



<b>Policy#</b>	1201		
<b>Policy Name</b>	Facility Access Policy		
<b>Department</b>	Safety		
<b>Policy Owner Title</b>	Safety Manager		
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<b>Approval Authority</b>	Board of Commissioners		
<b>Policy Directive Required?</b>	Yes		

## FACILITY ACCESS POLICY

### I. PURPOSE

- A. The information contained in this document is intended to provide our Customers and their architects, engineers, building, electrical, landscape, and plumbing contractors with specific details and technical information which will enable the District to best serve our Customers.

### II. REQUIREMENTS

- A. All requirements are based on PUD policies and standards as well as national, state, and local electrical and building codes. Their application is necessary to ensure a safe working environment for PUD employees, as well as provide safe, reliable, efficient and low-cost utility services to all of our Customers.

### III. DISTRICT RIGHTS

- A. The District shall have the right, through its agents or employees, to safely enter the property of the Customer at all times for the purpose of: reading, inspecting, repairing, or removing metering devices, equipment, and conductors of the District; trimming or removing trees and brush around meters, transformers, or other equipment and conductors that may interfere with the safe and efficient operation of the utility system; maintenance of utility lines, both overhead and underground; and inspection, replacement, installation and removal of District facilities.

#### **IV. CUSTOMER RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. The Customer shall not permit access to District equipment or lines by anyone other than authorized representatives of the District. The Customer shall obtain and grant all necessary permission to enable District Representatives to install, maintain, service, or remove its facilities located on the Customer's property.
- B. Facilities installed on Customer property will be in accordance with current District regulations, requirements, and policies that give consideration for present and future access.
- C. The Customer shall keep the area around all meters, transformers, and other District facilities on the Customer's property free of vegetation, health and safety hazards, debris, and obstructions; to ensure clear and safe access at all times.

#### **V. ELECTRIC METERS AND METERING EQUIPMENT**

- A. When deemed feasible by District Representative for underground service installations, the meter shall be installed on a Customer provided remote meter pedestal adjacent to the pad-mounted transformer or secondary pedestal located on the Customer's property or another location that provides safe and unrestricted access at all times; such as at the end of or along their driveway; or along their property line adjoining an alley or street.
- B. When remote meter pedestal installation is not feasible, or when overhead service is required, the meter may be installed on a service pole; attached on the outside surface of the Customer's house or other building in a location pre-approved by a District Representative in accordance with current District Requirements that allow safe and unrestricted access at all times.
- C. All electric meters, Residential and Commercial, installed on the outside of a building or on a remote meter pedestal shall be located at the closest point feasible to the service drop or lateral termination, or shall be installed as close to the nearest and most convenient point of access to the Customer's property as possible. (See Electrical Service Requirements Drawing - # 12).
- D. The District shall determine the location of the remote metering pedestal, service entrance, service pole, or other metering equipment prior to installation. Customers who install wiring or equipment without an approved location from a District Representative shall be at risk of having to change the service location to conform to the requirements of the District. This requirement applies to all new installations and future modifications or repair work where the meter and/or service equipment is involved.

- E. Meters shall not be located at the rear of houses or buildings without pre-approval from a District Representative and safe and unrestricted access is provided at all times from an alley or street along the property line directly behind or on either side of the house or building. (See Electrical Requirements Drawing - #12).
- F. Meters shall not be enclosed or the installation modified in such a way so as to impede safe and convenient access to the meter and associated equipment. Nothing shall hinder or prevent the inspection, removal or installation of meters and other metering equipment, meter rings, meter seals or other locking devices.
- G. Meters shall not be enclosed in garages, carports, breezeways, porches, or in locations where subsequent additions, rewiring, or remodeling could enclose the meter.
- H. A remote meter pedestal shall be installed with the center of the meter between 3' and 4' above grade with a minimum clearance of 6' in front and 3' from both sides and back of the remote meter pedestal. No obstruction that restricts access to the meter pedestal shall be allowed within 8' above grade. (See Electrical Service Requirements Drawings - # 14, 15, 16, & 17)
- I. Meters and metering equipment installed on buildings must be surface - or flush - mounted and not recessed; the center of the meter shall be between 5' and 6' above grade with no obstructions allowed within 3' above the top of the meter base or metering equipment; and have a minimum clearance of:6' in front and 2' on either side of the meter base or metering equipment to telephone or CATV equipment, satellite dishes, down spouts, doors, steps, decks, chimneys, shutters, or other building projections. (See Electrical Service Requirements Drawing - # 11).
- J. Metering equipment installed on a District service pole shall utilize standoff brackets with between 5' and 6' above grade to the center of the meter and with a minimum clearance of 6' in front and 2' on the side and back of the meter. When feasible, a minimum clearance of 6' around the entire pole shall be maintained free of obstructing vegetation, trash, debris, vehicles, etc. (See Electrical Service Requirements Drawings - # 7 & 8).
- K. The access distance requirements for remote meter pedestals, meters on buildings or service poles and other metering equipment prohibits the installation of fences, propane tanks, decks, air conditioning equipment, buildings, posts, drums, storage shelves, piping, steps, pumps, etc. within the required access distances.
- L. Obstructive landscaping, brush, and trees shall not be planted or allowed to encroach within the required access areas. Garbage, lumber, wood, debris, vehicles, RVs and other obstructions must be kept clear of the required access distances.

