



## Neighbors Helping Neighbors

### Creation

The Neighbors Helping Neighbors program is hereby created to provide temporary financial assistance with water and sewer bills to individuals and families who are customers of the Kingston Water Department.

### Operation of Program

Water and Sewer customers will have the opportunity to voluntarily contribute \$1.00 per month, payable as an added surcharge to their regular bill. Contributions received will be accounted for in accordance with generally accepted accounting procedures and placed in an account titled "Water and Sewer Assistance Program". Only contributed funds will be placed in the account. These funds shall be used solely for providing financial assistance to Kingston water and sewer customers and for no other purpose. To ensure that funds will be available and that the account will remain solvent, no applications will be accepted until the Water and Sewer Assistance Program fund reaches an initial balance of \$1,000.00 and the total available for disbursement for a given month shall not exceed the amount received the prior month. The Water Department must receive advance authorization from the customer, in writing, prior to adding a surcharge to any account. Upon request by the customer, the surcharge will be removed at the next billing cycle.

### Application for Financial Assistance

Any residential customer of the Kingston Water Department shall be eligible to make application for financial assistance through the Neighbors Helping Neighbors program. The application will require the applicant to provide updated contact information, income and expense verification and a statement outlining the need for assistance. All applications will be kept on file and will remain confidential.

### Creation of Review Committee

A Review Committee shall be created to review all applications submitted, determine the applicant's eligibility for assistance and thereafter grant or deny the application. The Committee shall consist of the City Manager, The Water Department Billing Clerk, and the Water Department Superintendent. The Committee will review applications monthly and minutes of the meetings will be kept and provided to the Water Board. To protect the privacy of applicants, any reporting of assistance provided shall omit names, addresses or any other information that may identify the applicant. All votes to provide assistance must be unanimous.

### Eligibility for Assistance

To be eligible for assistance, the following criteria must be met:

- Applicant must be the account holder or provide written authorization allowing a person or agency to apply on his / her behalf.
- An applicant must not have received assistance through this program in the last 12 months.
- Applicant must agree to pay any balance due above and beyond the amount of assistance approved prior to receiving relief. If the remaining amount exceeds \$200 the applicant will be allowed to split the amount in to two consecutive monthly payments above and beyond their regular bill, with the understanding that failure to pay as promised will disqualify them from any future assistance.

### Payment of Assistance

Upon approval from the Relief Committee, the approved amount will be debited from the Water and Sewer Assistance Program fund and applied to the customer's account. The amount of assistance will be determined at the sole discretion of the Review Committee on a case by case basis. There is no right to assistance and continuation of this program will be contingent on the availability of sufficient funds.