

Online Presentment and Payment FAQ's

General

What are some of the benefits of receiving my bill electronically?

It is convenient, saves time, reduces errors, bills don't get misplaced, allows you to receive bills anywhere at any time and it helps the environment by saving trees. You can continue to receive a paper bill but if you elect to go paperless, you can always print out a copy of the invoice if needed.

What are the benefits of paying a bill online?

Paying online with a credit card or electronic check saves time, gives you the flexibility to pay how and when desired, saves money (no more stamps, paper checks or envelopes) and Invoice Cloud will store your information for future use – but only if you choose to store it.

What is Invoice Cloud?

Invoice Cloud is a web-based, electronic invoice presentment and processing company that your biller has partnered with to provide faster, more convenient billing services to their customers. By automating billing and collections, customers can click and pay online while helping the environment and reducing clutter in their home or workspace.

What is the relationship between the Town of Winthrop and Invoice Cloud?

The Town of Winthrop wanted to make paying bills easier for their customers, but didn't have the electronic presentment and payment systems required to display, safely process and store financial information. They chose Invoice Cloud because it is easy to use and the security is the strongest available. All the data collected is double encrypted and stored on secure servers. The data is not sold or released for any purpose other than to complete transactions.

Is there one account number for all of my bills?

No, account numbers for the different tax types vary. For instance:

- Real Estate - parcel ID
- Motor Vehicle and Boat Excise - Registration Number/License Plate Number
- Personal Property and Sewer Use - Account Number

If I pay different bills (i.e. property tax and water/sewer) do I need to register twice?

Yes, one time registration is required for each bill type to access the resident portal. You need to register for each of the bill types and accounts you wish to pay online. If you own two parcels you will need to register both parcels. If you own multiple vehicles, you will need to register each vehicle. Once the initial registration process has been completed for each of your accounts, viewing and paying future invoices will be in place. Although you may use a different email address for each bill type account, we recommend using the same email address so that email notifications of bills due and payments made are always located in the same place.

Can I put my sewer bill on Auto-Pay, but keep my real estate taxes as a scheduled payment?

Yes, each bill type operates independently. When you sign up for Auto-Pay, you be asked to select which bill type you want to put on Auto-Pay. Those bills selected will be paid on the day they are due.

Using the System

How does the system work?

It is very simple. Here are the 3 steps taken by customers:

1. Customer receives email notification or accesses account via the Town of Winthrop's web site at the following link:
http://www.town.winthrop.ma.us/Pages/WinthropMA_Treasurer/bill and clicks on the "View or Pay Your Bill" button.
2. Customer views invoice and either enters payment info for an express payment or registers to schedule a payment.
3. Customer receives an email confirmation with their payment amount and payment process date.

Can I use an Apple /Mac to use the service?

Yes, many customers use a Mac, Firefox 3.6 & 4.0, Chrome 11, Opera 10.x & 11 and Safari 4 & 5 browsers are currently supported.

What Browsers are supported?

Windows: Safari 4, 5 - Chrome 10, 11 - Opera 10, 11 - Firefox 3.6, 4 - Internet Explorer 7, 8, 9

iPhone and iPad: Mobile Safari 4x

Apple/Mac: Firefox 3.6, 4.0 - Chrome 11 - Opera 10.x, 11 - Safari 4, 5

Ubuntu (Linux): Opera 9.6 - Firefox 3.6

Do I need to register to pay a bill?

You may need to register to receive electronic bills through email but registration is not required for one time payments (Express Pay). One time payments require that you enter your payment information each time you make a payment. By registering your payment methods, you avoid that step and gain access to your payment history.

Why should I register to pay a bill?

By registering, you have access to all of your invoices regardless of type and all of the features of the payment portal. These include the ability to view all current invoices at same time, schedule payments for a specific dates, see previous invoices and payment dates, update your profile information, go paperless (if bill type allows) and sign up for Auto-Pay. You also avoid having to enter your payment information each time you pay a bill.

How Do I Register?

Registering is easy and can be done when you make your first payment. There are two ways you can access the payment site.

1. When you receive an email notification that your bill is ready to pay, simply click on the "View Invoice or Pay Now" button. You will be directed to the Town of Winthrop's "Pay and/or View Bills Online" website, powered by Invoice Cloud. Once you select the type of bill you wish to pay and locate your account, you will be given the opportunity to register or make an express payment. If you choose to register, you be asked to provide a password and accept the terms and conditions to use the system. The payment information you enter in your profile will then be securely encrypted and saved for your next visit.

2. You can go directly to the Town of Winthrop's website and click on the pay online or pay my bill button. You will then be directed to the Town of Winthrop's "Pay and/or View Bills Online" site, powered by Invoice Cloud. Once you select the type of bill you wish to pay and locate your account, you will be given the opportunity to register or make an express payment. If you choose to register, you be asked to provide a password and accept the terms and conditions to use the system. The payment information you enter in your profile will then be securely encrypted and saved for your next visit.

