

RESOLUTION NO. R19-1869

A RESOLUTION TO ADOPT A POLICY FOR THEFT OF SERVICE AND TAMPERING WITH WATER METERS

WHEREAS, the City of Stockbridge ("City") is a municipal corporation duly organized and existing under the laws of the State of Georgia and is charged with being fiscally responsible concerning the use and expenditure of all public funds; and

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to establish a Policy for Theft of Service and Tampering with Water Meters;

THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF STOCKBRIDGE HEREBY RESOLVES:

SECTION 1. Approval. The policy attached hereto as Exhibit A is hereby approved.

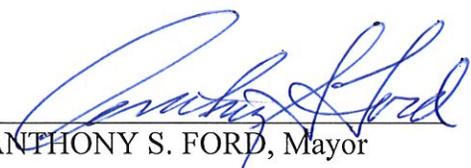
SECTION 2. Public Record. This document shall be maintained as a public record by the City Clerk and shall be accessible to the public during all normal business hours of the City of Stockbridge.

SECTION 3. Authorization of Execution. The Mayor or Mayor Pro Tem is hereby authorized to sign all documents necessary to effectuate this Resolution.

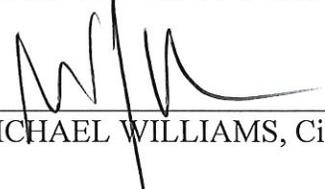
SECTION 4. Attestation. The City Clerk is authorized to execute, attest to, and seal any documents which may be necessary to effectuate this ordinance, subject to approval as to form by the City Attorney.

SECTION 5. Effective Date. This resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Stockbridge as provided in the City Charter.

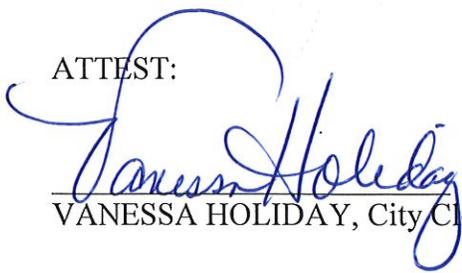
SO REOLVED this 10th day of June, 2019.



ANTHONY S. FORD, Mayor

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


MICHAEL WILLIAMS, City Attorney

ATTEST:


VANESSA HOLIDAY, City Clerk (SEAL)

EXHIBIT A



Theft of Service and Tampering with Water Meter Policy

Water meters are installed to meter water that is for sale from the City of Stockbridge's water system and it is illegal for any unauthorized person to alter, tamper with, relocate, willfully damage, bypass or reconnect a water meter after the City of Stockbridge has disconnected it.

I. GENERAL

Meter tampering shall be defined as tampering with or bypassing the city's meter or equipment or other instances of water service diversion such as physically disorienting the meter, attaching objects to the meter to divert or bypass water service or insertion of objects into the meter and other electrical and mechanical means of tampering with, bypassing or diverting water service.

Any meter or service found to have been altered, tampered with or bypassed in a manner that would cause such meter to inaccurately measure and register the water consumed or which would cause the water to be diverted from the recording apparatus of the meter shall be prima facie evidence of intent to violate this policy by the person in whose name such meter is installed or the person or persons using or receiving the benefits of such unmetered, unregistered or diverted water. The city will notify law enforcement of all instances of meter tampering.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

- A. Tampering with utility equipment or stealing service will result in the immediate disconnection of service with or without prior notification. Theft of service shall include, but not be limited to the following:
1. Opening valves at the curb or meter that have been turned off by utility personnel.
 2. Breaking, picking or damaging cut-off locks.
 3. By-passing meters in any way.
 4. Taking unmetered water from hydrants by anyone other than an authorized official of a recognized fire department, fire insurance company or utility for any purpose other than firefighting, testing or flushing of hydrants.
 5. Use of sprinkler system water service for any purpose other than fire protection.

6. Removing, disabling or adjusting meter registers.
7. Connecting to or intentionally damaging water lines, valves or other appurtenances for the purpose of stealing or damaging utility equipment.
8. Moving the meter or extending service without permission of the City of Stockbridge.
9. Any other intentional act of defacement, destruction or vandalism to utility property or act that effects utility property.
10. Any intentional blockage or obstruction of utility equipment.

III. UNAUTHORIZED USAGE PENALTIES

A. Tampering with water meters

Where the water has been cut off due to non- payment but is being received through tampering with the water meter, a fee of seventy-five (**\$75.00**) dollars will be charged to the account in connection with the placement of a locking device on the water meter. This fee will be in addition to any other fee previously assessed.

B. Tampering with locked device

If the customer's water has been disconnected for non-payment and the lock is cut to restore service, additional fees will be charged and the water service will not be restored until the past due balance, reconnect fee and all additional fees are paid. After the first (1st) cut lock, a barrel lock will be placed on the meter as well as a cage. If these are tampered with, then the meter will be pulled. The fees for the above are as follows:

- **Cut Padlock** – fifty (**\$50.00**) dollars fee plus meter tampering fee of one-hundred (**\$100.00**) dollars.
- **Damaged Valve** – one hundred (**\$100.00**) dollars plus labor at thirty-dollars and seventy-five cents (**\$30.75**) per hour plus cost of materials to repair.
- **Barrel Lock Installation** - twenty (**\$20.00**) dollars plus labor at thirty-dollars and seventy-five cents (**\$30.75**) per hour.
- **Meter Cage Installation** – twenty-five (**\$25.00**) dollars plus labor at thirty-dollars and seventy-five cents (**\$30.75**) per hour.
- **Meter Pull** – one-hundred (**\$100.00**) dollars plus labor at thirty-dollars and seventy-five cents (**\$30.75**) per hour.

C. Unauthorized meter or a straight line

Where a water meter has been removed and water is being obtained through an unauthorized meter or "straight line," a fee of one-hundred and twenty-five (**\$125.00**) dollars will be charged to the account in addition to any other fee previously assessed. In addition to the above penalties, the responsible party may be cited and required to appear in the City of Stockbridge Municipal Court to answer said charge or charges.

IV. **ADJUSTED BILLS DUE TO TAMPERING**

In the event of meter tampering, any of the following may be used to calculate bills and assess charges for the billing periods in which the meter tampering occurred.

1. Bills may be calculated based upon service consumed by that member at that location under similar conditions during periods preceding the initiation of meter tampering. Such estimated bills shall be based on at least twenty-four (**24**) consecutive months of comparable usage history of that member when available, or less history if the member has not been served at that location for twenty-four (**24**) months.
2. Bills may be calculated based upon that member's usage at that location after the meter tampering has been corrected.
3. Bills may be calculated where the amount of unmetered consumption can be calculated by industry recognized testing procedures.
4. The city may use other methods of calculating bills for unmetered water when the usage of other methods are more appropriate.
5. The city will charge for all labor, material and equipment necessary to repair or replace all equipment damaged due to meter tampering.