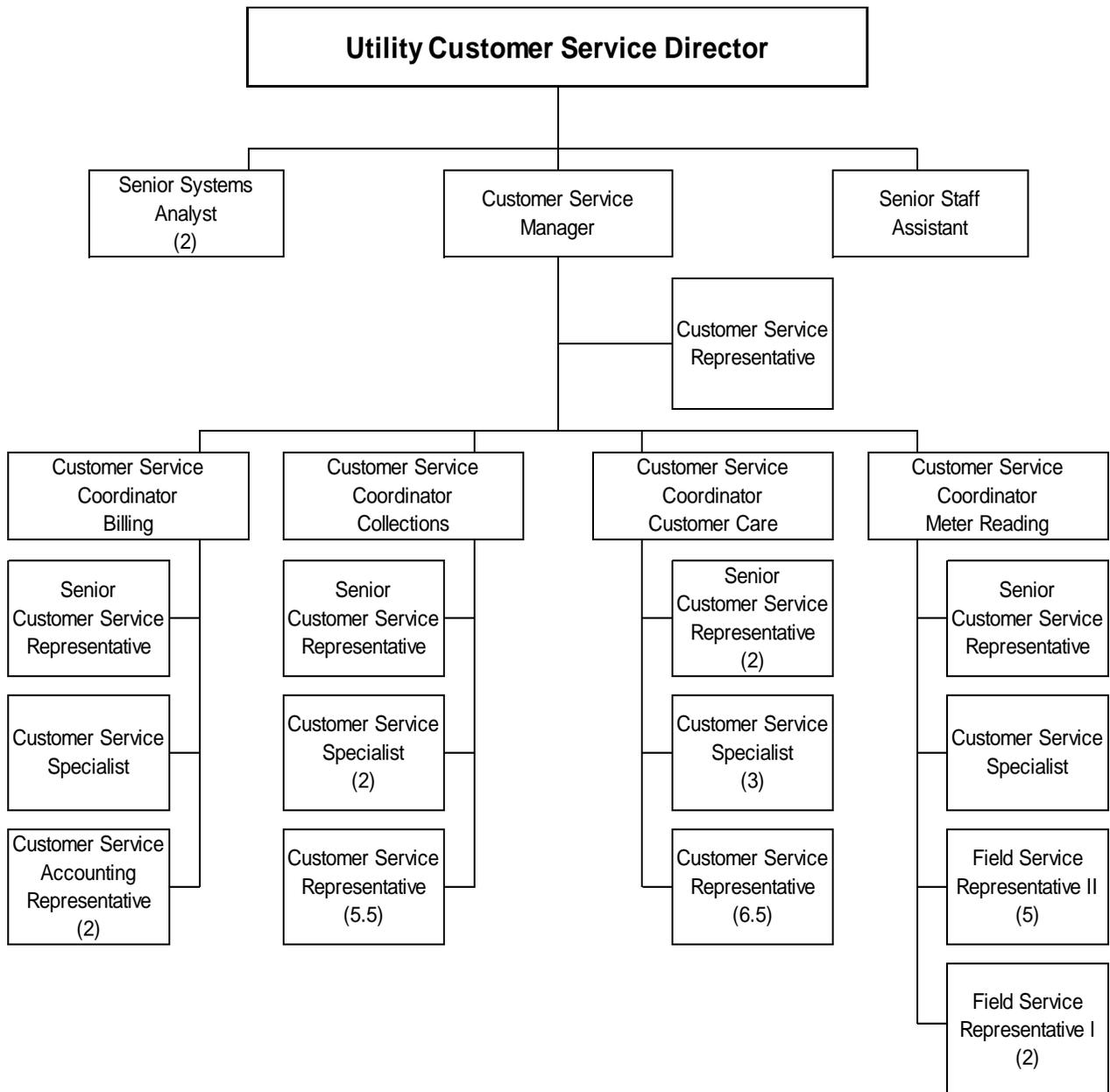




Utility Customer Service



Utility Customer Service – 43.0 FTE’s

Mission

Utility Customer Service provides courteous, understanding, efficient service to customers of the City of Clearwater utilities and to the internal departments that we are privileged to serve.

