



Service Practice Policies

Following are the Service Practice Policies of Newport Utilities as of February, 2022. These policies supersede any previous collection of Service Practice Policies.

RESIDENTIAL DEPOSIT POLICY

Deposit Amount

A deposit amount may be required of any Customer. A credit check will determine the deposit level required:

- 1 Star = \$300 deposit
- 2 Stars = \$200 deposit
- 3 Stars = \$ 0 deposit

If initially a Customer's credit status is such that no deposit is required, but, over time, a Customer's credit status declines due to multiple disconnects for non-payment, a deposit may be required in order to re-establish service using the same credit check process to determine the deposit level required.

A deposit amount should not exceed twice the highest monthly average bill amount for a Customer, which is typically around \$300. In case of residential Customer hardship, Newport Utilities may accept installment payments for one half of the deposit value. The full deposit value must be paid within six months of active service.

Deposit balances, including interest, are subject to review by Customer and Newport Utilities.

Deposit Interest Earned

If a deposit is retained, it will earn interest at Newport Utilities passbook savings rate plus 1%. The interest rate is reviewed and/or adjusted by Newport Utilities annually each July. Interest earned will be accumulated to Customer's deposit account on a monthly basis.

Deposit Refunds

Termination of Service: Upon termination of service, the deposit and accrued interest may be applied towards a Customer's outstanding balance(s). Any credit balance(s) that remain thereafter will be refunded to Customer within 30 days of Customer's final bill process date.

Credit Status: If after twelve months of active service, a customer has kept their account status current (no incidents of disconnects for non-payment, broken payment arrangements, or returned payments due to insufficient funds), a customer can request to have their deposit refunded (including interest earned to date). Newport Utilities will apply the credit from the deposit refund to the customer's account, which will then be applied towards future bill amounts.

COMMERCIAL DEPOSIT POLICY

Newport Utilities requires a deposit on all commercial accounts. The deposit amount requirement is two times the average bill. NU re-evaluates commercial deposit levels on an annual basis to ensure we have adequate deposit levels in place as well as to ensure deposits that are secured through means other than cash have not expired. In the event an increase in deposit value is required due to increased average usage, diminished credit status/payment history, NU will notify the Customer that an increase in deposit would be needed to secure the account(s).

Favorable credit status after 12 months of payment history may reduce the deposit level requirement to one time the average bill.

Customer Wiring Standards

All wiring of Customer must conform to governmental requirements and accepted modern standards, as exemplified by the requirements of the National Electrical Safety Code, the National Electric Code, and other applicable codes and standards.

Inspections

NU shall have the right, but shall not be obligated, to inspect any installation before electricity is introduced or at any later time, and reserves the right to reject any wiring or appliances not in accordance with NU's standards; but such inspection or failure to inspect or reject shall not render NU liable or responsible for any loss or damage resulting from defects in the installation, wiring, or appliances, or from violation of NU's rules, or from accidents which may occur upon Customer's premises. NU shall disconnect service for violations of relevant codes if instructed to do so by a code enforcement agency.

Underground Service Lines

Customers desiring underground service lines from NU's overhead system must bear the excess cost incident thereto. Specifications and terms for such construction will be furnished by NU upon request.

Customer's Responsibility for NU's Property

All meters, service connections, and other equipment installed by NU shall be, and remain, the property of NU. The Customer shall provide a space for and exercise proper care to protect the property of NU on his/her premises. In the event of loss or damage to NU's property arising from customer negligence, the customer shall pay the cost of the necessary repairs or replacement.

Right of Access

NU's identified employees shall have safe access to Customer's premises at all reasonable times for the purpose of reading meters, testing, repairing, removing, exchanging, or inspecting any or all equipment and facilities belonging to NU.

