

# Frequently Asked Questions

Updated 03-16-2023

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## **1. What is Jefferson County RWD #13?**

Jefferson County RWD #13 is a water district established in 1974. The District is set up as a Quasi-Municipality (not-for-profit). The RWD #13 water lines provide potable drinking water to patrons of the District and City of McLouth and Leavenworth County RWD #10. There are 1107 Benefit Unit owners as of March 1, 2023. We operate in three counties (Jefferson, Leavenworth, Douglas) and are governed by a seven-member Board of Directors elected by the membership for staggered 3-year terms. Board meetings are generally held at the District Office at 1951 Wellman Rd., on the third Thursday of the month, 7:00 p.m. The annual meeting is held on the third Thursday of March, 7:00 p.m., location is determined in December.

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## **2. Where do I find the Rules & Regulations and Bylaws of the District?**

These documents may be found on our website: [www.jfrwd13.com](http://www.jfrwd13.com) or stop by the office to pick up a set. We encourage you to be familiar with District policies.

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### **3. How do I become a water patron?**

The first step in becoming a patron of Jefferson County RWD #13 is completing a Request for Water Service Feasibility form. The form may be found at our website or the Office Manager will email or mail you the form. Once this form is completed and returned to the District Office, along with a \$100.00 non-refundable fee, the District engineer will evaluate the service location for sufficient water service availability. If the feasibility study is approved, you have 120 days to submit the Benefit Unit Application and Water Users Agreement along with payment in full for all fixed costs. The fixed costs will be detailed in the approval letter. You will be responsible to pay for the fixed costs prior to installation. Any additional variable costs must be paid before service to a meter may begin.

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### **4. What is the source of the water?**

The District has two wells south of the water plant at 1915 E. 1600 Rd.

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### **5. Where will be meter be placed?**

Meters are set within 15 feet of the water main and generally on one side or the other of the driveway.

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### **6. Who installs the service line?**

You are responsible for the service line and it is installed by someone you hire. The District is responsible up to the meter pit only.

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### **7. When must I begin to pay the monthly minimum?**

The minimum monthly charge is imposed when a Benefit Unit is purchased, a Benefit Unit number is assigned and when service is made available regardless of when a meter is installed, or water is used. The minimum includes zero water usage.

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### **8. What is the monthly cost of the services for a standard 5/8" meter?**

Current rates are \$36.00 monthly minimum (includes no water) and \$6.50 per 1,000 gallons.

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## **9. Who reads the meter?**

The District hires contract labor to read the meters. The same family has been reading the meters for many years and they are dedicated to doing the job right.

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## **10. When are the meters read and what are the billing terms?**

The meters are read over the last four days of the month and the billing statements generally go out on the first of the month. Payment is always due by the 16th of the month. Late fees (10%) are calculated on the 17th, and late notices are mailed on the 20th. Any account that is delinquent for two billing cycles will have their service terminated until the bill is paid in full along with the \$50.00 reconnect fee. If you dispute any part of the bill, you have the right to appear and be heard at a hearing. See the Rules & Regulations for more information.

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## **11. What are the bill payment options?**

You may pay by cash, check or money order at the District Office during regular business hours. Checks and money orders may be placed through the drop slot in the front door of the office. We also have an Automatic Payment Plan (ACH) option. With this option there is a form to fill out and return along with a voided check. The bill payment will draft from your bank account on the 16th or next business day. Another option is through Payment Service Network: view & pay your bill online, pay by phone, and optional paperless billing. Call the office or check the website for details.

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## **12. What is the benefit unit/meter forfeiture procedure?**

Per the Bylaws, a Benefit Unit/Meter shall be subject to forfeiture any time that the monthly minimum charge or charge for metered water remains unpaid for six months or longer after becoming first due and payable. Forfeiture shall occur only in accordance with the procedure as detailed in the Bylaws (Section 7, page 5). See page 4 of the Rules & Regulations for details on reinstatement of a Benefit Unit forfeited for non-payment of fees and charges.

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## **13. What if I cause damage in the meter pit?**

Purchase and ownership of any Benefit Unit located in the boundaries of R.W.D. #13 Jefferson County does not give authority to any water patron to conduct work (repairs, replacement, etc.) in the water meter pit. Such work is the sole responsibility of R.W.D. #13 Jefferson County. The water patron will be financially responsible for any and all damage to the equipment caused by the water patron or any representative for the water patron. This bill will be added to the patron's usual monthly water bill which will make it subject to any and all late charges. Dispute of this bill falls under the same terms and conditions set forth in the Rules and Regulations as the usual monthly water bill.

