

# Quick Facts about Water and Sewer Service



We value our customers and wish to keep you 'in the know' about all things water! Here a few quick facts about your water and sewer service. If you have any specific questions please call the St. Joseph Water Department at 269-983-6324, or email [water@sjcity.com](mailto:water@sjcity.com).

**Go PAPERLESS!** Did you know you can now receive a full page quarterly bill via EMAIL instead of a post card? Just let us know and we will switch you to email billing starting next quarter.

**Payment options:** *At your request we have made a big change in payment options.*

**Beginning in April we can process CREDIT CARDS over the counter for **Water Bills**, **City Taxes**, **Park Reservations**, **Parking Tickets** and other fees.**

Please note: After March 31<sup>st</sup>, we will no longer use Payment Service Network (PSN), or GovPayNow, as our 3<sup>rd</sup> party credit card and Echeck providers.

**New Payment options include:**

## **OVER THE COUNTER**

Pay by a Visa, MasterCard, American Express or Discover card



## **BY TELEPHONE**

Call Point & Pay's Automated Service 24/7 at 866-279-6342

Or, to talk to a representative (M-F, 8am-10pm), call 888-891-6064, select option 1

## ONLINE

Go to [www.sjcity.com](http://www.sjcity.com) and click on the 'Online Payments' icon. You may pay by credit card or Echecks.

## NOTE

There will be a Point & Pay convenience charge of 3% of the payment amount (\$2 minimum), for all credit card payments and a \$3 per Echeck (up to \$10,000).

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## SIMPLIFY YOUR LIFE WITH

# AUTOMATIC BILL PAY

It's free, easy and secure! Just complete our application and return it with a *voided* check. Please see our brochure for details, or go to [www.sjcity.com](http://www.sjcity.com) and download the form.

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## BASIC PAYMENT OPTIONS STILL INCLUDE:

**IN PERSON**— At City Hall, 700 Broad Street, Monday through Friday 8:00 am until 5:00 pm.

**BY MAIL**—Send check to the St. Joseph Water Department, 700 Broad Street, St. Joseph, MI 49085. Please include your account number, name and service address. We cannot accept credit card payments by mail or drop box.

**DROP BOX**—Insert your payment in our 24/7 drop box located inside the double glass doors at the Broad Street entrance to City Hall. Please include your account number, name and service address.

**YOUR BANK'S ONLINE BILL PAY**—Create a Water Department payee: St. Joseph Water Department, 700 Broad Street, St. Joseph, MI 49085. Be sure to reference your 6-digit account number.

**High water bill?** If your bill seems high, please check your home for leaks. A running toilet can waste a tremendous amount of water over a three-month period. Typically when a toilet seal does fail you cannot see or hear the water use, you must dye test the toilet to identify the leak. Typical replacement parts run less than \$10, but the leaked water can run into the hundreds of dollars. Be proactive and periodically inspect your service for undetected leaks.

**Low water bill?** If your water usage seems unusually low you may have a defective meter. Please call us at 269-983-6324 and we will arrange a service call and check the meter at no cost.

### **Moving into or out of a property in the service area?**

If you are moving into a property, you must make application for water service in person at St.

Joseph City Hall, 700 Broad Street, St. Joseph MI 49085. You will need your photo ID to complete the application. We do not turn the water off in between customers.

If you are moving out of a property, please call the Water Department at 269-983-6324 to arrange for a final water meter reading and a bill to be sent to you; be ready to tell us the date you are moving out and the address where we should send the final bill. If you are selling your property then typically the title company will withhold money to pay your final water bill and we will then bill them directly. Please give us a few days' notice of your need for a final reading. Water meters are routinely read quarterly so without a final read, it is impossible to accurately prorate the three month billing amongst the parties; avoid the confusion... order a final!