Billing

Bills will be rendered monthly and shall be paid at the office of NU or other locations designated by NU. Due dates are established as 15 days after the billing date. Bills paid after the due date specified on the bill may be subject to additional charges. Failure to receive a bill will not relieve customer from payment obligation. Should bills not be paid by due date, NU may, at any time thereafter, upon six (6) days written notice to customer, discontinue service. Should the due date fall on a Saturday, Sunday, or a holiday that NU observes, the next following business day will be held as a day of grace for delivery of payment. Remittances received by mail after the due date will not be subject to such additional charges if the incoming envelope bears United States Postal Service date stamp of the due date or any date prior thereto.

Discontinuation of Service by NU

NU may refuse to connect or may discontinue service for the violation of any of its Rules and Regulations, or for violation of any of the provisions of the Schedule of Rates and Charges, or of the application of Customer or contract with Customer. NU may discontinue service to Customer for the theft of current or the appearance of theft devices on the premises of Customer. The discontinuance of service by NU for any cause as stated in this rule does not release Customer from his obligation to NU for the payment of minimum bills as specified in application of Customer or contract with Customers.

Meter Tampering

Tamper means “to rearrange, injure, alter, interfere with, or otherwise prevent from performing a normal or customary function.” With respect to the provision of electric service, no one shall perform the following specified acts with the intent to obtain utility services without full payment, or with the intent to enable another person to do so, or with the intent to deprive the utility of its full lawful charges for utility services: (1) diversion of electric service, (2) preventing any electric meter or other device used in determining the charge for electric service from accurately performing its measuring and communicating functions by tampering or by any other means, (3) tampering with any property owned by or used by NU to provide electric service, and (4) connecting or reconnecting with property owned or used by NU to provide electric service without the authorization or consent of NU.

All metering equipment will be sealed by NU for protection. No one, except authorized NU employees, NU contractors, or agents, shall cut, break, or otherwise remove an NU seal on meters or metering equipment. NU will assess revenue and tampering charges against any person who tampers with or damages any NU electric system equipment, including but not limited to electric meters or any device used to measure electric power provided to a premise.

In the absence of an identifiable customer, the owner of any premises may be presumed to be the customer of such premises for the purposes of NU remedies for meter tampering.

Connection, Reconnection, and Disconnection Charges

NU may establish and collect standard charges to cover the reasonable average cost, including administrative, of connecting or reconnecting service, or disconnecting service as provided above. Higher charges may be established and collected when connections and reconnections are performed after normal business hours, or when special circumstances warrant.

Line or Service Retirement/ Removal

NU may remove an abandoned line or service due to revenue inactivity and evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Elements of consideration for abandonment will include but not limited to; no electric revenue, or activity, within the last (5) five years; examination of the health, or longevity, of the spans of wire and poles; the cost of repairs may not exceed (50%) fifty percent of the total replacement cost including tree trimming.

Termination of Contract by Customer

Customers who have fulfilled their contract terms and wish to discontinue service should give at least a three (3) day notice to that effect unless the Customer’s contract specifies otherwise. A Customer’s notice to discontinue service prior to expiration of the Customer’s contract term will not relieve Customer from any minimum or guaranteed payment under any contract or rate schedule.

Service Charge for Temporary Service

Customers requiring service on a temporary basis may be required by NU to pay all costs for connection and disconnection incidental to the supplying or removing of service. This rule applies to circuses, carnivals, fairs, festivals, temporary construction, and the like.

Interruption of Service

NU will use reasonable diligence in supplying current, but shall not be liable for breach of contract in the event of, or for loss, injury or damage to persons or property resulting from, interruptions in service, excessive or inadequate voltage, single-phasing, or otherwise unsatisfactory service, whether or not caused by negligence.

