



Agenda Item: 14.F
Date of Meeting: June 9, 2025
Department: Public Works

STAFF REPORT

To: City Council
From: Robin Picken
Subject: **Second Reading and Adoption of an Ordinance Amending Title 13 of the Bishop Municipal Code – Water and Sewer Service Regulations**
Prepared On: May 30, 2025
Attachments: Ordinance - Update to Title 13 Water and Sewer Ordinance

Background/History:

The City of Bishop periodically reviews its municipal code to ensure that provisions are current, consistent, and support efficient public service delivery. Staff has identified several areas of Title 13 (Public Services) that require update or clarification to ensure orderly, efficient, and cost-effective administration of the City's water and sewer services. The proposed amendments include:

- Limiting properties to one water and one sewer connection per parcel to reduce redundancy.
- Updating terminology to reflect current job titles (e.g., replacing “public works supervisor” with “public works superintendent”).
- Clarifying responsibilities between the Public Works and Finance departments.
- Ensuring that all food service establishments are required to install and maintain functioning grease interceptors.
- Prohibiting the use of garbage grinders in restaurants and commercial food establishments.
- Repealing outdated provisions regarding annual payment discounts.
- Clarifying billing practices related to backflow testing.

The changes are administrative in nature and do not affect service levels or rates.

Analysis/Discussion:

Several sections are being revised to align terminology with current staffing titles—specifically, replacing references to the “public works supervisor” with “public works superintendent.” This change ensures that the municipal code accurately reflects the City’s organizational structure and current job titles.

New sections are proposed to limit each parcel to a single water and a single sewer

connection. These changes are intended to eliminate redundant utility connections, which can lead to inefficiencies in maintenance, increased infrastructure costs, and complications in utility management. The ordinance also requires that each water service connection be separately metered. This requirement aligns with Senate Bill 552 (SB 552), which emphasizes the importance of water loss control and system efficiency as part of statewide drought preparedness efforts.

Water meters are a critical tool for promoting conservation and operational efficiency. By measuring actual usage, meters allow property owners to monitor consumption, identify leaks, and make informed decisions about water use. For the City, metering improves system oversight, enhances planning and forecasting, and supports targeted conservation efforts during drought conditions. These benefits contribute to the City's long-term water reliability and compliance with state mandates for drought resilience.

The ordinance also repeals outdated provisions that allowed property owners to prepay their annual water and sewer charges in exchange for a 5% discount. While originally intended to reduce administrative burden, these provisions are no longer consistent with the City's billing practices and now result in a measurable loss of revenue. Over the past four fiscal years, these discounts have averaged approximately \$46,800 per year in foregone revenue. In addition, it costs the City an estimated \$5,000 annually in staff time and administrative overhead to process these advance payment discounts.

Given that modern billing systems have streamlined monthly payment processing, the original justification for offering this discount no longer applies. Eliminating the discount will ensure fair and consistent billing, simplify administration, and help preserve revenue needed for ongoing utility operations and infrastructure investments.

The ordinance strengthens the City's requirements for grease interceptors by explicitly requiring their installation and maintenance at all food service establishments and other commercial or industrial facilities that discharge fats, oils, or grease. This update provides clearer enforceability and better protects the City's sewer infrastructure from blockages and costly maintenance issues.

Additional changes include:

- Clarifying that testing fees for backflow preventers are billed separately from regular utility bills, rather than being included in bi-monthly billing.
- Revising language to prohibit the use of garbage grinders in commercial food establishments, simplifying enforcement of existing waste discharge controls.
- Minor editorial corrections to align with existing City policies and practices.

These updates are administrative and regulatory in nature and are not expected to affect service levels or impose new costs on utility users. The ordinance provides the City with clearer authority and improved tools to manage its utility systems effectively.

On May 12, 2025, the City Council approved the first reading and introduction of the proposed ordinance by title only.

Economic Impacts:

There is no direct economic impact associated with this ordinance. The amendments streamline administrative procedures and reflect current City operations.

Budget Impacts:

Repealing the 5% advance payment discount is expected to increase annual water and sewer revenue by approximately \$46,800 and reduce administrative processing costs by an estimated \$5,000, resulting in a total fiscal benefit of nearly \$51,800 per year to the City's water and sewer funds.

Legal Review:

City Attorney Pucci has reviewed this item and finds that the recommended action complies with the law.

Recommended Action:

Council consideration to approve the second reading and adoption of the proposed Ordinance amending Title 13 of the City of Bishop Code of Ordinances relating to water and sewer service regulations, by title only.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BISHOP, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, AMENDING TITLE 13 OF THE CITY OF BISHOP CODE OF ORDINANCES, RELATING TO WATER AND SEWER SERVICE

Approved By: Ethan Aukee 6/2/2025

Approved By: Robin Picken 6/2/2025

Approved By: Dean Pucci 6/2/2025

Approved By: Deston Dishion 6/2/25