



APRIL 2020

# Our response to COVID-19



**We want to assure you that we take the health and well-being of our community, customers, and employees very seriously. Like you, we're closely monitoring the quickly developing effects of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.**

Our response is evolving, and we've made some significant changes to protect you and our workforce. Even in this ever-changing environment, our commitment to delivering you safe, reliable water and power remains the same.

We are more than just your local water and power utility. We are your friends and neighbors. We live and work here, too. Our board members are customers. While these are unprecedented times, we are all in this together and call the Spokane Valley home.

## **Thank you for the opportunity to be of service.**

If you have any questions, please give us a call at 888-774-8272 or 509-924-3800 or visit our website at [verawaterandpower.com](http://verawaterandpower.com). **Be well. Stay home. Stay safe.**

## **Safety first:** Operational changes to protect you and our workforce.

In compliance with Gov. Inslee's emergency order we have implemented the following for social distancing:

- **Our lobby is closed to the public.** While our lobby is closed, you can always reach us at 888-774-8272. Vera representatives are reporting to the office Mondays through Fridays from 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. After 11:30 a.m. and on weekends, our call center is answering our phones.
- **Our crews are responding only to essential calls.**
- **Crew members are not entering individual homes.**  
We will no longer enter a customer's home to read a meter. For closing reads of an interior meter, take a photo of the meter and email to [moving@verawaterandpower.com](mailto:moving@verawaterandpower.com).
- In general, **we have suspended new construction.**

By taking these measures and reducing these services, our goal is to keep our staff safe and available to respond in the event of an emergency-related outage.

For details about our adjustments, visit [verawaterandpower.com](http://verawaterandpower.com).



**Our staff and crews remain committed to providing safe, affordable, and reliable water and power to our community.**

**CONTACT VERA AT:  
888-774-8272**  
VERAWATERANDPOWER.COM

**Having problems paying your Vera Water and Power utility bill?  
See our helpful information on the other side. We are here to help!**



# Helpful customer information

## In response to the Governor's request to suspend late fees and disconnects:

- All customers affected by this pandemic – **who work with us** – will avoid disconnection of service and credit action. But we need to hear from you.
- Additionally, we have **suspended late fees** and blue disconnection door hangers. We will send a second reminder letter in lieu of door hangers and are waiving the associated fees.
- While we have implemented late-fee forgiveness and are willing to work with you to avoid disconnection during this difficult time, remember that **utility billing continues**. Skipping a payment now will create a higher cumulative bill. Please call us at 509-924-3800 to arrange a payment plan. The best time to call is Mondays through Fridays between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
- Costs and fees incurred **prior** to this emergency are not affected. Customers who are already delinquent will not incur further costs or be disconnected if they are working with us.

**Find state, county, and community COVID-19 financial resources at [verawaterandpower.com](http://verawaterandpower.com)**

## Please call us!

**If you are experiencing trouble paying your bill due to the pandemic, it is imperative that you call us to make arrangements.**

**CALL: 509-924-3800  
Mon-Fri | 7:30 - 11:30AM**

We will continue to look for ways to further support the needs of our customers and our community through the duration of the pandemic.

## Changes to public meetings

As a community-owned, not-for-profit utility, our board of director meetings are open to the public. Should our board meet electronically, we are required to have a speaker phone at the normal meeting location for public use. *Under Gov. Inslee's emergency order, this requirement has been waived.*



If our board meets electronically, we plan to hold our regular public meetings similar to school board meetings or local city councils. The public will be given a dial-in number and access codes to participate remotely.

Check [verawaterandpower.com](http://verawaterandpower.com) for board meeting updates.

## Delays to public records requests

Typically, we must respond to any public record request within five days. Gov. Inslee's emergency COVID-19 proclamation waives this requirement. Therefore, during this pandemic, when we receive a public information request, we will attempt to respond within five days. Due to the lack of manpower at this time, public records requests that require a manual search of the records will be delayed until the Governor's emergency order has expired.

For details on how to request a public record, go to [verawaterandpower.com/faq](http://verawaterandpower.com/faq).



## Be aware of scammers

Emergencies and unprecedented events offer opportunities for scammers to launch fraudulent campaigns that feed off the climate of concern. Specifically, scammers are taking advantage of the COVID-19 outbreak to send fraudulent emails, texts, etc.

Beware of scams asking for personal information or immediate payment, and NEVER click on a suspicious link or attachment.