Shortage of Electricity

In the event of an emergency or other condition causing a shortage in the amount of electricity for NU to meet the demand on its system, NU may, by an allocation method deemed equitable by NU, fix the amount of electricity to be made available for use by Customer and/or may otherwise restrict the time during which Customer may make use of electricity and the uses which Customers may make of electricity. If such actions become necessary, Customer may request a variance because of unusual circumstances including matters adversely affecting the public health, safety, and welfare. If Customer fails to comply with such allocation or restriction, NU may take such remedial actions as it deems appropriate under the circumstances including temporarily disconnecting electric service and charging additional amounts because of the excess use of electricity. The provisions of the Section entitled INTERRUPTION OF SERVICE of this schedule of Rules and Regulations are applicable to any such allocation or restriction.

Service Point Voltage

The electric supply will be at the voltage NU deems to be appropriate and consistent with good engineering practices and the national standard for the type of service provided. NU does not guarantee actual voltages but will endeavor to maintain voltages in accordance with national standards.

Voltage Fluctuations Caused by Customer

Electric service must not be used in such a manner as to cause unusual fluctuations or disturbances to NU's system or to the electric service provided by NU. NU may require Customer, at his/her own expense, to install a suitable apparatus, which will reasonably limit such fluctuations or disturbances.

Additional Load

The service connection, transformers, meters, and equipment supplied by NU for each Customer have definite capacity, and no addition to the equipment or load connected thereto will be allowed except by consent of NU. Failure to give notice of additions or changes in load, and to obtain NU's consent for same, may render the Customer liable for any damage to any of NU's lines or equipment or interruption of electric service provided by NU caused by the additional or changed installation.

Standby and Resale Service

All purchased electric service (other than emergency or standby service) used on the premises of Customer shall be supplied exclusively by NU, and Customer shall not, directly or indirectly, sell, sublet, assign, or otherwise dispose of the electric service or any part thereof.

Single Point Delivery

The rates named in the Schedule of Rates and Charges for each class of service are based upon the supply of service to the entire premises through a single delivery and metering point, and at a single voltage. Separate supply for the same Customer at other points of consumption, or at a different voltage, shall be separately metered and billed.

Notice of Trouble

Customer shall notify NU immediately should the service be unsatisfactory for any reason, or should there be any defects, trouble, or accidents affecting the supply of electricity. Such notice may be verbal, by electronic mail, or by regular mail.

Non-Standard Service

Customer shall pay the cost of any special installation necessary to meet his/her particular requirements for service at other than standard voltages, or for the supply of closer voltage regulation than required by standard practice.

Meter Tests

NU will, at its' own expense, make periodic tests and inspections of its meters in order to maintain a high standard of accuracy. NU will make additional tests or inspections of its meters at the request of Customer. If tests made at Customer's request show that the meter is accurate within two percent (2%), slow or fast, no adjustment will be made in Customer's bill, and NU's standard testing charge will be paid by Customer. In case the test shows meter to be in excess of two percent (2%) fast or slow, an adjustment shall be made in Customer's bill over a period of not over thirty (30) days prior to date of such test, and cost of performing the test shall be borne by Newport Utilities.

Meters behind a Newport Utilities owned meter

Revenue meter practice is prohibited by the City of Newport's power contract with TVA. TVA's federal wholesale power contracts with each local power company include a requirement in the Schedule of Terms and Conditions that prohibits sub-metering. The contract states that municipalities and cooperatives shall not sell electricity for sub-metering or resale. Newport Utilities' Rules and Regulations addresses this in section nineteen (19) as an additional provision. "All purchased electric service (other than emergency or standby service) used on the premises of Customer shall be supplied exclusively by NU, and Customer shall not, directly or indirectly, sell, sublet, assign, or otherwise dispose of the electric service or any part thereof."

Relocation of Existing Facilities

NU shall, at the request of Customer, relocate or change existing NU owned equipment. Customer shall reimburse NU for such changes at actual cost including appropriate overhead. Established NU assets requiring relocation stemming from a customer's encroachment/ actions will be at the expense of the customer.

Bill Proration

Bills rendered for other than the regular billing period will be prorated based upon NU's standard bill proration policy then in effect, taking into account the actual days in a month service was provided.