Department Description

Utility Customer Service (UCS) is responsible for providing centralized customer service functions to customers of the seven City utilities: Gas, Water, Sewer, Solid Waste, Recycling, Reclaimed Water, and Stormwater. The major areas associated with this responsibility include Meter Reading, Billing, Collections, and Customer Care.

Meter Reading Representatives are responsible for securing accurate and timely readings. Metered services include: Water (potable, lawn, reclaimed), Gas and Wastewater (based on metered potable water usage). Each month Meter Reading Representatives visit each service location and record meter readings in a hand held device that interfaces with our Utility Management System. Meter reading is the first step in a billing process that optimizes “read-to-bill” time and ensures that each account is billed each month. The Meter Reading section also performs special readings, leak notifications, and initiates service orders based on field observations.

The Billing section is responsible for calculation and preparation of customer bills, resolving billing exceptions, processing service orders and special/final bill requests, and generating reports. Each day, the Billing section is responsible for reviewing account billing, based on the previous day’s meter readings, as well as, billings for non-metered utility services.

The Collections section is responsible for managing utility customer accounts receivable in a fiscally responsible manner that respects customers while limiting the exposure of the City of Clearwater to delinquent accounts. Active accounts with past due balances are noticed and measures are undertaken to secure payment. Services are disconnected for non-payment when necessary. The Collections area also manages inactive accounts receivable, seeking payment of final bills, performing skip-tracing and filing property liens as appropriate. Payments are received and processed on a daily basis.

The Customer Care section is responsible for responding in a timely, courteous, and professional manner to customer requests received via telephones, mail (postal or e-mail) or from walk-in customers. Accounts are opened or closed, requests for information are responded to, and inquiries are researched and resolved.

Utility Customer Service is located on the first floor of the Municipal Services Building, 100 S. Myrtle Avenue. Customers may reach Utility Customers Service either by phone at 727-562-4600, in person Monday thru Friday (except for observed holidays), or on the web at [www.myclearwater.com/services/customer service](http://www.myclearwater.com/services/customer%20service).

Utility Customer Service

| Program Summary | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| | Actual 2012/13 | Actual 2013/14 | Budget 2014/15 | Budget 2015/16 | % Change |
| Personnel | 2,278,652 | 2,164,280 | 2,289,820 | 2,422,410 | 6% |
| Operating | 607,056 | 621,995 | 639,690 | 696,540 | 9% |
| Internal Services | 366,667 | 404,334 | 437,410 | 431,990 | -1% |
| Transfers | - | - | 50,000 | 50,000 | 0% |
| Total Utility Customer Service | 3,252,375 | 3,190,609 | 3,416,920 | 3,600,940 | 5% |
| Full Time Equivalent Positions | 45.0 | 44.0 | 44.0 | 43.0 | (1.0) |

Department Highlights

- ◆ The Utility Customer Service program is an internal service function supporting all City utility operations. All costs of the Utility Customer Service program are passed back to the City's utility departments based upon services provided. This program supports all customer service functions, including billing, collection, accounting, meter reading, administration, and customer service for approximately 50,000 monthly billable accounts. For fiscal year 2014/15, Utility Customer Service billed revenues of over \$154 million.

◆ The Utility Customer Service program is supported by forty-three full time equivalent positions, a decrease of one FTE from the 2014/15 budget. One Meter Reader has been eliminated in the fiscal year 2015/16 budget.
- ◆ Other operating costs reflect a 9% increase from the 2014/15 budget. This includes \$25,000 budgeted for consulting services in support of the improvements necessary in the utility billing system, and anticipated increases in postage.

◆ Transfers include \$50,000 to fund a capital improvement project for Customer Information System Upgrades and Replacements, which provides funding for future enhancements and maintenance of the customer service information system. This is the same level of funding as the 2014/15 budget.

◆ There have been no other significant changes in the Utility Customer Service Department; the budget for this program reflects a 5% increase from the 2014/15 budget.