How do I find my account number to login?

Once you have registered, you will need only your email address and password to log in. To login the first time you use the system, you will need your account number or customer ID from your bill. The "locate your bill" screen gives instruction regarding the required information.

I forgot my Password, how do I find it?

You should click on "Forgotten Password?" at the bottom of the login screen. You will need your account number and email address to retrieve your password. If you're unable to locate this information, you may call the Biller and after verifying your identity, the Biller can provide you with the information.

Can more than one person pay bills online for the same account?

There are two ways that payment responsibilities can be shared. If the other payer is part of your household, you may choose to share your login information with that individual. In a situation where personal financial data is not shared, you may forward your email notification to the individual, who will then click on the "View or Pay Now" button and elect to make an express pay payment. They will need to enter their name, email address, address and payment information. They will receive the payment confirmation. You can verify their payment by viewing the invoices in your account.

Payment

What forms of payment can I use?

You can pay by credit or debit card or you may issue an electronic check from your bank account (checking or savings). Please check the Town of Winthrop's website for the credit and debit cards that are eligible.

Can I still send in a paper check?

Yes, your bill can be paid in any of the following ways:

- Email notification based payment – click the "View invoice or Pay Now" button in your email
- Web based online payment – login to online bill pay via the Town of Winthrop's website
- Paper check – sent by whatever means you choose, including US Postal Service (note: many paper checks today are converted into electronic transactions once they are received by the Town of Winthrop).

What is a service or convenience fee?

A non-refundable fee added to an invoice to cover various administrative costs associated with billing and accepting payment.

If I don't have email can I still process an electronic payment?

Yes, you can call the Town of Winthrop Revenue Collections Department at (617) 846-1750 to see if they accept electronic payments over the phone, or mail your check in and it can be converted into an electronic payment transaction. To complete the online payment process yourself, you will need an email address so that the system can deliver your payment confirmation. If you do not have an email address, you can obtain a free email account from any of the following services: yahoo.com, hotmail.com, or gmail.com.

Which bills can I pay online?

- As of Wednesday, July 20, 2011, you will be able to pay your new August 2011 Water/Sewer (UB) bill.
- Fall of 2011, you will be able to pay real estate and personal property tax bills.
- Beginning of 2012, you will be able to pay motor vehicle excise tax bills.

What are the costs for paying online?

There are no signup costs or subscription fees. The non refundable convenience fee when using an ACH transfer (electronic check) from your checking or savings account is \$0.40 per transaction.

The non refundable convenience fee when using credit cards is a percentage-based or flat rate fee that varies depending on the card type and the bill you are paying. The convenience fee is automatically calculated based upon the type of credit card used and the dollar amount of the bill being paid and is shown on the payment page before you submit your payment for processing.

There are fees imposed by Invoice Cloud for returned payments, and your bank may charge you a fee based on the bank's fee schedule.

May I pay my tax bill by credit card at the Town of Winthrop's Revenue Collections office?

No, the Town of Winthrop is only permitted to accept credit card payments online via Invoice Cloud.

How should I enter my credit card information?

The information you enter on the payment screen must be exactly the same as it appears on your credit card. This information collected will be used to authorize your payment.

How will I know that my payment has been accepted?

After you submit your payment, you will see a payment confirmation screen. It will contain your payment confirmation message. It will show an approved number for credit cards or a processed number for electronic check. You will also receive a confirmation email after your transaction is submitted. The email will include your account number, invoice number, amount paid, and confirmation message.

Can I use more than one payment method per transaction?

Yes, the Town of Winthrop accepts partial payments; you may use one payment method for part of the transaction and another payment method for other parts of the transaction.

When paying by ACH transfer (electronic check), how does my payment appear on my bank statement?

There will be two entries on your bank statement; one for the bill amount, and one for the convenience fee.

How long does it take for a credit card transaction to process if I pay online?

Credit card transactions typically take 48 hours to settle. An authorization is issued immediately; however, it takes 48 hours for the money to be moved.

How long does it take for an EFT (electronic funds transfer) transaction to process if I pay online?

EFT transactions typically take 48 – 72 hours to settle.

How much does paying online help the environment?

Paying online is only half of the benefit, by going paperless when applicable (not available for all invoice types) and not receiving paper invoices, you can increase the effect you can have on the environment. There are several ways reducing paper consumption helps the environment, including saving trees and using less gas. According to the PayItGreen Alliance™, “if one in five households were to switch to electronic payments, statements and bills, we could collectively: save 1.8 million trees each year and avoid using 103 million gallons of gasoline to mail bills, statements, and payments.” If you’d like to be part of that one in five, just select paper invoices under your profile information and uncheck the “receive paper invoices” box.

Do I need to notify my bank or change bank accounts?

No, your current bank account (checking or savings) will work fine. So many payments are made electronically now that banks are already prepared for online payments. However, if you have arranged through your bank to automatically pay your bill, you need to contact your bank and discontinue the automated payment, otherwise you may pay your bill twice.

