

# News from the Source

LCA Customer Newsletter - SUBURBAN DIVISION

Información importante de su compañía de agua.

January – March 2016

## Winter Freeze Alert!

**Have you checked on your water meter lately?** Now that winter is here, it's a good time to ensure your meter is protected from freezing. Remember that while Lehigh County Authority owns the meter, the water customer is responsible for protecting it.

**If the water meter is broken because of freezing or other damage,** LCA will charge the customer for the meter's replacement.

Most water meters and pipes are in basements, crawl spaces, and other unheated areas, where they could freeze. **Insulating your meter is a simple way to protect it.** The easiest way to insulate a water meter is with a specially made cover. If you're not sure what kind to purchase, check with a plumbing supplier.

**If your pipes or meter are in an unheated crawl space, they'll need to be insulated.** You may want to invest in "heat tape" — available most places plumbing supplies are sold — to wrap around the pipes and meter. If you're unable or unsure how to do this, contact



an electrician or plumber to be certain it's done properly.

**Turn off water to outside faucets** (there should be shutoff valves inside the house). Never shut off heat when you are away. Lower the thermostat instead — shutting off the heat can lead to frozen pipes.

### Contacting LCA:

Online: [www.lehighcountyauthority.org](http://www.lehighcountyauthority.org)

Phone: 610-398-1444

Visit: 1053 Spruce Road

Wescosville, PA 18106

Mail: PO Box 3348

Allentown, PA 18106

Email: [service@lehighcountyauthority.org](mailto:service@lehighcountyauthority.org)

Hours: 8:15 a.m. - 4:45 p.m. weekdays

## ***Renters, take note***

When you moved in, did you and your landlord complete a **Tenant Authorization Form**? If you have water service through LCA, you and your landlord must jointly complete this form to document your understanding of your respective roles, responsibilities and fees. You can obtain the form on our website:

***[lehighcountyauthority.org/wp-content/uploads/TenantAuthorizationForm.pdf](http://lehighcountyauthority.org/wp-content/uploads/TenantAuthorizationForm.pdf)***

LCA will terminate service for unpaid water / sewer bills, regardless of tenant / landlord billing responsibility. We will do our best to notify all parties of this action prior to service termination.

When a tenant moves out, the tenant's final bill with all remaining charges will be billed to the landlord. This bill must be paid before we will begin billing for a new tenant.

A landlord's water / sewer bill must be paid in full before we can begin billing a tenant for utility services.

If a tenant moves out / in and LCA is not notified before the next regular quarterly bill is issued, we will not recalculate the prior bill. The current bill should be paid in full, and we will issue the final bill as of the date of the last regular bill.

## ***Meter tampering is prohibited!***

### **Plumbers — call before you work**

Tampering with your water meter is strictly prohibited by LCA through our Rules & Regulations for service. If you need a copy of our Rules, they are available for download on our website at [www.lehighcountyauthority.org](http://www.lehighcountyauthority.org).

**Penalties will be applied** if LCA suspects your meter has been tampered with. This could involve removing the meter without LCA authorization, breaking the seal on the water meter, or any other damage to the meter caused by a customer or plumber without LCA's authorization. Penalties and fines may include one-time fines, all costs associated with replacing a meter, and estimated usage for all billing periods where an actual meter reading cannot be obtained.

**An important note for plumbers:** Please contact Lehigh County Authority before doing any work involving a meter. An incorrect meter hookup can cause expensive damage to the meter and plumbing system. It can also cause backflow problems.



**The New Customer Fee** (\$15) will be assessed every time billing responsibility changes, if a final bill is issued. This is a required fee that covers the cost of a technician visiting the property to take a final water meter reading, and to process and mail a final bill.

Because water and sewer utility service is tied to the property and cannot move from the property (unlike cable or cell phone service), LCA reserves the right to place a property lien for unpaid bills, in addition to pursuing service termination. As a result, it is important the landlords receive notice when their tenants become delinquent on their water / sewer bill. LCA sends duplicate copies of all past-due notices to both tenants and landlords.