- M. Fuel storage tanks, including propane tanks, shall not be installed within 6' of any District metering equipment.
- N. All pathways providing access to any meter shall be a minimum of 3' in width and shall be kept clear of all obstacles and safety hazards, including, but not limited to, landscaping, brush, debris, obstructions, holes, aggressive or dangerous animals, etc.
- O. Any pathway on the Customer's property that encounters an open ditch of any type over 2' wide shall have a flat, solid, and structurally stable walkway, 2' wide with a skid-free surface spanning the entire width of the ditch.
- P. Any walkway on the Customer's property constructed over an open ditch with a width and/or depth of 3' or more shall have a structurally sound handrail along the entire length of the walkway that will not flex more than 1/2" when subjected to a side load of 40 pounds per square foot along the entire length of the handrail.
- Q. All walkways over ditches must provide a minimum of 1' clearance above any water or hazard in the ditch and must not sag more than 1" the entire length of the walkway when subjected to a weight of 300 pounds per square foot.
- R. When a meter becomes more than 6' above grade, a permanent meter access platform and steps with a skid-free surface must be installed by the Customer that meets or exceeds the current local ***Uniform Building Code*** (UBC) and must be pre-approved by a District Representative, and maintained at the Customer's expense. After construction, the center of the meter must be between 5' and 6' above the surface of the platform. (See Electrical Service Requirements – Drawing # 13).
- S. If, as a result of an action of the Customer that causes the meter to become more than 6' above grade and in the opinion of the District it is feasible and preferable to lower the metering equipment to a location between 5' and 6' above grade, the metering equipment shall be lowered at the Customer's expense to comply with ***District Electrical Service Requirements*** and ***Facility Access Policy***.
- T. In flood areas, the bottom of the meter device must be raised a minimum of 3' above the highest water line on record. If necessary to raise a meter more than 6' above grade, a permanent platform and steps with a skid-free surface shall be installed by the Customer that meets or exceeds the current local UBC and maintained at the Customer's expense. A platform constructed 3' or more above grade must have a secure 3' high handrail installed on the steps and platform that meets or exceeds the local UBC. After the platform is constructed, the center of the meter must be between 5' and 6' above the platform surface. A District Representative must be consulted for approval prior to construction. (See Electrical Service Requirements - Drawing# 13).

## **VI. WATER METERS AND OTHER WATER EQUIPMENT**

- A. When feasible, the water meter shall be installed at the end of the Customer's driveway near the street or along the property line adjoining a street. Meters shall not be installed at the rear of the property unless an alley or street allows unrestricted access with a truck. All water meter installations must be pre-approved by the District.
- B. The Customer shall maintain a minimum clearance of 6' on all sides of the water meter or other water equipment located on the Customer's property; free of debris, landscaping, brush, trees, and other obstructions. At no time shall any obstruction, debris, vehicle, RV, etc. be placed or parked on top of a water meter.
- C. Paths and walkways spanning ditches accessing water meters and other water equipment on a Customer's property shall have the same requirements as previously outlined for electric meters and equipment.
- D. At no time shall access to the District's water meters or equipment on the Customer's property be denied as a result of fences with locked gates, landscaping, trees, buildings, debris, vehicles, aggressive or dangerous animals, or other obstructions.

