

CHAPTER 24. SUBSTANTIVE RULES APPLICABLE TO WATER AND SEWER SERVICE PROVIDERS.

Subchapter E. CUSTOMER SERVICE AND PROTECTION.

§24.85. Response to Requests for Service by a Retail Public Utility Within Its Certificated Area.

- (a) Except as provided for in subsection (e) of this section, every retail public utility shall serve each qualified service applicant within its certificated area as soon as is practical after receiving a completed application. A qualified service applicant is an applicant who has met all of the retail public utility's requirements contained in its tariff, schedule of rates, or service policies and regulations for extension of service including the delivery to the retail public utility of any service connection inspection certificates required by law.
- (1) Where a new service tap is required, the retail public utility may require that the property owner make the request for the tap to be installed.
 - (2) Upon request for service by a service applicant, the retail public utility shall make available and accept a completed written application for service.
 - (3) Except for good cause, at a location where service has previously been provided the utility must reconnect service within one working day after the applicant has submitted a completed application for service and met any other requirements in the utility's approved tariff.
 - (4) A request for service that requires a tap but does not require line extensions, construction, or new facilities shall be filled within five working days after a completed service application has been accepted.
 - (5) If construction is required to fill the order and if it cannot be completed within 30 days, the retail public utility shall provide a written explanation of the construction required and an expected date of service.
- (b) Except for good cause shown, the failure to provide service within 30 days of an expected date or within 180 days of the date a completed application was accepted from a qualified applicant may constitute refusal to serve, and may result in the assessment of administrative penalties or revocation of the certificate of convenience and necessity or the granting of a certificate to another retail public utility to serve the applicant.
- (c) The cost of extension and any construction cost options such as rebates to the customer, sharing of construction costs between the utility and the customer, or sharing of costs between the customer and other applicants shall be provided to the customer in writing upon assessment of the costs of necessary line work, but before construction begins. Also see §24.81 (a)(1) of this title (relating to Customer Relations).
- (d) **Easements.**
- (1) Where recorded public utility easements on the service applicant's property do not exist or public road right-of-way easements are not available to access the property of a service applicant, the public utility may require the service applicant or land owner to grant a permanent recorded public utility easement dedicated to the public utility which will provide a reasonable right of access and use to allow the public utility to construct, install, maintain, inspect and test water and/or sewer facilities necessary to serve that applicant.
 - (2) As a condition of service to a new subdivision, public utilities may require developers to provide permanent recorded public utility easements to and throughout the subdivision sufficient to construct, install, maintain, inspect, and test water and/or sewer facilities necessary to serve the subdivision's anticipated service demands upon full occupancy.
 - (3) A district or water supply corporation may require an applicant for service to grant an easement as allowed under applicable law.

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- (e) **Service Extensions by a Water Supply or Sewer Service Corporation or Special Utility District.**
- (1) A water supply or sewer service corporation or a special utility district organized under Chapter 65 of the code is not required to extend retail water or sewer utility service to a service applicant in a subdivision within its certificated area if it documents that:
- (A) the developer of the subdivision has failed to comply with the subdivision service extension policy as set forth in the tariff of the corporation or the policies of the special utility district; and
- (B) the service applicant purchased the property after the corporation or special utility district gave notice of its rules which are applicable to service to subdivisions in accordance with the notice requirements in this subsection.
- (2) Publication of notice, in substantial compliance with the form notice in Appendix A, in a newspaper of general circulation in each county in which the corporation or special utility district is certificated for utility service of the requirement to comply with the subdivision service extension policy constitutes notice under this subsection. The notice must be published once a week for two consecutive weeks on a biennial basis and must contain information describing the subdivision service extension policy of the corporation or special utility district. The corporation or special utility district must be able to provide proof of publication through an affidavit of the publisher of the newspaper that specifies each county in which the newspaper is generally circulated:

Appendix A

NOTICE OF REQUIREMENT TO COMPLY WITH THE SUBDIVISION SERVICE EXTENSION POLICY OF {name of water supply corporation/special utility district}

Pursuant to Texas Water Code, §13.2502, _____ Water Supply Corporation/Special Utility District hereby gives notice that any person who subdivides land by dividing any lot, tract, or parcel of land, within the service area of _____ Water Supply Corporation/Special Utility District, Certificate of Convenience and Necessity No. _____, in _____ County, into two or more lots or sites for the purpose of sale or development, whether immediate or future, including re-subdivision of land for which a plat has been filed and recorded or requests more than two water or sewer service connections on a single contiguous tract of land must comply with {title of subdivision service extension policy stated in the tariff/policy} (the "Subdivision Policy") contained in _____ Water Supply Corporation's tariff/Special Utility District's policy.

_____ Water Supply Corporation/Special Utility District is not required to extend retail water or sewer utility service to a service applicant in a subdivision where the developer of the subdivision has failed to comply with the Subdivision Policy.

Applicable elements of the Subdivision Policy include:

Evaluation by _____ Water Supply Corporation/Special Utility District of the impact a proposed subdivision service extension will make on _____ Water Supply Corporation's/ Special Utility

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District's water supply/sewer service system and payment of the costs for this evaluation;

Payment of reasonable costs or fees by the developer for providing water supply/sewer service capacity;

Payment of fees for reserving water supply/sewer service capacity;

Forfeiture of reserved water supply/sewer service capacity for failure to pay applicable fees;

Payment of costs of any improvements to _____ Water Supply Corporation's/Special Utility District's system that are necessary to provide the water/sewer service;

Construction according to design approved by _____ Water Supply Corporation/Special Utility District and dedication by the developer of water/sewer facilities within the subdivision following inspection.

_____ Water Supply Corporation's/Special Utility District's tariff and a map showing _____ Water Supply Corporation's/Special Utility District's service area may be reviewed at _____ Water Supply Corporation's/ Special Utility District's offices, at {address of the water supply corporation/special utility district}; the tariff/policy and service area map also are filed of record at the Public Utility Commission of Texas.

- (3) As an alternative to publication of notice, a corporation or special utility district may demonstrate by any reasonable means that a developer has been notified of the requirement to comply with the subdivision service extension policy, including:
- (A) an agreement executed by the developer;
 - (B) correspondence with the developer that sets forth the subdivision service extension policy; or
 - (C) any other documentation that reasonably establishes that the developer should be aware of the subdivision service extension policy.
- (4) For purposes of this subsection:
- (A) "Developer" means a person who subdivides land or requests more than two water or sewer service connections on a single contiguous tract of land.
 - (B) "Service applicant" means a person, other than a developer, who applies for water or sewer utility service.