



BRAINERD PUBLIC UTILITIES

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Tenant/Landlord Responsibility for Vacated Rentals

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Latest Revision/Effective Date: June 30, 2026

Original Adoption Date: August 28, 2003

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent process for the termination and transfer of utility services at rental properties served by Brainerd Public Utilities (BPU). This policy is intended to clarify the responsibilities of tenants and property owners when utility service is discontinued due to a tenant vacating a property, ensure continuity of utility service, reduce disputes regarding utility billing responsibility, and provide clear notification procedures to property owners.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all rental properties receiving utility services from BPU where utility service is established in a tenant's name. The policy governs the termination of tenant utility accounts, reversion of utility responsibility to the property owner, notification procedures, and responsibility for utility charges incurred after a tenant vacates a rental property.

III. Definitions

Final Billing Date: The date through which utility services are billed to a tenant upon termination of a utility account. Charges incurred after this date shall be billed to the property owner unless utility service has been established in another customer's name.

Property Owner: The individual, partnership, corporation, limited liability company, trust, or other legal entity holding legal title to a rental property receiving utility services from BPU.

Rental Property: A residential, commercial, or other property occupied by a tenant under a lease, rental agreement, or other arrangement granting possession or use of the property that is not the property owner.

Tenant: An individual or entity occupying a rental property under a lease, rental agreement, or other arrangement with the property owner and who may establish utility service in their name.

Utility Account: The customer account established with BPU for the provision and billing of utility services to a specific property.

Utility Service: Electric, water, wastewater, and any other utility services provided by BPU to a customer account.

Account Reversion: The automatic transfer of utility account responsibility from a tenant to the property owner upon termination of the tenant's utility service.

Termination of Service: The discontinuation of a utility account in a customer's name, including the issuance of a final bill and transfer of account responsibility as applicable.

IV. Policy Statement

Utility services will be terminated upon a tenant's request when they vacate a rental property. The utility service will then revert to the owner of the property. When there is a signed rental lease between the tenant and property owner, and the tenant does not fulfill their lease, utilities incurred after the tenant's final billing will be the responsibility of the property owner to pay.

BPU will notify the owner of the vacated property after the tenant's final billing is complete.

V. Procedures

1. A tenant requesting termination of utility service due to vacating a rental property must notify BPU and provide a requested final service date.
2. BPU shall complete a final meter reading and issue a final bill to the tenant for utility services provided through the termination date.
3. Upon termination of the tenant's utility account, utility service for the property shall automatically revert to the property owner unless otherwise authorized by BPU.
4. The property owner shall be responsible for all utility charges incurred after the tenant's final billing date until a new tenant establishes utility service in their name.
5. BPU shall notify the property owner after the tenant's final billing has been completed and the utility account responsibility has reverted to the owner.
6. If a signed rental lease exists and a tenant vacates the property prior to fulfilling the lease terms, the property owner remains responsible for utility charges incurred after the tenant's final billing date.
7. Property owners are responsible for notifying BPU of current mailing addresses and contact information for billing and notification purposes.
8. Failure of a property owner to receive notice from BPU shall not relieve the property owner of responsibility for utility charges incurred after the tenant account termination date.

VI. Roles and Responsibilities

The Billing Representative is responsible for processing tenant final bills, completing final meter readings, and ensuring utility accounts are accurately transferred from the tenant to the property owner upon termination of service. The Billing Representative shall initiate this process upon notification from Business Office Support Staff or other

authorized utility personnel that a tenant has requested termination of service or vacated a rental property. This position verifies billing accuracy, applicable service dates, and account information to ensure compliance with established utility policies and procedures. The Billing Representative also provides notification to property owners regarding account reversion and ongoing billing responsibility, maintains supporting account documentation and records, and coordinates with Front Office Staff and management regarding disputed accounts, delinquent balances, or unusual account circumstances. In performing these duties, the Billing Representative is responsible for administering utility billing procedures in a consistent, accurate, and professional manner.

VII. Compliance and References

None.

VIII. Associated Forms and Attachments

Vacated property landlord letter.

IX. Review and Update Schedule

This policy shall be reviewed and updated on an as-needed basis to reflect changes in utility operations, administrative practices, or applicable legal requirements. Revisions shall be submitted to the Commission for approval when necessary.

Adopted: August 28, 2003, Revised: June 30, 2026

X. Approval and Authority

The BPU Commission has the authority to approve, amend, and repeal this policy. Upon approval by the Commission, the policy shall be implemented, administered, and enforced by the Business Office Supervisor or their designee. The Business Office Supervisor is responsible for ensuring that utility staff consistently apply the policy and associated procedures in accordance with Commission direction.