**Leaving for an extended amount of time?** If your property will be vacant and you would like your water service temporarily shut *off* at the curb stop, call 269-983-6324 to schedule. There is a charge of \$50 for this service and you will continue to be billed the minimum quarterly charge while the water is turned *off*. However, when you have the water turned *off* at the road, and you properly drain your system, you should be protected from the damage that may occur from an undetected leak or frozen pipes while you are away for an extended period of time. In lieu of turning the water off at the curb stop, some customers turn the water off just inside the home at the valves adjacent to the meter. While this is not the same as turning it off at the curb, it can significantly minimize the risk of freezing/flooding issues.

**Trouble paying your water or sewer bill?** Please contact us right away at 269-983-6324 if you will have trouble paying your water/sewer bill by the due date. If we talk with you and understand your situation, we can work with you to set up a payment schedule. If we don't hear from you, your service may be turned *off* once your account becomes delinquent. Restoring service requires payment in full plus an administrative shut-off/turn-on fee. Please contact us so we can keep your water turned on.

**If we leave a service tag on your door,** Please call 269-983-6324 within a few days to arrange for a service call. Typically we need to access your property to inspect, service, or replace your water meter; there is no charge to you for these service calls. However, if we ask for a service call and we do not hear from you promptly, your service may be disconnected until you contact us for an appointment.

**Need to remove or replace your meter?** Don't touch that meter! It is a violation of City ordinance to tamper with your water meter. Please call 269-983-6324 if your meter has to be removed or replaced for any reason, and we will make an appointment to have a service person do so.

**What is a unit of water:** 1 unit of water is equal to 100 cubic feet or 748 gallons of water.

**Am I average?** Ever wonder how your water use compares to the “average” family? The national average is 10 units, per person, per quarter (or 81 gallons per person per day). Most families in our region use less than this. If your water use seems high you might have an undetected leak you need to discover and repair. Call us if you have questions.

**Wonder how much water you use?** — You can now access your water account information and history in real time through the City’s website at [www.sjcity.com](http://www.sjcity.com) and track your water usage. If your water usage seems high, you may have an undetected leak that needs repair. Failed toilet flappers are common culprits.

**Water leaks** on the main public water line in the street, or between the main public water line and the individual service connection shutoff valve (usually located near the property line) are the local municipality’s responsibility and will be repaired by the local municipality. Water leaks on the individual service connection, between the shut-off valve and the building, or inside the building, are the responsibility of the property owner.

**Lawn sprinkling is on an "even/odd" schedule:** In 2003 water conservation measures which restrict lawn sprinkling, with the goal to reducing the peak water demands on the water plant, were introduced. These restrictions remain in effect at all times throughout the year. If your property address is an "even" number, you may water your lawn and plants on "even" numbered days of the month. If your address is an "odd" number, you may water on "odd" numbered days of the month. If you live in the City, please call 269-983-6324 to request a 30-day permit for new plantings or sod. If you live in the township, please call your local municipal office for a permit.

**Pool Fills:** There are two options: Your local Fire Department can quickly fill pools at a set cost or, you can fill it yourself and pay for your water (& sewer) use on your next water bill. We can give you a cost estimate based on pool size. A 20’ x 10’ x 6’ deep pool fill is about \$60.

**Sewer backups** can be caused by a problem in the public sewer or in a property's private sewer service. If you believe the problem might be in the public sewer, call the local municipality and they will check the public main and possibly save you the expense of calling a plumber. If you live in the City of St. Joseph please call 269-983-6341 between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday; call St. Joseph Water Plant at 269-983-1240 at night, on weekends, or holidays. If you live outside the city, please call your local jurisdiction. (St. Joseph Charter Township 269-429-7703, Lincoln Charter Township, 269-429-1589, Royalton Township 269-429-2501)

**Sewer breaks** on the main public sewer line in the street are the local municipality’s responsibility and will be repaired by the local municipality. Sewer breaks on the individual service connection - even

when that connection is still under the street - are the responsibility of the individual property owner. Call your local jurisdiction if you have questions. (See phone numbers above).

**Water plant tours are available by calling 269-983-1240.** Our water plant staff is very proud of our facility, and loves to show *off* the building and explain our water treatment process. The more we know about water the more we can work together to protect this priceless resource.