## **VII. PADMOUNT TRANSFORMERS AND OTHER PADMOUNT EQUIPMENT**

- A. The Customer shall maintain a minimum clearance of 10' in the direction of all doors on pad-mounted equipment located on their property; whether in front, back or on the sides of the equipment. A minimum clearance of 3' shall be maintained on sides or back of pad-mounted equipment without doors. A minimum clearance of 15' shall be maintained between District pad-mounted equipment and combustible fuel storage tanks including propane tanks. At no time shall any obstruction be built or placed on or above District pad-mounted equipment. (See Electrical Service Requirements Drawing - # 34)
- B. Except when precluded by service voltage drop limits, pad-mounted equipment and substructures shall be installed near property lines and along streets or unrestricted drive frontage such that the pad-mounted equipment is readily accessible at all times by truck. (See Electrical Service Requirements Drawing - # 12 & 34)
- C. Transformers and other equipment shall not be located at the rear of the Customer's property unless unrestricted access is available by truck from an alley or street along their property line.
- D. At no time shall access to the District's pad-mounted transformers and other padmounted equipment on the Customer's property be blocked by fences with locked gates, landscaping, trees, buildings, debris, vehicles, aggressive or dangerous animals, or other obstructions.

## **VIII. POLES**

- A. When feasible, all District poles located on a Customer's property shall have a minimum of 6' of unobstructed clearance around the pole and shall be located in an area accessible at all times by District truck.
- B. No equipment, devices, or wiring, other than service entrance equipment belonging to a Customer, shall be attached to District-owned poles except with approval and by contract with the District. Any such attachments shall only be allowed in strict accordance with District specifications and regulations.
- C. Customers and the general public are not allowed to attach satellite dishes, antennas, clothes lines, ropes, signs, fences or any other equipment to; drive nails or staples into; or deface District-owned poles.
- D. District poles shall not be enclosed or obstructed in any way that will prevent the District's safe access by truck for maintenance, inspection, repair, replacement, or removal.

## **IX. POWER LINES**

- A. Overhead power lines shall be accessible at all times for inspection, vegetation management, maintenance, repair, or replacement by authorized District Representatives or other utilities contractually authorized to attach their equipment to District poles.
- B. All surface areas above underground cables, whether direct buried or in conduit, must be accessible for future District operations including, but not limited to, maintenance, location, repair, and replacement. The Customer shall not construct any structure, obstruction, or landscaping, over the buried cable route that would restrict access at any time. In the course of facility maintenance or replacement in easement areas, the District is not responsible for restoring such structure, obstruction, or landscaping to the original condition.

## **X. AGGRESSIVE OR DANGEROUS ANIMALS**

- A. A Customer's aggressive or dangerous animals shall, at all times, be kept restrained a minimum distance of 25' from all meters, transformers, poles, and other District facilities on the Customer's property; including pathways required to access District facilities on the Customer's property. If 25' cannot be maintained, the animal must be kept inside a secure building or enclosure at all times to prevent its interfering with District Representatives' safe access to District equipment.
- B. Customers with aggressive or dangerous animals that harm, threaten, or in any way endanger a District Representative will immediately be reported to the appropriate authorities.

## **XI. FAILURE TO COMPLY**

- A. Customers with unrestrained aggressive or dangerous animals, Customers who in any way prevent or are unable to allow District Representatives safe and unobstructed access at all times to District facilities located on the Customer's property, or Customers who otherwise violate the ***District Electrical Service Requirements*** and ***Facility Access Policy*** shall choose among those applicable options in Sections 12 and 13 below, or face the consequences of Section 14 below.

## **XII. CUSTOMER OPTIONS OF VOLUNTARY COMPLIANCE REQUIRING NO ADDITIONAL DISTRICT FEES**

- A. The District will not charge an additional fee to Customers who voluntarily comply with the ***District Electrical Service Requirements*** and ***Facility Access Policy*** within (30) thirty days of being notified by doing one of the following, provided the option chosen resolves the access issue.
1. Permanently remove the safety hazard, debris or obstruction; trim or remove brush or other vegetation; or take action in any other way necessary to comply with the District's required access distances.
  2. If a Customer has a padlocked gate, allow the installation of a District padlock to ensure that both the Customer and District Representatives have access at all times to the Customer's property and District facilities.
  3. Install a lockbox of their choice on or near their gate that will allow a District padlock to be installed. The lockbox will hold the Customer key or code allowing authorized District Representatives required access.
  4. Program a District code, unique to each Customer, into the locking mechanism on their electronic gate.
  5. Keep aggressive or dangerous animals at least 25' from District equipment and pathways or otherwise kenneled, penned, or secured, thus allowing District Representatives safe access at all times to District facilities on the Customer's property.

