

Utility Accounting Division

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http://www.tampagov.net/dept_Utility_Accounting/

Key Public Service Areas

The Utility Accounting Division is responsible for efficient, effective billing and collection of charges for City water, sanitary sewer and solid waste services, while maintaining a high level of customer service.

Scope of Department Operations

The Utility Accounting Division carries out its duties with a staff of 69 and an annual budget of \$5.6 million. The Division is responsible for reading over 131,900 meters bimonthly, and preparing and mailing consolidated water, sanitary sewer and solid waste utility bills to all customers monthly. The Division handles all requests for service turn-ons, turn-offs and transfers in the City's 110 square mile service area. A customer service section responds to all customer billing inquiries and a credit section performs delinquent account collection activities. Estimated FY03 billings are \$160 million.

Current Initiatives

- Changing the MSS Billing System to bill reclaimed water
- Completing the automatic bill payment system

Critical Issues and Areas of Concern

- Meter Reading Resources
- Reclaimed Water Billing
- Automatic Electronic Bill Payment
- E-Services

Status Report

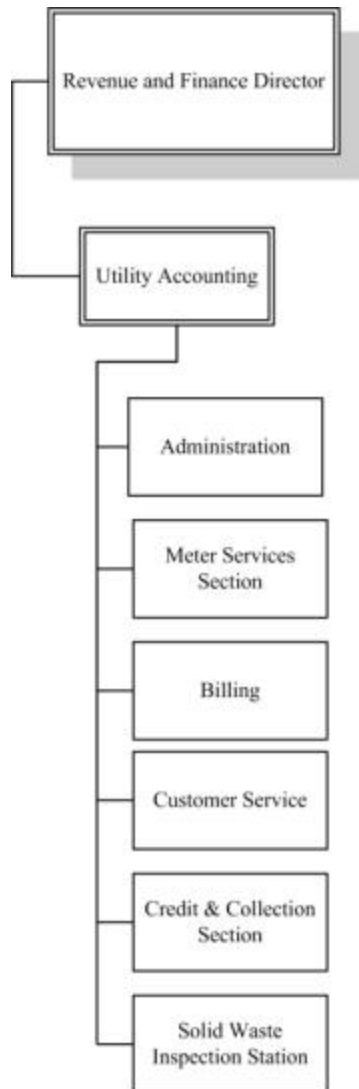
Meter Reading Resources. The Department's Utility Accounting Division reads over 130,900 meters on a bi-monthly basis with 12 readers. The last year a Meter Reader was added was FY88, or about 15 years ago, when the total number of meters was somewhat below 120,000. An additional reader is needed in order to continue to meet bi-monthly basis standard. An additional three to four thousands meters are expected to be added to the system due to the start of the STAR reclaimed water program, Phase I, in December 2003.

Reclaimed Water Billing. During FY03 and FY04, the Department's Utility Accounting Division Billing and Customer Service personnel will be working with MIS Department personnel on changes to the MSS billing system to enable the Division to bill reclaimed water charges on Customer's utility bills. This function needs to be complete by December 2003, in order to handle the first customers.

Automatic Electronic Bill Payment. The Department's Utility Accounting Division personnel will be working with MIS Department personnel during FY03 in order to complete an automatic electronic bill payment system which would allow utility customers a convenient, no-cost way to pay their utility bills on time, every time. Once signed up, customers would have their utility bills automatically paid with an electronic transfer of funds from their bank to the City's bank. This is a service that customers have been requesting for some time, a service that is already provided to them by TECO and Hillsborough County Utilities. It is expected that over five thousand customers will sign up for this service.

E-Services. The Utility Accounting Division has added the capability of paying utility bills over the Internet and is exploring other methods of making bill preparation and customer service more efficient.

Utility Accounting Division Organization Chart



The Utility Accounting Division reports to the Director of the Revenue and Finance Department and is responsible for billing and collecting charges for the City water, sanitary sewers and solid waste services. The Division is organized into three five sections.

Administration coordinates the work of the other Sections, administers payroll and accounting functions for the Division.

Meter Services Section is responsible for the bi-monthly meter reading of over 130,000 water meters with 12 meter readers. The Section is responsible for service turn on and turn off requests, including turn on request from the Credit Section.

Billing is responsible for producing 6,000 utility bills each work night.

Customer Service is responsible for responding to all customer requests for turn ons, turn offs, and all billing inquiries.

Credit and Collection Section is responsible for calling on delinquent accounts and either collecting or discontinuing utility service.

Solid Waste Inspection Section is responsible for administering customer requests for Solid Waste vacancy credits, and elderly discounts.