

Frequently Asked Utility Billing and Payment Plan Questions

Q: I feel I was billed incorrectly. What should I do?

The first thing to do if you feel you were billed incorrectly, or have any other inquiry about your bill, is to contact the utility company (contact numbers will be listed on your bill). Utility companies are obligated to thoroughly investigate the matter and report results to you. If you are dissatisfied with the response, you may then request a supervisory review by the utility. If the billing dispute cannot be resolved after a supervisory review, you may then contact a reviewing officer at the Consumer Section of the Rhode Island Division of Public Utilities and Carriers at (401) 780-9700.

Q: Are payment plans available through the utility companies?

Yes, electric and gas utilities must offer payment plans to residential customers that consist of equal monthly payments.

Q: Can Customers, who do not have an outstanding balance, enter into a 12-month budget plan at any time of the year?

Yes, a payment plan is an option that allows customers to pay equal amounts through the summer and winter, thus avoiding seasonal fluctuations like high gas bills in the winter months. In addition to the 12-month plan, your local utility company may offer other payment plan options that may better suit your individual situation. Questions about special payment plans can be directed to your utility company.

Q: What if I do not understand the charges on my monthly utility bill?

Utility companies strive to balance clarity with the need to give the consumer the information they need to evaluate their usage and services on monthly statements. If you have questions about the entries that appear on your bill, contact your utility company. As with billing complaints, if you are not satisfied with the explanation contact the Consumer Section of the Rhode Island Division of Public Utilities and Carriers at (401) 780-9700.

Q: What is the monthly service charge that appears on my monthly bill?

Your monthly service charge is the base fee for providing service to your location. It covers the costs of processing accounts, meter reading and billing. There are fixed operational and billing costs associated with all utility accounts during the service period, whether the utility service is being used or not.

Q: Am I responsible for a bill incurred from my residence?

If you have utility service in your name, then you are the responsible party for payment of service rendered to that location.