Power Contracts

Standard Power Contracts may be required in addition to an application for service for all customers whose monthly billing demand exceeds 50 kW. The Power Contract shall be executed at the time of application for service or at such time as Customer's load growth reaches fifty (50) kW.

Scope

This schedule of Rules and Regulations is part of all contracts for receiving electric service from NU, and applies to all service received from NU, whether the service is based upon contract, agreement, signed application, or otherwise. A copy of this schedule, together with a copy of NU's Schedule of Rates and Charges, shall be kept open to inspection at the office of NU.

Residential Energy Services Program

NU, in fulfillment of the purposes and provisions of the Tennessee Valley Authority Act and as part of its electric service, may make available funds to eligible electric Customers for energy improvements identified in a survey for the Customer's dwelling under the Residential Energy Services Program (such as "energy right") being conducted by NU and TVA. Eligible Customers must sign repayment agreements under which the funds made available will be repaid to NU. Monthly repayment amounts due for this service will be included as a part of the electric bills from NU. Except as otherwise agreed in the repayment agreement the provisions of the section entitled "Billing" of this Schedule of Rules and Regulations shall apply to bills for the amounts made available by NU as part of its electric service for weatherization measures. NU may also make available disbursements to participants to encourage the installation and efficient use of electric appliances and devices in dwellings.

Information to Customers

NU will make information about rates and service practice policies available upon application for service and at any other time upon written or telephoned request. NU, on written request from a customer, will provide a statement of monthly consumption of that Customer for the prior twelve months if the information is reasonably ascertainable. NU may establish a reasonable charge for this statement. NU may utilize news media or other appropriate techniques to inform Customers about rates and service policies.

Customer Appeal Procedure

Customers should take any dispute to a Customer Service Representative first. The Representative will do their best to answer any question or dispute the customer has. This will include checking the account for accurate readings and charges. If the Customer Service Representative does not appease the Customer, at this time the Customer should talk with a manager. The Manager will review the Customer's complaint and the Customer Service Representative's findings at this time. If the Customer is still not satisfied, the problem may be addressed to the General Manager.

Revisions

These Rules and Regulations may be revised, amended, supplemented, or otherwise changed from time to time. Such changes, when approved by NU Board and TVA, when effective, shall have the same force as the present Rules and Regulations.

Conflict

In case of conflict between any provision of any rate schedule and the Schedule of Rules and Regulations, the rate schedule shall apply.

Policy of Non-Discrimination

Newport Utilities has and holds a policy of not discriminating against credit applicants on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, or age (provided that the applicant has the capacity to enter into a binding contract) because all or part of the applicant's income is derived from any public assistance program, or because the applicant has in good faith exercised any right under Consumer Credit Protection Act.

Temporary Service

A service used during the construction of a permanent structure is considered temporary service. A temporary service is the only service that can pass state inspection with only one ground rod, permanent services require two ground rods. A temporary service must not be used to energize any portion of the wiring in a permanent structure. Camper services, well pumps, electric fences, etc. are not considered temporary services and are defined as permanent services. A temporary service may not be altered on the distribution side after the state inspection. Overhead temporary service poles are typically set no more than seventy-five (75) feet from the nearest NU pole. If any additional wiring is performed after the temporary service has been inspected, that service will be considered a permanent service and is subject to all state inspections and NEC, NESC, and NU requirements regarding a permanent service.

Ready-Removable Structures

(RV's, miniature homes with wheels and sheds/ outbuildings, transportable structures without a permanent foundation) that have been modified for living space are not considered permanent residences and are subject to additional requirements by the state concerning inspections, engineering evaluations, and/ or altered service requirements by the Newport Utilities Staking department in conjunction with the state electrical inspector.

Residential Development

A residential development is considered to be multiple services for new subdivisions, apartment complexes, mobile home communities, campgrounds, etc.

Commercial and Industrial Service

A commercial or Industrial service is a service to a permanent commercial or industrial structure(s) or outbuildings on residential property such as barns, shops, pump houses, garages, any three-phase service, etc.

