

AVISTA CORPORATION
dba Avista Utilities

RULE NO. 8

NOTICES

A. Notice to Customers

Notices from the Company to a Customer may be given verbally or in writing, depending on the notification type. Written notices will be either delivered or mailed to the Customer or to the Customer's service or mailing address as specified on the application for service.

(T)
(T)
(T)

In emergencies, where delay may result in impaired service or in hazards to the Customer, the public, or the Company's facilities, the Company may give notice by telephone, personal contact, radio, television, or other means of communication.

(T)

Notices approved by the Commission will be posted in a conspicuous place in each utility office where credit matters are transacted, setting forth the rights and responsibilities of customers under Commission rules. The notices are printed in large boldface type and are written in language that is easy to understand.

(T)

B. Written Summary of Rights and Responsibilities

(T)

1. At the time service is initiated and once each year thereafter, the Company will give its residential Customers a written summary of their rights and responsibilities, as they relate to the Company's services. If service is initiated without a personal visit between the Company and the Customer, the Company will mail the summary to the Customer before the first bill statement is mailed. The summary shall include the text of a summary reviewed and approved by the Consumer Services Division and describe:

(T)

(T)

a. The option to designate a third party to receive bills and notices and the availability of notices in languages other than English;

b. Applicable financial assistance programs, such as the Energy Assistance Fund;

c. The availability of medical certificates;

d. Special payment options such as equal payment plans and preferred billing date;

(T)
(T)

e. An explanation of various potential charges including late-payment fees, deposits, and returned check charges;

(T)
(T)

(continued)

Advice No. 26-01-G
Issued January 16, 2026

Effective For Service On & After
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By

Patrick Ehrbar, Director of Regulatory Affairs



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f. An explanation of Severe Weather and Income-Qualified protections available to Customers in accordance with OAR 860-021. (N)
(N)

g. Procedures for conflict resolution, including how to register a dispute with the Company and with the Commission and the toll-free number of the Commission's Consumer Services Section; and

h. Notification that listings of Customer intervenor organizations, including address and telephone number, may be requested from the Consumer Services Division of the Commission. (T)
(T)

2. When service is initiated, the Company will inquire whether the Customer would like to receive notices in a language other than English and will inform the Customer of the type of notices and translations currently available. If the language chosen is not available, the Company will tell the Customer that the translated version does not yet exist, but that the Customer's interest will be recorded. This information will be reported to the Commission annually, specified by the number of requests per language. (T)
(T)
(T)
(T)
(T)

C. Notice of Pending Disconnection – **Residential**

1. The Company will give at least 20 days written notice to residential customers, and the customers designated representative, prior to disconnection of services for non-payment of services rendered. The notice is printed in bold face type and states: (T)
(T)

a. The reason for the proposed disconnection;

b. The amount to be paid to avoid disconnection;

c. The earliest date for disconnection;

d. Name and telephone number of the appropriate unit of the Department of Human Resources or other agencies which may be able to provide financial aid; and (T)

e. An explanation of:

i. The medical certificate provisions of OAR 860-021-0410;

ii. The Commission's complaint process and toll-free number; and

iii. The time-payment agreement provisions of OAR 860-021-0415. (T)

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D. Service of Notice of Pending Disconnection – **Residential**

- 1. A 20-day notice is not required when disconnection is for 1) failure to establish credit or pay a deposit as described within these rules; 2) meter tampering, diverting or theft of service; 3) an emergency endangering life or property under OAR 860-021-0315; and 4) a Customer-requested disconnection. (T)
(T)
(T)
(T)
(T)
- 2. A notice of disconnection may not be sent prior to the due date for payment of a bill.
- 3. The Company will serve the 20-day notice of disconnection in person or send it by first class mail or electronically to the last known address of the Customer. Service is complete on the date of personal delivery, electronic transmittal, or the day after the date of the US Postal Service postmark or postage metering. (T)
(T)
(T)
- 4. At least five business days before the proposed disconnection date, the Company will mail or deliver a written or electronic disconnection notice to the Customer (except for disconnections meeting the criteria of Sec. D.1(3) and (4) above.) (T)
(T)
 - a. The disconnection notice informs the Customer that service will be disconnected on or after a specific date and explains the alternatives and assistance that might be available (see Sec. C.1.d). (T)
(T)
 - b. If notification is made by delivery to the residence, the Company will attempt personal contact. If personal contact cannot be made with the Customer or an adult resident, the Company will leave the notice in a conspicuous place at the residence. (T)
- 5. On the day that the Company expects to disconnect service, and prior to disconnection, the Company will make a good faith effort to personally contact the Customer or an adult at the residence to be disconnected. (T)
 - a. If the contact is made, either in-person or via telephone, the Company will advise the person contacted of the proposed disconnection; (T)

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- b. If contact is not made, the Company will leave a notice in a conspicuous place at the residence informing the Customer that service has been, or is about to be, disconnected. (T)
- 6. Where personal contact is made and the circumstances are such that a reasonable person would conclude that the Customer does not understand the consequences of disconnection, the Company will: (T)
 - a. Notify the Department of Human Resources and the Commission; and
 - b. Delay the proposed disconnection date for five additional business days.
- 7. Where personal contact is made, the representative of the Company making contact is empowered to accept reasonable partial payment of the overdue balance in accordance with Rule No. 11, Sec. D.
- 8. The Company documents its efforts to provide notice under this rule and will make that documentation available to the Customer and the Commission upon request. (T)
- 9. When the Company record shows that a residential billing address is different from the service address, and the Company has reason to believe that the service address is not occupied by the Customer or Co-Customer, the Company must provide a five-day disconnect notice to the occupants of the premises described in OAR-860-021-0405(6). The five-day disconnect notice must be addressed to "tenant" or "occupant" and must include a statement regarding the impending disconnection of service, the earliest date for disconnection and an explanation of the Commission's complaint process and toll-free number. The notice to occupants may not include the dollar amount owing or the reason for disconnection. (T)
- 10. When a record shows that a residence is a master-metered multi-family dwelling (including rooming houses), the Company will notify the Consumer Services Division at least five business days prior to disconnecting the service. The Company will use reasonable efforts to notify occupants of the impending disconnection and alternatives available to them. (T)

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E. Notice of Pending Disconnection and Service of Notice of Proposed Disconnection
- Non-Residential

For non-residential services, notice of pending disconnection and service of notice of proposed disconnection is provided for in Rule 11 Section E.

F. Notices from Customers

Notices from a customer to the Company must be given by the customer or the customer's authorized agent to the Company's office, either orally or by written communication. Written notice is required when specified in tariff schedules or in any written agreement or contract.

G. Dishonored Payments

If a Customer makes a payment subsequent to the issuance of a five (5) day notice, whether payment is made to prevent a service discontinuance or to reactivate a previously discontinued service, and the Customer's financial institution fails to honor said payment, the account shall be deemed unpaid. The Company will attempt to notify the Customer in person, by telephone, or by written notice, of the payment failure. The Customer shall have one business day to correct the failure. If a valid payment is not received, service to the customer may be discontinued without further written notice after the due date of the previously issued five (5) day notice. This process may proceed separate from the normal notice process described herein.

Advice No. 08-02-G
Issued March 31, 2008

Effective For Service On & After
April 1, 2008

Issued by Avista Utilities
By

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