### **XIII. CUSTOMER OPTIONS REQUIRING ADDITIONAL FEES TO BE PAID BY THE CUSTOMER**

- A. If the Customer does not wish to voluntarily comply with *District Electrical Service Requirements* and *Facility Access Policy*, after having gone through the District's notification process, the Customer shall choose one of the following options, provided the option resolves the access issue, and shall pay all expenses charged to the Customer for such services:
1. Pay to have vegetation removed by the District from around meters, services poles, transformers, and other equipment.
  2. Pay all costs to have the Customer's and/or District facilities moved to a location on their property where safe and unobstructed access by District Representatives is allowed.
  3. Pay to have the District install a lockbox on or near the Customer's gate.
  4. Pay to have remote meter reading equipment installed on their property.
  5. Pay an access appointment fee if a Customer requires an appointment in advance to allow District Representatives entry to their property when it becomes necessary to access District facilities for the purpose of routine inspection, maintenance, repair, replacement or removal. This option does not pertain to routine monthly meter reading.
- B. All costs, with the exception of item "2", shall be in accordance with the current *District Schedule of Deposits and Charges*. Costs to Customers falling in category "2" shall be on a case-by-case basis. Customer shall sign any and all documents reasonably required by the District to assure Customer pays for the costs, fees and charges incurred.

### **VIX. CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATIONS**

- A. Failure to comply with the current *District Electrical Service Requirements* and *Facility Access Policy* or pay any fees, costs or charges when due will result in any or all of the following:
1. Discontinuation of the Customer's services;
  2. A deposit charged to their account until the requirements of the District have been met;
  3. If fees, costs or charges are outstanding, restriction on Customer opening additional accounts with the District until the amount is paid; and/or
  4. Legal or other action as may be available to the District to collect those debts owed.



## **XV. EMERGENCIES AND OUTAGES**

- A. The District requires safe and unobstructed access to its facilities at all times when outages occur or when property or life is threatened by unsafe conditions. Customers preventing immediate and unobstructed access to District facilities on their property, when outages or emergencies exist, will be held liable for damages and will be responsible for the cost to repair or replace damaged District facilities resulting from the inability to make emergency repairs in a timely manner.

## **XVI. VEGETATION MANAGEMENT**

- A. After having been notified by the District, Property owners who prevent District Representatives from accessing a tree on their property for the purpose of trimming or removal, that has been identified as a "danger tree" by a certified Arborist, and is in danger of falling onto the District's power lines or other District equipment, will be held responsible for all costs of repair and power restoration, should the "danger tree" fall onto the District's power lines or other District equipment.

## **XVII. PRIVATELY CONSTRUCTED ROADWAYS, DRIVEWAYS, AND BRIDGES**

- A. Personnel and equipment of the District, are in many instances required to gain access to Customer's property by traversing privately owned access routes. In many instances the access routes include privately constructed roadways, driveways and bridges that have not been constructed or maintained in accordance with state or county standards.
- B. While the Board of Commissioners of the District recognizes the responsibility to provide services to all persons and properties within the District, it also recognizes its responsibility to use reasonable means to protect District personnel and equipment from unreasonable risks that could result in injury to persons or damage to property.
- C. In order to provide reasonable protection to District personnel and equipment without impairing the District's ability to provide service in all parts of the District, it is the policy of the District to impose the following requirements and conditions.
- D. The District requires that all privately owned bridges have the maximum weight limit of the bridge, as determined by a qualified engineer, conspicuously posted on or adjacent to the bridge. The property owner shall furnish a copy of the engineering inspection report to the District.
- E. In the event any bridge shall not be inspected or posted as required above, or in the event the weight of District vehicles shall exceed the posted limit, vehicles, other than light-weight vehicles, shall not be permitted to cross such bridge.
- F. In the event the District should discover any private roads, over which District vehicles would be required to travel, that are deemed to be unsafe or unusable in the

opinion of District personnel because of road grade, road width, unstable surface conditions, vehicle height limitations or other factors, the District vehicles shall not be permitted to travel on such roads.

- G. In the event that District personnel shall become aware of any unsafe or un-posted bridge or unsafe private roadways, the District shall notify the reputed owners of all improved properties served by such bridge or roadway in writing of such fact as soon as is reasonably possible.