



City of Eustis

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TO: EUSTIS CITY COMMISSION

FROM: Rick Gierok, Interim City Manager

DATE: August 20, 2026

RE: Discussion on Solid Waste Billing Practices – Ordinance Compliance

Introduction:

Staff is requesting direction from the City Commission regarding current billing practices related to solid waste service charges in situations where residential water service is turned off at a customer's request or when a water meter is removed as part of the lien process. Staff has identified two circumstances where current operational practices result in the suspension of solid waste charges for residential properties, which may conflict with the City's ordinance requiring solid waste service for all improved real property within the City limits.

Background:

Section 78-57(a) of the City Code requires that all occupants or owners of improved real property located within the City maintain solid waste collection and disposal services provided by the holder of the City's current solid waste hauler contract. The Code does not make that requirement dependent on the status of water service or the presence of a water meter.

Staff has identified two existing operational practices where solid waste charges may currently be suspended:

- **Vacation Water Off Program** – Property owners may request that their water meter be turned off while the property is vacant for an extended period (for example travel, seasonal absence, or renovations). During this period, the water meter is turned off and solid waste service charges are paused. When the customer returns, the water meter is turned back on and water and solid waste billing is reactivated.
- **Meter Removal at a Customer's Request** – When a meter is removed at a customer's request, all service charges, including solid waste, are currently suspended once the meter is removed.

Upon review, staff has determined that suspending solid waste charges in these situations conflicts with Section 78-57(a), which requires all property owners to maintain solid waste collection service.

In addition to the potential ordinance conflict, continuing the current practice creates several operational concerns including:

- Lack of a reliable tracking method for how long services remain suspended
- Potential sanitation concerns if refuse accumulates at vacant properties

- Situations where refuse may still be collected by the City's contracted hauler but not billed
- Inconsistent application of the City's ordinance requiring solid waste service for all properties

Recommended Action:

Staff recommend aligning operational practices with Section 78-57(a) by continuing to charge solid waste service fees for all residential properties within the City regardless of water service status or meter removal. This would include discontinuing the current practice of suspending solid waste charges during the Vacation Water Off program and after meter removal during the collections process.

Policy Implications:

Aligning billing practices with Section 78-57(a) ensures consistent enforcement of the City Code and supports compliance with the City's solid waste service requirements and contractual obligations with its current solid waste hauler.

Alternatives:

The City Commission may choose to:

1. Direct staff to align current billing practices with Section 78-57(a) and require solid waste service charges for all residential properties regardless of water service status; or
2. Direct staff to return with a proposed Code amendment establishing circumstances, if any, under which solid waste service and charges may be suspended for qualifying residential property.

Budget/Staff Impact:

Implementation would require minor updates to internal billing procedures but would not require additional staffing or budget allocations.

Prepared By:

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Reviewed By:

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