Electric Inspection

Electric inspections will be conducted by a licensed inspector employed by the Tennessee Department of Commerce & Insurance. Newport Utilities is not responsible for failed inspections or customer equipment not meeting state electrical codes. Permits may be purchased through the state website <https://core.tn.gov>

Property Lines/ Boundaries

The customer is responsible for establishing property lines and boundaries. Newport Utilities assumes no responsibility for incorrect boundaries and any costs incurred by the customer. All NU assets will be placed a minimum ten (10) feet off all boundaries unless an adjacent ROW is established.

New Service Overhead Construction

The customer should have an established permanent roadway route. The transformer location and accessibility should be within twenty (20) feet of the roadway. The roadway should have a maximum vertical grade limit of 15%. The roadway should be at least "blocked-in", within twelve (12) inches of being on grade, including installed drainage tiles/ bridges, and Newport Utilities reserves the right to require gravel at any point in the construction process at the customer's expense. All excavation work, earth moving, should be near final grade, due to line height requirements. The roadway near each pole location should be wide enough for a utility truck plus the extended outriggers to be on stable ground. Pole placement will be within twenty (20) feet of a maintained roadway. There may be exceptions for non-livable structures, i.e. barns, grassland farms, well pumps, electric fences, etc. It will be the sole decision of Newport Utilities to determine adequate accessibility. The roadway must remain customer maintained and suitable for a seventeen (17) ton utility truck to traverse. No permanent structures are to be built inside ten (10) feet of the outer most conductor.

New Service Underground Construction Additional Information

The transformer location and accessibility should be within twenty (20) feet of the roadway. The customer is responsible for the ditching necessary to install underground conductors. Primary, high voltage, conductor ditches must maintain a minimum depth of four (4) feet deep and a minimum width of one (1) foot, with a minimum radial clearance of other utilities of one (1) foot. Newport Utilities reserves the right to require a one (1) foot suitable backfill, sand, gravel, or top soil, be applied to the bottom of the ditch. The ditch will be backfilled two (2) feet and a red hazard tape, provided by Newport Utilities, will be applied the entire length of the ditch, before the completion of the backfill. All secondary, low voltage, conductor ditches must maintain a minimum depth of two (2) feet. All secondary ditches must remain uncovered until authorized by the state inspector. The customer must have a pedestal style service pole installed and inspected before construction is initiated.

No Access in the Conduit before the Meter

There shall be no conductor/ wire access in the conduit before the meter. (For example; no LB's (Line box) in the conduit before the meter base, source side)

Reallocation of Assets Due to Inactivity

All NU assets are subject for removal/ retirement/ repurposing as a result of prolonged inactivity. This will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Vegetation Management

The customer is responsible for the initial vegetation management (tree, undergrowth- trimming, removal), which is a minimum fifteen (15) feet, ground to sky, clearance measured on each side of the outer most conductor. Thereafter, vegetation management of primary lines (non- insulated conductors) will be maintained by Newport Utilities and service lines (insulated conductors) will remain the customer's responsibility. During an outage event, Newport Utilities will perform minimal vegetation removal to restore power.

