



Policy 18 - Utility Records

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POLICY STATEMENT

1 ... All state, county and municipal records shall at all times, during business hours, be open for public inspection by any citizen of Tennessee, and those in charge of such records shall not refuse such right of inspection to any citizen, unless otherwise provided by state law. [TCA 10-7-503]

2... Public records mean all documents, papers, letters, maps, books, photographs, electronic data, sound recordings or other material regardless of physical form or characteristics made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business by any governmental agency. [TCA 10-7-301(6)]

3 ... In accordance with state law, the following is an example of utility records subject to public inspection:

CUSTOMER RECORDS:

- a) Customer bills and usage records;
- b) Customer mailing lists;
- c) Customer payment delinquencies, cut-offs and payment histories.

EMPLOYEE RECORDS:

- a) Payroll records;
- b) Documents and minutes relating to employee hiring, job performance, discipline, and dismissal.

GENERAL UTILITY RECORDS:

- a) Minutes of meetings of the Governing Board;
- b) Real and personal property records of the utility;
- c) Purchases;
- d) Accounting and bookkeeping records;
- e) Plans, maps and engineering records;
- f) Operations and safety records and reports.

4 ... Records which are not subject to public inspection include the following:

- a) Certain records related to employee medical treatment or medical testing.
- b) Records related to alcohol drug testing programs under the Tennessee Drug-Free Workplace Program.
- c) Records related to federally mandated drug and alcohol testing programs of the United States Department of Transportation.
- d) Records of treatment or referrals for treatment maintained by an employer assistance program;
- e) Information about a person who has provided a valid protection document to the utility such as an order of protection from a court or affidavit from the director of a rape crisis center or domestic violence shelter indicating a victim needs protection;
- f) Records with the identity of the owner of any public obligation issued (bonds);
- g) The following information on **employees**: unpublished telephone numbers; bank account information; social security numbers; driver's license information except when the employee's job duties requires that he or she operate a motor vehicle; and this same information on family member.
- h) The following **customer records** considered to be "Private Records": credit card number; social security number; tax identification number; financial institution account number; burglar alarm codes; security codes; and access codes.
- i) Certain records to the **vulnerability of a utility's operations and contingency plans** or records related to responding to violent incidents or terrorist incidents. These records are: records which would allow a person to

identify areas of structural or operational vulnerability of a utility; records that would permit unlawful disruption to, or interference, with a utility's services; and contingency plans of a utility to respond to or prevent violent incidents or terrorist incidents.

5...Prior to divulging any employee medical records, the Utility's Governing Board or its designee shall consult with the utility's attorney.

6...Any state citizen requesting utility records will be provided them at the convenience of office staff, or at least within three working days for all reasonable requests.

7...Original records are not to be taken from the utility office except by court authority.

8...Photocopies of records will be made available by the utility at the rate of .25 cents per one-sided page or as otherwise priced from time to time by the Governing Board of the utility.

9...Certain information that is stored on computers may be made available by the utility on computer disc for a charge of \$20.00 dollars per request or as otherwise priced from time to time by the Governing Board of the utility.

10... The utility shall notify the customer(s) when copies of their records have been requested, by furnishing the customer with a copy of the "Record Request Form" submitted by the requester and what records were furnished.

Records Paper Records Converted Computer Records:

The governing body of a utility may adopt a resolution to authorize the disposal of any permanent paper records when the record may be maintained on a computer or removable computer storage media, including CD ROM disks, instead of bound books or paper records if the following standards are met:

- (A) Such information is available for public inspection, unless it is a confidential record according to law;
- (B) Due care is taken to maintain any information that is a public record during the time required by law for retention;

system shall be copied to computer storage media daily, and the newly created computer storage media more than one (1) week old shall be stored at a location other than at the building where the original is maintained; and

- (D) The official can provide a paper copy of the information when needed or when requested by a member of the public.

Record Keeping Duration:

2 Years

- A. Correspondence

3 Years

- A. Daily cash summaries
- B. Bank deposit slips
- C. Inventory records
- D. Employee time records
- E. Invoices
- F. Purchase orders
- G. Customer billing stubs
- H. Garnishments
- I. Similar records

6 Years

- A. Contracts
- B. Leases
- C. Insurance policies
- D. Claims records
- E. Duplicate receipts
- F. Canceled checks
- G. Redeemed bond/interest coupons
- H. Canceled certificates of deposits

10 Years

- A. Accounts receivable
- B. Inventory ledgers
- C. Cost records
- D. Journal vouchers
- E. Subsidiary revenue ledgers
- F. Expense ledgers
- G. Voucher or check registers

PERMANENT Records

- A. Audit and financial reports
- B. Bond and interest ledgers
- C. Certificate of bonds and interest coupons destroyed
- D. Charts of accounts and procedure manuals
- E. Deeds and other title documents
- F. Employee payroll records
- G. Fixed asset records
- H. General ledgers and cash journals
- I. Investment security or trust records
- J. Meter deposit records
- K. Special assessment ledgers

SOURCE: Uniform Accounting Manual for Tennessee Utility

Districts, P. 4-2 and Uniform Accounting Manual for Tennessee
Cities, P. 8-2 (July 1991)

RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS (WATER SYSTEM)

Type of Record Must be kept for at least.....

Lead & Copper Records	12 Years
Chemical Analyses	10 Years
Sanitary Surveys	10 Years
Bacteriological Analyses	5 Years
Variances and Exemptions	5 Years
Cross-Connection Plans	5 Years
And Inspection Records	
Customer Complaint Logs	5 Years
Facility Maintenance Records	5 Years
Storage Tank Inspection Records	Life of the Tank
Violations of Primary Drinking Water Regulations	3 Years
Records for Completing Monthly Operating Reports	Next Sanitary Survey
Turbidity Analyses	Next Sanitary Survey
Chlorine residuals on new water taps on mains which must be dug up to make the tap	Next Sanitary Survey or 3 Years

Source: Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation