Utility payments: save time, improve accuracy & reduce costs

Why utility payments matter

Energy is your largest controllable operating expense, making improved management of your utility payments one of the most effective methods for reducing costs.

The utility payment challenge

Most real estate companies discover that standard payables approaches are inadequate for utility payments. Processing utility bills requires tracking down missing bills, contacting utility providers to resolve billing errors and manually entering complex data is an inefficient way to process payables.

Utility bills create unique processing difficulties. Internal AP staff typically lack the expertise needed to understand complex multi-level rate and tariff structures or resolve exceptions with utility providers, leading to overpayments and inaccurate data.

INDUSTRY REALITY:

13-21%

error rate on utility bills

10-35%

of utility bills are paid
late industry-wide

Unless you have dedicated staff tracking bills, missed payments are inevitable, resulting in late fees and potential credit rating damage that leads to higher deposit fees. Disconnected systems make it hard to track spending and identify trends. Utility data is only useful if it's complete, accurate and easy to access.

Staff time is better spent creating property value, managing tenant retention, and driving revenue rather than spending countless hours tracking, reviewing and processing utility bills.

A better way to manage utility invoices

Many real estate companies leverage automated utility payment platforms to validate, process and pay their utility bills. Such platforms ensure accurate data capture that allows companies to benchmark properties, secure financial incentives and accomplish sustainability initiatives.

Integrated platform benefits

Utility payment solutions that connect with your property management platform enable invoices to flow directly into your system with no double entry or external uploads. You gain full visibility across properties and can validate charges before payment. For clients using **Utility Invoice Processing** alongside **Bill Pay Express**, the result is a fully automated, end-to-end AP process — from invoice receipt to payment — all within one connected platform.

Key integration advantages

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- Timely invoice processing helps reduce late fees and avoid unnecessary penalties

- Electronic invoice receipt via web and EDI reduces errors and cycle times

- Payables automatically mapped to general ledger accounts

- Real-time subledger maintenance eliminates manual reconciliation

- Direct payments from property management platform with automatic bank reconciliation

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

- Utility and real estate data in one centralized database

- Instant access to lease information, tenant status and occupancy projections

- Budget preparation cycles shortened from weeks to days

- Streamlined payable workflows with reduced data entry errors

PERFORMANCE VISIBILITY

- Real-time visibility into building performance for executives and investors

- Easy data normalization by weather, location and square footage

- Simplified sustainability reporting and benchmarking

- Enhanced ability to identify maintenance issues and cost-saving opportunities

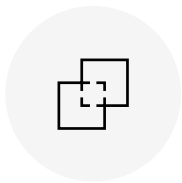## What to look for in a utility payment provider

Integration with your property management platform is the most critical factor. You should seek a responsive partner with expertise in utility billing industry issues who understands your business rules and can handle various exceptions.

Key evaluation questions

SERVICE CAPABILITIES

- What types of bills do they track and validate, and what level of detail do they capture?

- Do their validations include normalized metrics like cost/use per day compared to historical data?

- Will they resolve validation flags or simply alert your staff to problems?

- Will they commit to response turnaround times for questions and requests?

- Will they work as your advocate with utility providers to resolve issues and obtain credits or reimbursements?

INTEGRATION REQUIREMENTS

- How closely does a provider's solution integrate with your property management platform?

- Can they provide paperless utility invoice management that streamlines AP processes?

- Do they offer complete data transparency across departments?

" Utility Invoice Processing has been a tremendous addition to our Yardi environment. Threshold notifications have enabled us to **reduce our approval workflow steps by 75%.**

— **Brian Laird, EastGroup Properties**

MAXIMIZING YOUR INVESTMENT

A successful utility payment solution requires a provider that acts as your partner, offering complete invoice management services that save time and money while providing control over utility payables. The solution should simplify sustainability reporting, improve utility budgeting accuracy and provide complete data transparency.

Streamlining AP processes with full visibility ensures you're not paying more than necessary to utility providers while maximizing accounting resources. Companies that leverage integrated utility payment processes gain competitive advantages through improved resource allocation and reduced operational costs across their business.

Utility Invoice Processing can help you automate AP workflows, eliminate late fees and gain complete visibility into your utility spending. Take control of your invoices today.

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