

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: LANELL ENDRES, INTERIM CITY ADMINISTRATOR

**SUBJECT: INTERIM POLICY FOR PAYMENT OF UTILITY BILLS WHILE
RUNNING WATER TO PREVENT FREEZING**

DATE: MARCH 6, 2014

BACKGROUND

The Public Works Commission met and discussed the recent issue of residents needing to run water to prevent the freezing of their water service lines and the impact on the utility bills. In response to the concerns of the potentially high water and sewer bills, the Commission is recommending the Council approve the attached Interim Policy. The attached plan addresses what residents should pay while a final decision is being determined concerning any possible credits for the excess water and/or sewer charges. They plan to develop a more broad policy that can be used in other winter seasons that will also address other issues regarding running water to prevent freezing and the thawing of the pipes. This will be presented to the Council once it is completed.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The Public Works Commission and Staff recommend the City Council adopt the proposed resolution for the Interim Policy regarding payment of utility bills for those accounts that are running water to prevent freezing of water service lines.

REQUESTED COUNCIL ACTION

I respectfully request a motion to adopt the proposed resolution for the interim policy as provided.

Attachment:

Proposed Resolution for the Interim Policy Regarding Payment of Utility Bills

**CITY OF CANNON FALLS
GOODHUE COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

RESOLUTION NUMBER 2063

**A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE AN INTERIM POLICY REGARDING PAYMENT OF
UTILITY BILLS WHILE RUNNING WATER TO PREVENT WATER SERVICE LINE
FREEZING**

WHEREAS, the Cannon Falls City Council acknowledges that the winter of 2013-2014 has been extremely cold and that city residents are experiencing water service line freezing; and

WHEREAS, due to the extreme cold and depth of the frost, many residents are running water to try to prevent their water lines from freezing or re-freezing; and

WHEREAS, the Public Works Commission and City Council will be addressing the issue of applying credit to water and/or sewer charges on utility bills for the excess charges; and

WHEREAS, the number of properties impacted by running water is unknown, the Council will not be making a final decision on crediting utility accounts until after several billing cycles.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CANNON FALLS, COUNTY OF GOODHUE, MINNESOTA: The City Council hereby resolves the following:

- 1) Residents that are running water to prevent freezing should pay the average billing amount (for example, the December 2013 and January 2014 billing averages) monthly until a final decision is made and credits, if any, are applied;
- 2) Penalties will be waived on the accounts that are making their average monthly payments;

- 3) Due to the time intensive work that will be required to manually adjust the bills, the adjustments, including any penalty amounts, will only be made once the final determination has been adopted;
- 4) This policy will expire no later than the June, 2014 billing;
- 5) The Public Works Commission will draft a proposed policy for City Council consideration to deal with these and other issues regarding service line freezing and the running of water to prevent freezing for subsequent winter seasons.

Adopted by the Cannon Falls City Council on the 6th day of March, 2014.

By: Lyman M. Robinson, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Lanell Endres, Interim City Administrator