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#### **14. How do I get a copy of the Water Quality Report (CCR)?**

The Water Quality Report is posted on our website or contact the office to request a copy.

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#### **15. What do I do if I notice a change in water quality (color, clarity, taste, odor)**

If you experience any change in the water quality, call the office at 785-842-1502 during regular business hours. After hours, call the office and the greeting will reflect the phone number of the person on call.

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#### **16. What do I do if I notice a change in water pressure?**

With any change in water pressure, call the office at 785-842-1502 during regular business hours. After hours, call the office and the greeting will reflect the phone number of the person on call.

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#### **17. What do I do if I think I have a leak?**

\*Locate your water meter. On the face of the meter there is a leak indicator in the shape of a triangle. If the triangle is turning and you are not using water, it means water is flowing through the meter and you have a leak.

\*To isolate the leak, turn off the main water valve at the house and go back down to the meter. If the triangle is still turning, you have a leak between the house and the meter. Check for unusual green spots where grass is growing or water standing (or spongy areas) in the yard.

\*For example, in-house leaks could be toilets, faucets, or water softeners. Outdoor leaks could be underground in the service line, irrigation system, or outside hydrants. If you have a frost-free water hydrant, water could be leaking underground.

It is smart to have the name and phone number of a plumber and/or contractor on hand so you are ready when a leak situation occurs.

Contact the office regarding possible water relief credit.

Note: The District is only responsible for repairing water leaks on our water mains and the meters. The property owner is responsible for leaks on their service connection between the meter and the structure.

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## **18. Why does debris come out of the faucet when running hot water?**

Most likely your water heater needs to be flushed. CAUTION: Most manufacturers recommend hiring a professional to flush your water heater. If you plan on doing this yourself, read the owner's manual to keep from being hurt and or damaging the water heater.

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## **19. Will I need a water softener?**

It is a matter of personal preference if a softener is needed. The Water Quality Report (CCR) gives water hardness values. This report may be found on the website or contact the office.

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## **20. What will a Kansas One-Call locate involve?**

Call before you dig--Dial 811 (or 1-800-DIG-SAFE). Wait two full working days after contacting Kansas One-Call for the utility companies to visit your dig site to mark the approximate location of their underground utility lines. Locates are valid for 15 calendar days. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Utility owners, RWD #13 for example, WILL NOT mark privately owned underground lines. This means the service line between the meter and the structure.

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## **21. What do I need to do if I am selling my property?**

Contact the District Office with the move-out/closing date, forwarding address and buyer information. It is essential that the Benefit Unit Certificate be formally transferred, and this requires the signature of both seller and buyer. Often the realtor will obtain the signatures and put the buyer in contact with the District Office. A \$25.00 transfer fee will be applied to the buyers first water bill.

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## **22. What do I do if I notice a leak on the District side?**

Call the office at 785-842-1502 during regular business hours. After hours, call the office and the greeting will reflect the phone number of the person on call. Even if you are not certain it is a leak, please let us know and we will investigate the situation immediately!

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## **23. What do I do if I want to be on the District Board?**

Any participating member may submit one nomination for each vacancy on the Board of Directors standing for election. Such nominations must be received in the office of the District

by the third Thursday in February on a form available from the District Office (and on the website), together with the signature of the nominator.

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**24. What is the emergency after-hours procedure?**

Call the office at 785-842-1502 and the greeting will reflect the phone number of the person on call.

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**25. Who are the full-time District employees?**

**Employee Contact Information:**

Joe Osborn, Plant & Distribution Operations Manager 785-813-3589

Niki Fincham, Office Operations Manager 785-842-1502

Brandon Bethard, Operator 785-813-3794

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**26. Who are the District Board members?**

**Board Members:                      Term Expires:**

**Chairman:**

Gordon Brest                      March 2025  
Tonganoxie, KS

**Vice Chairman:**

Andrew Breuer                      March 2024  
Lawrence, KS

**Treasurer:**

Paulette Schwerdt                      March 2025  
Lawrence, KS

**Secretary:**

George Pogge                      March 2024  
Lawrence, KS

**Director:**

John Hachmeister                      March 2026  
Oskaloosa, KS

**Director:**

Linda Day  
Tonganoxie, KS

March 2024

**Director:**

Rick Reischman  
Tonganoxie, KS

March 2026

**27. Who is Aqua Backflow?**

As of December 2021 we have secured the services of Aqua Backflow, Inc. to supervise our cross-connection program. Shortly after moving into the District you will receive a mailer from them on our behalf. The completion of a short survey will be requested.