month."

While this new payment option is a benefit to many customers, it also helps the City.

"It helps us because we don't have as many bills to send out or as much mail coming in," Rosser explained.

The City currently sends out approximately 50,000 utility bills each month.

To register for the automatic debit program, a signed agreement form is required. Customers can pick the form up at City Hall or download it from the City's web site (www.melbourneflorida.org/utilbill/). Along with the completed form, a voided check is also required.

Another service available to Melbourne utility customers that

for many is particularly useful in the summer is the vacation shut-off option.

If customers plan to be away for an extended period of time, they can have their water disconnected to avoid possible leaks or other mishaps while they are away. This option requires a re-connection fee of \$29.

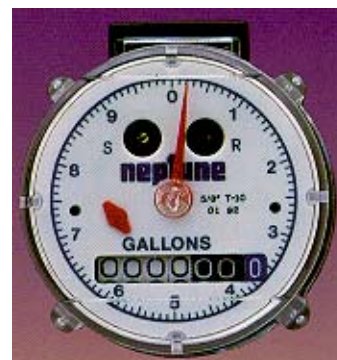
The Utility Billing offices are open on Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 5 p.m.

As an additional convenience for Melbourne's customers, there is a drive-thru window located on the west side of City Hall where payment can be made. The payment must be accompanied with a copy of the bill. The drive-thru window hours are Monday through Friday from 8:15 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Bill seems too high — you may have a leak

You receive your water bill and as you look at it, you are surprised. The bill is significantly higher than what you normally receive. If this happens to you, first look for any obvious reasons. Have you had guests for extended stays that may be the cause? Do you have a swimming pool to which you had to add water? Did you use City-supplied water for irrigation?

If these types of reasons don't apply, it's time to check for leaks. A common culprit can be a leaking toilet. To check if your toilet is leaking, place a few drops of food coloring into the toilet tank. If the tank is leaking, color will appear in the bowl within 30



minutes.

If this is not the cause, your next step should be to check your water meter. Note all the numbers and the location of the sweep hand. Right before you do this, turn off everything in the house that uses water. Don't forget the ice maker and any

other less obvious water users.

After two hours, go check the readings again. If any numbers have changed or if the sweep hand has moved, you have a leak.

Repairs of leaks on the property owner's side of the water meter are the property owner's responsibility to have repaired. If you do establish that you have a leak, you may qualify for a credit on the sewer portion of your bill. For more information on sewer credits, visit the City's web site at: www.melbourneflorida.org/utilbill/sewer_credit.htm or call the City's Utility Billing office at 953-6390.



The City of
Melbourne

City of Melbourne
Utilities Administration/
Environmental Community
Outreach Division
2881 Harper Road
Melbourne, FL 32904
Phone: (321) 674-5761
Fax: (321) 674-5765
E-Mail: utilitiesconserve@melbourneflorida.org
Web: www.melbourneflorida.org

Time to prepare yards for hurricanes

When a hurricane appears to be approaching our area, residents have much to do to prepare ... buying lumber and boarding up windows, purchasing bottled water and other supplies, ensuring insurance papers and other important documents are easily accessible, filling up gas tanks and making sure they have enough cash on hand in case of extended power failures that would render ATMs and even credit cards unusable.

There are things that people can do now to prepare to eliminate some of the steps when a storm is knocking on our door. One time-consuming task that would be prudent to complete soon is yard preparation.

“As we move toward the most active time of the hurricane season, the Recycling and Sanitation Management Division would like to encourage residents to prepare now in the event a storm approaches,” said T.J. Iglesias of that division. “Planning and preparation now will allow sufficient time later to address

more pressing needs.”

The division is advising residents and businesses to remove any dead limbs and branches from trees, and trim them back if needed. Also, check for and remove trash and debris that could easily be caught in high winds and inflict injury to people or damage property. This sort of yard debris could also get caught in storm drains, ditches and canals and increase the potential for flooding.

Yard waste is collected on the mainland every Monday, and on the beachside every Thursday. The yard waste needs to be placed in plastic or metal containers that don't exceed 32 gallons in capacity. Plastic bags are not accepted.

Homeowners should also check their garages for unused household hazardous waste items that could be spilled as a result of a storm. The Sarno Road landfill accepts this waste at no charge every Thursday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Program keeps the City of Melbourne cleaner and greener

The Melbourne Recycling and Sanitation Management Division's Adopt-a-Road program establishes a partnership between the City and its residents and business community. Together, the quality of Melbourne's environment and community is improved by keeping neighborhoods clean and free of debris.



Sign placed on the right-of-way at Stack Boulevard acknowledging the Fountains of Melbourne for adopting a one-mile stretch.

According to staffer T.J. Iglesias, the most recent organization to adopt a section of roadway is The Fountains of Melbourne. They have adopted a one-mile stretch of Stack Boulevard between Eber Road and Palm Bay Road.

“The City is inviting other businesses, clubs, organizations and individuals to adopt at least a one-mile section of a City main-

tained road, street or median and agree to perform litter removal at least four times a year,” Iglesias said.

Two signs recognizing the “adopter” are placed in the section individuals or organizations adopt. In turn, they complete a contract with the

City agreeing to take care of the section for a minimum of a year.

“We provide them with safety vests, gloves and bags. They fill out a ‘Recycle Report Card’ to report their collections. Then, they just leave the filled bags by their sign and we pick them up,” explained Iglesias.

If you are interested in participating in the program or would like more information, please call the Recycling and Sanitation Management Division at 953-6302.

Check mail for Melbourne's Water Quality Report



At the end of June, Melbourne water customers will receive the City's annual Consumer Confidence Water Quality Report in the mail.

The report covers water quality testing performed during 2001 and explains the City's water in relation to state and federal standards.

Also contained in the brochure is information about the sources of Melbourne's water, how it is treated, and the ongoing water treatment plant improvement and expansion project.

If you do not receive a copy of the report or if you would like to request additional copies, please call the City's Utilities Administration office at 674-5761. There will also be copies made available at City Hall's Utility Billing Office located at 900 E. Strawbridge Avenue, or the report will be made available to view online at Melbourne's web site (www.melbourneflorida.org).

Don't forget to follow lawn watering rules

Last year the City of Melbourne revised the rules covering hours in which lawn watering is allowed. The rules were changed to mirror those established by the St. Johns River Water Management District.

Irrigation is only allowed between the hours of **4 p.m. to 10 a.m.** This rule applies whether the source is City-supplied water or from a private well. Reclaimed water is exempt from the restriction as is the discharge from an air conditioning unit.

Please follow the rules and other sensible lawn and garden watering practices. Don't over-water, which can be harmful to the grass and plants by causing fungal growth and weeds. The recommended amount is about one inch per week whether by rain or irrigation. In a typical summer, irrigation will probably only be needed once or twice week, or not at all if a summer rain pattern is in place.