



Empire District™
A Liberty Utilities Company

CUSTOMER HANDBOOK

WELCOME

- Thank you for establishing service with Empire.

Based in Joplin, Missouri, The Empire District Electric Company is a subsidiary of Liberty Utilities Co. and headquarters for the Liberty Utilities Central Region, providing electric, natural gas, water, and wastewater service to nearly 340,000 customers across seven states. A subsidiary of the company provides fiber optic services. For more information regarding Empire, visit www.empiredistrict.com. For more information about Liberty Utilities, visit www.libertyutilities.com.

Copies of price schedules and general rules and regulations are available at www.empiredistrict.com. **This booklet is being provided in accordance with state commission rules.**

HOW TO REACH US

Our Contact Center is available for routine service requests and inquiries from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday, by calling:

800-424-0427

To report a gas leak or emergency 24/7:

800-406-9220

ACCESSING YOUR ACCOUNT INFORMATION

You may also access information about your account by visiting our website, www.empiredistrict.com, and signing on to **MyAccount**. **MyAccount** offers the easiest way to view your Empire account from anywhere. Simply follow the easy tips to register. Instantly you can begin accessing your Empire account information.

MyAccount offers a variety of tools to better understand your energy usage and your account.

- **MyStatements** – Examine your current Empire bill at any time, plus view previous bills to compare each month.
- **MyPayments** – You can view account payment history over the previous 12 months.
- **MyUsage** – View and track your usage over the past 12 or 24 months. You can see monthly meter readings to compare energy usage month to month.
- **MyEbill** – You can select to receive your monthly Empire statement via secure email. No longer wait to receive a paper bill, instead you can instantly see your monthly charge.

STARTING & TRANSFERRING SERVICE

You can start new service or transfer your current service to another location by calling our Contact Center at 800-424-0427 or completing a

request form available on our website, www.empiredistrict.com. Simply click on the **Customer Service** tab and then select **Customer Service** forms. You need to contact us at least two business days in advance to schedule the start of your service; this does not include weekends or holidays. Identification may be required.

A deposit may be required for customers who have unsatisfactory or insufficient credit, in cases where tampering or diversion has occurred, and when there is a history of delinquency. Deposits may be billed in installments in some cases. The deposit, plus interest, will be returned when:

- You establish a suitable credit history; or
- Your service is discontinued, and the amount of your deposit is greater than the balance due Empire.

STOPPING SERVICE

If you need to discontinue your gas service, you can call our Contact Center at 800-424-0427 or complete a request form available on our website, www.empiredistrict.com. Simply click on the **Customer Service** tab and then select **Customer Service** forms. Arrangements must be made at least two days in advance, and you must provide an address to receive your final bill. A disconnection charge of \$40 will apply when service is turned off.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

E.A.S.E.

Empire's Action to Support the Elderly is designed to lift the burden of worry from customers age 60 and older and/or handicapped customers. For those who qualify, deposits and late penalties may be waived, due dates can be adjusted, and third-party notification is available when accounts become delinquent.

PROJECT HELP

Project Help is an assistance program created to meet emergency energy-related expenses of elderly

and/or disabled customers. Project Help is funded through voluntary donations. To donate, simply add \$1.00 to your monthly payment or visit our website and click on **Customer Service, Customer Assistance** for information on how to donate. All donations are tax deductible. Project Help is administered by the Missouri Valley Community Action Agency.

BILL PAYMENT OPTIONS

PAY BY MAIL

Return envelopes are included with your monthly bill. When paying by mail, allow at least five days for delivery and posting.

AUTOPAY

When you choose Autopay, your payment is automatically deducted from your bank account. Your monthly bill will show the exact amount and date your bank account will be debited.

AVERAGE PAYMENT PLAN (APP)

APP calculates your expected annual charges and divides them into equal monthly payments.

FLEXIBLE DUE DATE

If you participate in APP or Autopay, you may select your scheduled due date from a list of options.

