**Section 280.60 Payment**

a) Intent: This Section describes the methods of payment for utility service; recording of payment receipt; determining lateness of payment; allocation of payment amounts to the customer's account; and limitations on payment methods for accounts on which returned payments have been made.

b) Method of Payment:

1) At a minimum, the utility shall provide detailed information about all methods of payments on the utility's website and in the customer information packet required in this Section.

2) The utility's bill to the customer shall advise the customer how to obtain information on the available payment methods. When contacted by a customer inquiring about making a payment, the utility's customer service personnel shall advise the customer of the available methods of payment, including the most expedient and least cost methods of available payment.

3) When a utility determines that it will no longer accept a specific alternative method of payment, it shall provide advance notice to the affected customers.

c) Late Payment:

1) Payment is late when it has not been received by the utility within two days after the due date on the bill.

2) The date a payment or payment instrument is presented to or arrives at the utility or its agent/vendor is the date of payment receipt.

3) A utility shall not wait until funds are transferred or posted to the utility bank account for purposes of determining payment receipt.

d) Late Fees:

1) If a utility elects to assess late fees, it shall file a tariff describing the late fees.

2) Late fees shall not exceed 1.5% per month assessed towards any undisputed amounts remaining unpaid for more than two days after the due date on a bill.

3) Late fees may be assessed on undisputed overdue budget installment amounts (not the accumulated uncollected budget plan payment balance) owing on a budget payment plan when there is an overall deficit credit balance in an account, as an alternative to termination of participation in the plan for late payment.

4) A utility shall not continue to assess late fees on any final bill that has been outstanding for more than six months.

5) Late fees shall not be assessed on any amount billed that is not for utility service unless otherwise authorized by statute.

6) Late fees for units of State government shall be assessed according to the State Prompt Payment Act [30 ILCS 540]. No late payment charges shall be assessed on the amounts owing on units of county and local government (including, but not limited to, townships, municipalities and school districts) until 45 days after the date of the issuance of the bill for utility service.

e) Returned Payments:

1) Limiting: A utility shall not limit a customer from paying by any of the available methods acceptable to the utility unless the customer has provided one or more returned payments in the past 12 months, without an explanation from the customer's financial institution that the returned payment was not the customer's fault.

2) Notice: A utility shall notify a customer when it will no longer accept a form of payment from the customer as a result of returned payment.