



Neighbors helping Neighbors Utility Assistance Program

City of Camas

COVID
Utility
Delinquencies
January 2021

Due Date	Number of Accounts	Amount Outstanding
3/2020	8	\$1,276
5/2020	23	\$6,710
7/2020	41	\$9,105
9/2020	63	\$14,271
11/2020	87	\$22,205
1/2021	263	\$63,331
Total		\$116,898

What legally can the City do?

- ❖ RCW 35.92.020(5) authorizes cities to “provide assistance to aid low-income persons in connection with services provided under RCW 35.92 (municipal utilities) and RCW 35.67.020(5) provides cities the same authority to sewer services
- ❖ RCW 74.38.070 provides authority to cities providing utility services to offer reduced utility rates for low-income senior citizens and other low-income citizens.
- ❖ Article 8, Section 7 of the state constitution permits “gifts” of public funds in “support of the poor and infirm” which has been interpreted by the courts to mean “poor or infirm” Health Care Facilities Authority v Ray

- ◆ Proclamation 20-23.2 prohibits:
 - ◆ Disconnecting any residential customers from water service due to nonpayment
 - ◆ Refusing to reconnect any residential customer who has been disconnected for nonpayment
 - ◆ Charging fees for late payment or reconnection of services
- ◆ Proclamation 20-23.4 requires local government utilities to develop and post COVID-19 customer service support programs.
 - ◆ Customer notification
 - ◆ Customer support programs
 - ◆ Public information requirements
 - ◆ State-wide resources
- ◆ Proclamation 20-23.13 The utility shutoff/late fee prohibitions have been extended through April 30, 2021

Governor Inslee's Stay Home – Stay Healthy Proclamations

- ◆ St Vincent DePaul
- ◆ Salvation Army Family Services
- ◆ Veterans Assistance Program
- ◆ Camas-Washougal Treasure House Utility and Rent Assistance
- ◆ Good Shepard Church

What is
available today
to residents?

City of Camas
Utility
Assistance to
Date

Shop Local and Save

Camas Warm Hearts -
Christmas Tree Donations

Offers from Residents –
Neighbors helping Neighbors

Proposed Partnership



Proposed City Utility Assistance Program

Tier 1

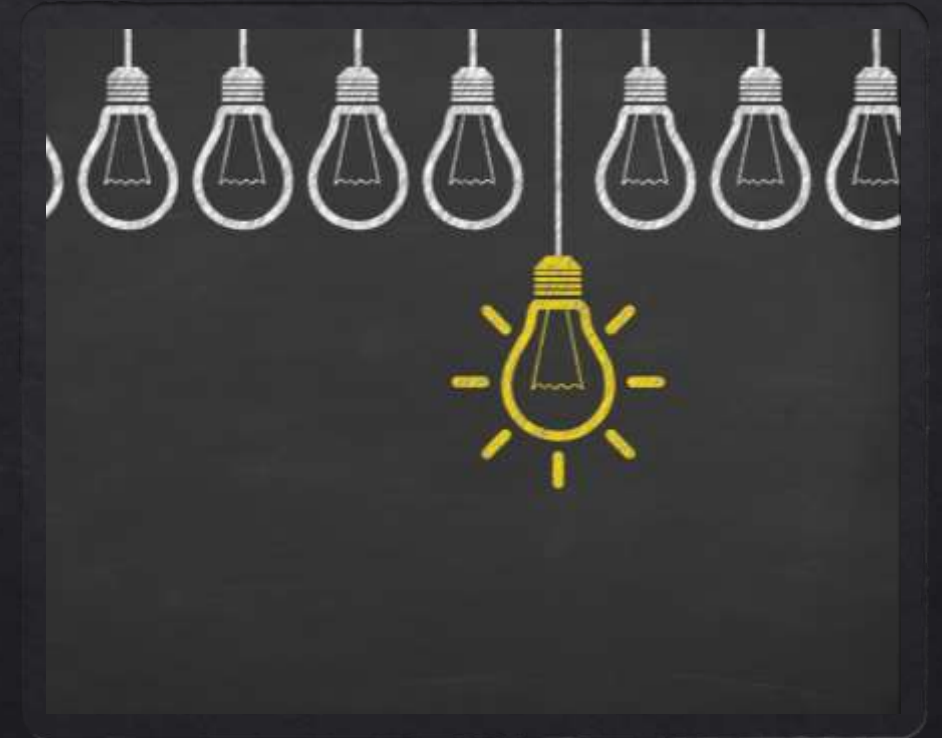
- Customers would apply for the assistance
- Staff would review the applications for meeting thresholds
- Finance Committee would sign-off (similar to ambulance billing debt forgiveness)
- Utility bills would be paid

Tier 2

- Staff would refer customers to the Family Community Resource Center
- Center would notify the City of the assistance recommendation
- Utility bills would be paid

Funding the Program

- ◆ Tier 1
 - ◆ Utility rate funded option for RCW prescribed individuals
- ◆ Tier 2
 - ◆ Donations to a Family-Community Resource Center sponsored fund for individuals who find themselves outside the income guidelines



◆ Eligibility

- ◆ Water service at address and is the primary residence
- ◆ Not seeking other assistance
- ◆ Residential dwelling and serves only one household
- ◆ No prior assistance in 12 months unless a senior than twice for seniors
- ◆ No subsidized housing assistance
- ◆ Household income is not greater than 125% of the federal poverty guidelines

What would
eligibility look
like for Tier 1?

Questions

