

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Why am I being billed?**

Utility costs are rapidly increasing. The owner of your community has chosen to have the residents pay for their utilities separately, which in the past were built into rent. Billing the utilities separately results in lower utility bills and promotes conservation.

Did you know a utility provider's sewer rates are typically 3-5 times higher than their water rates?

Did you know utility providers often charge higher seasonal rates when usage is greater to encourage conservation?

Did you know utility rates in many areas have risen by over 30% in the last couple years and are expected to increase even more in the next 1-3 years?

## **Who are The Billing Associates?**

The Billing Associates is a third party utility billing company providing submetered and allocated utility billing services, payment processing, customer service and support for the multifamily and commercial real estate industries.

## **How soon after I move-in will I receive my bill?**

Utilities are typically billed in arrears and our billing cycle follows that of the local utility provider. For example, a billing statement mailed to a resident in February normally reflects usage for the previous month of January. You're first billing statement should arrive within 4-6 weeks after your move in date.

## **What usage cycle will I be billed for?**

The usage cycle for billing varies for each community and is based upon the local utility provider's normal billing cycle. Billing statements are normally generated on a monthly basis. You can call or email our Customer Service Department for more information on your specific billing cycle.

**How often will I be billed?**

Bills are normally generated on a monthly basis. You can call or email our Customer Service Department for specifics.

**Do I need a utility deposit?**

The Billing Associates does not require a utility deposit, though your lease may require you to pay a utility deposit to your landlord. A lease, lease addendum or appropriate written notice is required to start billing of utility services. The community management company will supply The Billing Associates with a lease that contains a paragraph, a lease addendum, or appropriate written notice that obligates the resident to pay for their utilities. The apartment security deposit may be applied to any outstanding balance owing when you move out.

**Will my bill be more expensive because the community uses a billing service?**

Generally no; Residents may be able to take advantage of the community's commercial rate that is usually lower than the residential rate. Base fees are typically lower than those charged by utility companies that service homes. This program is designed only for the recovery of utility costs.

**How much water does the average person use at home per day?**

Estimates vary, but each person uses about 80 - 100 gallons of water per day. The largest use of household water is to flush the toilet, after that, to take a shower or bath.

**Are there ways to reduce my usage?**

Yes, conservation tips are available from your management office or [click here](#) to learn more about "Conservation Tips"

**How are individual meters read?**

In most cases, The Billing Associates captures consumption data from individual in unit meters utilizing an AMR (Automatic Meter Reading) technology. This data flows from a computer chip within the meter or by transmitter attached to meter and is transferred to a host system via modem. Daily meter readings are captured and retained as a record of resident consumption.

**How do you calculate my bill if there is no individual meter in place at my apartment home?**

Ratio Utility Billing Service (RUBS) is a billing allocation option when a community is unable to install meters due to the construction limitations. Consumption is calculated using a formula to determine each resident's utility expense. The formula is based on detailed information about your community, residents and utility provider usage and charges billed to your community. This formula can be based on the number of occupants, square footage or other allocation formulas.

**Why do I not have a sub-meter?**

In older properties, often the plumbing or electrical configuration makes retrofitting with sub-meters cost prohibitive.

**How do I know this bill amount is fair?**

Studies have shown submetering and RUBS utility billing is fair and significantly reduces utility consumption when people are separately billed for their utility usage. These forms of utility billing have been legally reviewed and tested by most state and local governments and found to be acceptable and legal.

**I've been out of town. Why do I still have to pay this bill?**

Residents on a RUBS allocation program are responsible for paying their pro-rated share of the utility bill on a monthly basis. Just as you would pay your rent, phone bill or other bills each month you will also be responsible to pay your utility bill. If you have questions concerning this policy, please contact your property manager.

**Why is my water bill higher than last month?**

Your utility bills will vary and no one can guarantee the exact amount of your utility usage.

**How will my water bill be affected by a leak?**

If the leak has a significant bearing on the amount of the bill, an adjustment may be made on behalf of your account. (This is determined at the discretion of the community manager.) You can help us both by reporting leaks immediately. The community will respond to all service requests in a timely manner.

**Is there a monthly service fee?**

The Billing Associates is a third party utility billing company and not your utility provider. All service providers and/or utility companies charge a service or base fee of some kind. We do not mark up or build in our costs of doing business in the utility services you receive. We charge a nominal monthly administrative billing fee for the billing of your utility services.

**Are there late charges or other fees?**

A late fee, as allowed by law, will be charged to your account if your payment is not received by the payment due date noted on your billing statement. Please utilize the payment coupon and remittance envelope enclosed with your statement to ensure prompt payment posting. A nominal administrative billing fee is billed monthly along with a one-time account activation fee to setup your utility billing services. Returned checks are assessed NSF fees as allowed by local law. Customers paying by credit card or e-check will be charged a small convenience fee to cover the cost banks charge for processing these transactions. To avoid these transaction fees you can mail payment.

**Can you set up a payment plan for me?**

Unfortunately, The Billing Associates cannot negotiate payment plans. For questions concerning this please contact your property manager.

**How do I pay my bill?**

Please review your billing statement. The payment coupon included with your statement will instruct you where to remit your payment. Checks or money orders can be mailed to the remittent address indicated on your billing statement. If mailing your payment to The Billing Associates please include your payment coupon. When your payment coupon is included with your check your account is promptly credited for your payment.

You can also pay your bill by credit card on-line at [www.tbasoutheast.com](http://www.tbasoutheast.com) or by calling our customer service call center. Customers paying by credit card or e-check will be charged a small convenience fee to cover the cost banks charge for processing these transactions. To avoid these transaction fees you can mail payment. Instructions are included on your monthly billing statement.

Our payment mailing address is:

Utility Payment Center  
PO Box 179  
Little Elm, TX 75068

Access your account or pay your bill online at:

[www.tbasoutheast.com](http://www.tbasoutheast.com)

**Who should I contact if I have questions about my bill sent by The Billing Associates?**

To reach our Customer Support Call Center Monday – Friday (8am -8 pm):  
Call us at 844-733-9255

To contact us by email: [support@customersupportgrp.com](mailto:support@customersupportgrp.com)

**Who do I inform about my Move In or Move Out?**

Your community manager is responsible for opening and closing your TBA SOUTHEAST account. The community staff will advise THE BILLING ASSOCIATES SOUTHEAST of your moving dates and we will open or close your account accordingly.

**How far in advance should THE BILLING ASSOCIATES SOUTHEAST be made aware of my Move Out?**

Notifying your community management staff of your intent to vacate is sufficient notice for THE BILLING ASSOCIATES SOUTHEAST. Your Final Bill will be collected by the community.

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