What information do I need to make a payment?

The only information you need to have available to complete a payment transaction when you have received an email notification is your email address, password and your bank account or credit card information. If you are accessing online bill pay from the Town of Winthrop’s website you may be able to locate your account through public information or you may also need to know your account number.

When can I pay?

You can make payment or review your account 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It is always a good idea to pay or schedule a payment at least few days before the due date to allow for processing time.

Can I use a credit card to pay my bill(s)?

Yes, you can. There is a convenience fee when using credit cards which varies based upon the type of card, type of bill and payment amount. The exact convenience fee amount will be displayed during the payment process prior to submitting the payment.

Can I use a debit card to pay my bill(s)?

Yes, although technically your debit card will be processed like a credit card and you will not be asked to enter a pin number. The convenience fee is the same as credit cards, except if using a Visa Debit Card for Tax payments, and varies based upon the type of card, type of bill and payment amount. The exact convenience fee amount will be displayed during the payment process prior to submitting the payment.

Can I tell if my payment has been posted?

Yes, simply login to your account and select “View paid or closed invoices”.

Will I have online access to my account?

Yes, you will have 24/7 access to your account for invoice review and payment, payment history and customer service requests.

How long will my payment history be maintained?

Eighteen (18) months is the standard retention period.

Will I be able to print a copy of my bill?

Yes, each invoice is presented in PDF and HTML format. Electronic storage is recommended because it saves paper and has a beneficial impact on our environment.

How do I change my account information?

Simply log into your account and change any of your personal information under my profile. If you are unable to change some of your information, you may need to call the Town of Winthrop Revenue Collections Office and have them change it for you.

What is Auto-Pay?

If you elect to opt in to Auto-Pay, it means that your bills will be paid automatically on their due date or date you choose using your default credit card or bank account. This will avoid any late fees and free you from having to remember when to pay.

Can I cancel Auto-Pay?

Yes, simply go into your profile and uncheck the auto-pay box that you had previously checked when you elected to opt into Auto-Pay

What are scheduled payments?

Scheduled payments are set up individually for each bill due on a specific date by you.

Can I schedule payments?

Yes. You can set up a future payment at any time prior to the bill due date.

Can I change a scheduled payment?

Yes, as long as it is changed before the date it was scheduled to be paid.

Why am I being charged a late fee?

If you feel that this fee has been assessed in error or you would like more information about late fee charges, please contact the Town of Winthrop's Revenue Collections office.

What is a partial payment?

A partial payment occurs when only part of an invoice is paid and the Town of Winthrop has elected to allow partial payments.

What is the difference between auto-pay and a scheduled payment?

Auto-pay is an automated process, which pays your balance in full each billing cycle 2 days prior to the due date; scheduled payments are manually entered by you for the date you choose each time you make a payment.

What if I already have auto-pay or a scheduled payment set up with my bank?

You will need to contact your bank and cancel your automated or scheduled payment before the payment is due (typically payments are made a couple days in advance of the due date, so don't wait until the last minute).

Getting Help

Who do I contact with questions about a bill?

If you are unable to find the information you need in your online payment history or open invoices, please call the Town of Winthrop's Revenue Collections office at (617)846-1750.

I accidentally deleted my current email notification, what should I do?

If you are registered, you can login (via the Town of Winthrop's website) and view the bill there or you can call the Town of Winthrop's Revenue Collections office and ask them to resend the email.

What if this website is down or for some reason I am unable to use this site?

Please be aware that interest and fees will not be waived if this website is inoperable for any reason or if data entry errors occur. If the website is inoperable, payments can be made by mail, or at the Town of Winthrop's Revenue Collections Office at Town Hall, Room 2. Online payments can be made through 4:30 pm of the due date on the bill.

If I have additional questions or I am having trouble registering, who should I call?

The Town of Winthrop's Revenue Collections office at (617) 846-1750; they can answer most questions, but if the website is down or inoperable, please call Invoice Cloud customer service at 877-256-8330 x2700.

Security

Is my information secure?

Invoice Cloud uses the highest standards in Internet security. Account information displayed within the customer and biller portals is truncated to protect confidential data. Any information retained is not shared with third parties.

Is my credit card and checking account information safe when I pay online?

Absolutely! Invoice Cloud will safely store all of your financial information using Payment Card Industry (PCI) Compliant systems. This includes truncating (abbreviating) account numbers so that even municipalities do not see your complete account information.

What is PCI Compliance and why is it so important?

PCI stands for Payment Card Industry and compliance with the industry standards is a requirement for those that accept the major credit cards and for software providers who have application which involve the transmission and/or storage of credit card information. If breaches are found on systems that are not PCI compliant, the major credit card companies have the ability to levy significant fines on the offending parties.

Who has access to my account?

You and the Town of Winthrop's Revenue Collections authorized staff. No one will have access to your financial information as all check routing numbers and cc numbers are truncated, so you never have to worry about security. As a security precaution, we don't even show your full financial information back to you.