



City of Melissa
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News Release

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Utility Billing clarifies practice of credit, debit card fees

MELISSA (June 10, 2021) In line with practically all retailers, merchants, companies, and other types of organizations that use third-party payers, the City of Melissa Utility Billing has been required to adopt the practice of passing service charges by credit and debit card companies to residents who use these methods for paying their utility bills.

"It has been an accepted standard practice for credit and debit card companies for some time," says Customer Relations Director Chris Thatcher. "These companies charge a small fee for the convenience of using their respective card, and we have no recourse but to pass the charge along to the user. Residents who choose this method should be aware that the charge does not originate with Utility Billing, but with their credit and debit card companies."

The service charge, a minimum of \$1 and a maximum of 2.8 percent of the total bill, is associated with credit and debit card payments used through the online payment option (<https://www.municipalonlinepayments.com/melissatx>), as well as those who pay their utility bill by those using the IVR (interactive voice response) at 866-261-7377. Both of these options also add a \$1.25 processing fee, separate from the credit card convenience fee surcharge.

Credit and debit card users who want to avoid the \$1.25 processing fee charged by the online and IVR methods may bring their card to Utility Billing at City Hall, 3411 Barker Ave., and pay. The credit card convenience fee of either \$1 or 2.8 percent of the total applies, though. Also, calling Utility Billing at (972) 838-2035 and providing a credit or debit card number is another way to avoid the \$1.25 processing fee, but it does incur the credit or debit card convenience fee of \$1 or 2.8 percent.

Even so, the City of Melissa lists several ways to pay utility bills with no additional charges. Residents with a bill pay feature within their bank accounts may use that service, which is often at no charge depending on the bank's policies. Residents should be mindful that this process can take between seven to 10 days for full processing and should plan their payment accordingly.

Utility Billing can also draft the amount from a checking or savings account when residents sign up for that service by either providing a voided check or the routing and account numbers to their bank accounts.

While not as convenient as a credit card or drafting from a bank account, residents may pay with cash or a check in person. A check made out to City of Melissa, may also be dropped into the drop box in front of City Hall. Cash should never be left in the drop box.

A check made out to the City of Melissa may be mailed to Melissa Utility Billing, 3411 Barker Ave., Melissa, TX 75454 or to the lock box at City of Melissa, Bank Lock Box, Department Number 531. P.O. Box 3689, Sugar Land, TX 77487.

"We're happy to work with our residents to find the right payment method for them," said Thatcher. "We welcome calls to (972) 838-2035 or emails to ub@cityofmelissa.com to get the right system in place for each customer."

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ABOUT THE CITY OF MELISSA – The City of Melissa is a fast-growing progressive suburb with a small-town feel, located 35 miles north of downtown Dallas in the dynamic growth area of northeast Collin County. Melissa sits on 21 square miles, is home to over 16,000 people, and is easily accessible by way of three intersecting highways. Melissa has ample inventory of the highly-sought-after undeveloped frontage available on US 75 and SH 121, primed to serve the commercial needs of a booming Collin County. Melissa is a home-rule municipality, governed by a council-manager form of government.