PAY BY PHONE/PAY ONLINE

Phone in your payment by calling 800-424-0427 and following the prompts, or you can pay online at www.empiredistrict.com. This feature utilizes an independent service which allows you to pay using a credit or debit card or electronic check. A fee is charged by our independent provider.

PAY IN PERSON

You may pay in person at any of our payment locations. For a list of locations near you, visit www.empiredistrict.com or call 800-424-0427. A fee may be charged by our independent providers.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR BILLING CHARGES

CUSTOMER CHARGE

Empire service includes a fixed monthly customer charge, no matter how much electricity is used.

DELIVERY CHARGE

The portion billed for the cubic feet of natural gas used.

PURCHASED GAS ADJUSTMENT (PGA)

This is the cost Empire pays to purchase natural gas on the open market, plus the transportation and storage services fees. It also reflects any under- or over- collection of actual costs in the previous period. Empire does not earn a profit on the price of gas, only on its delivery. The PGA accounts for about two-thirds to three-fourths of a winter bill.

FRANCHISE FEE

A tax levied by local municipalities which Empire collects and passes on to those respective cities. Applicable state and local taxes are also charged.

HOW TO READ YOUR METER

Some of the hands on the dial of your meter move in a clockwise fashion, while others move counterclockwise. All move from the lowest number to the highest. To read your meter, simply write down the number where the dial is pointing. When the hand is between numbers, use the smaller number.



This meter reads: **3156**

Empire also utilizes digital meters. Their readout is much like a car odometer.

ESTIMATED METER READING

Empire tries to read each customer's meter each month. However, sometimes it is not possible and estimations must be made. Any variation between a customer's actual usage and the estimated usage will be corrected the next time the meter is read.

DISCONNECTION/RECONNECTION OF SERVICE

Your Empire bill is due upon receipt and a delinquent date appears on your monthly statement.

To avoid service interruption, call immediately if you cannot pay your bill on time, if you receive a disconnection notice, or if there is any problem with your bill.

If you find you cannot pay your entire bill, please contact us for a mutually agreeable installment plan.

Although we do not routinely disconnect service without advance notice, there are times when we must for health, safety, emergency, or maintenance reasons or when someone has tampered with our equipment.

We will turn your service back on after the cause for the disconnection has been corrected. Service will be restored the same day, if possible, but no later than the next working day.

NATURAL GAS SAFETY

Natural gas is odorless and colorless. As a safety precaution, a sulfur-like odor, which smells like rotten eggs, is added to help identify gas leaks.

If you suspect a gas leak, never use matches or candles to look for a leak, never turn on or off any electrical switch or appliance, do not use a telephone inside of the building, and get everyone out of the building. Use a phone away from the location and call Empire at 800-406-9220.

CUSTOMER RESPONSIBILITY

Although Empire inspects a customer's exposed gas piping and connected gas equipment, it is the customer's responsibility to maintain their gas piping and connected equipment downstream from the gas meter.

CUSTOMER INQUIRIES

If you have any questions or concerns about your gas bill, please call 800-424-0427. We will work to find a solution to your concerns. If you are not satisfied with the resolution we offer, you may contact:

**Missouri Public
Service Commission**
PO Box 360
Jefferson City, MO 65102
800-392-4211

**Office of
Public Counsel**
PO Box 7800
Jefferson City, MO 65102
573-751-4857 • 866-922-2959

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Empire offers a variety of energy efficiency tips and rebates for both residential and commercial customers. Click on the **Smart Energy Solutions** tab on our website for program details and tips specific for your home.

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

Before you plant a tree or build a fence, make sure you know where your underground utilities are located. Empire encourages customers to dial 811, the nationwide one call system, or Missouri One Call at 800-DIG-RITE (800-344-7483).

This is a free service provided by Empire and other local utilities. This single call allows customers to avoid the possibility of a serious injury or expense of repair costs for damaged utilities.