New Service Process

1. New Service Application: Apply for a new service at the Newport Utilities main office or online at newportutilities.com
2. Pay all applicable fees and deposits.
3. Provide the following documentation:
 - a. Proof of property ownership for the service location
 - b. Valid E911 address, obtained at the E911 office located at 145 Mineral Street, Newport, TN 37821
 - c. Proof of a septic permit application, if serviceable by Newport Utilities Waste Water Department. Applications can be obtained at Cocke County Clerk, 111 Court Avenue, Newport, TN 37821
 - d. A Signed Electrical Service Contract with Newport Utilities
 - e. A Signed Utility Right of Way with Newport Utilities.
4. Schedule an appointment with the Newport Utilities Staking Department representative and provide details of your project. The representative will discuss the Newport Utilities and customer requirements and responsibilities to proceed with the project; such as overhead line clearances, underground ditching, assistance with temporary/ permanent pole and equipment location. The staking technician will assist the customer from conception to design.
 - a. Providing a site plan at the scheduled appointment may be required. Providing a site plat map on any commercial and subdivision developments at the scheduled appointment will be required.
 - b. Pinning and staking the lot lines may be required, a recent survey is sufficient if markers are visible. The customer is responsible for verifying the current property lines and boundaries. Newport Utilities assumes no responsibility for incorrect lines or boundaries, nor any costs incurred for any utility relocations as a result.
5. Pay applicable Aid to Construction Costs: The staking technician will provide the customer an estimated construction cost. This initial construction estimate must be paid before any construction may begin. The customer will be responsible for final construction costs at the time of installation (due to material availability and price changes upon arrival).
6. The finalized design will be given to the construction foreman (if the project involves major work) or the systems operator (for smaller projects) to schedule the construction of the electric project after all customer requirements are completed.
7. All required inspections will be completed by a licensed inspector before the project can be energized. Newport Utilities is not responsible for failed inspections or customer equipment not meeting state electrical codes.
8. The customer shall have the service pole and a passed inspection in order for the service to be energized during the construction of the service in order to prevent multiple trips.

Renewable Energy Generation

A critical first step in renewable energy generation is education before signing a contract. Contact Newport Utilities for guidance in the process.

1. Get quotes from multiple companies and carefully read the terms of the proposal.
2. Ask the installer for references and ensure the installer has an up-to-date business license and insurance. Look at any available customer reviews. TVA's Green Connect Quality Contractor Network is an excellent resource for selecting an installer.
3. Confirm the installer has a Solar PV Installation Professional or Board Certification from the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners, which is a gold standard for the industry.
4. Register to participate in Green Connect. www.tvagreenconnect.com
5. Sell back your Excess Generation: Facilities that generate power up to eighty (80) Megawatts may qualify for TVA's Dispersed Power Production program. Contact Newport Utilities.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who owns the power line?

Newport Utilities owns the power line to the point of either the meter or where the customer's underground secondaries begin, whichever comes first from the primary line side. The customer owns the residential service conduit and wire from that point inward, whether it is from the padmount transformer or an overhead transformer. The customer maintains the service conduit and the wire at their expense. All other assets are owned by Newport Utilities.

2. Will Newport Utilities relocate a pole upon customer request and who pays for it?

There are many factors to consider before relocating a pole. If the staking department determines the relocation is possible, a construction cost estimate would be presented to the customer. The customer would incur the full cost associated with the relocation request.

3. What is the required clearance over a deck or porch?

Service lines shall be twelve (12) feet above a deck or porch floors

4. Where do I put my meter base?

The meter base location will be decided by the staking technician in consultation with either the customer or the customer's electrician and will meet the state electrical code.

5. Can my service line go over my hot tub or swimming pool?

State electrical codes will not allow a service line to be over a hot tub or swimming pool.

6. How close can my driveway be to a Newport Utilities pole?

The minimum separation is 12 inches; however, Newport Utilities recommends at least 3 feet to avoid damage to the driveway when the pole is in need of repair or replacement. The maximum separation is 20 feet of a maintained roadway unless approved by the construction foreman.

7. Can I place the meter base directly on a mobile home or manufactured home?

The meter base can be placed directly on the side of a double-wide mobile home or manufactured home in most cases. A single-wide mobile home can have the meter base placed directly on the home if it is within 50 feet of the transformer pole or a lift/ service pole. If the single-wide mobile home is located beyond this limit, then a customer owned service pole must be installed. Mobile homes require a service disconnect within thirty (30) feet of the structure.

8. Can I place a meter base on a Newport Utilities pole?

Customer owned equipment installed on a Newport Utilities pole is discouraged and would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with the decision being at Newport Utilities' discretion.