



Accelerating Regionalisation Drive

How to read Your Bill

Our municipal statement is a key form of communication between the City of Johannesburg (City) and its residents. Our municipal statements are often a nightmare to decipher. You might not be entirely sure what you're being charged and why - so we put together a handy guide to help customers avoid any pitfalls. All Revenue Customer Service Centers will have a branded collateral to demonstrate how to read a bill. This campaign will compliment all other billing regionalisation initiatives of extending additional services to centers.

After buying a property, the new owner expects to receive a municipal statement from the City in respect of rates and taxes and services.

In the City, customers normally make applications for municipal statements in relation to water and electricity supply, and the City automatically opens a rates account for a customer.

The municipal statement is a key form of communication between the City and its citizens. Just how effective this communication is can be determined almost entirely by the customer's understanding of that municipal statement.

The first thing customers look at when opening our municipal statement is the amount owing. But there is so much more information within our municipal statement. From customer information (full names), stand numbers, value of the property, physical address, meter numbers, whether the customers last meter reading was estimated or refers to actual average daily usage; the municipal statement contains these information and much more. On the surface, a municipal statement can seem pretty simple. Many customers have trouble understanding their municipal statement or even struggle to find specific information.

Even the most educated of customers may find it difficult to figure out the meaning of certain terms, such as network charges, rebate, opening balance, balance brought forward, etc. herein lies the problem. Our invoices are not standardised, despite repeated efforts to get this rectified. We produce both short and long bills after adjustments.

Our municipal statements are often:

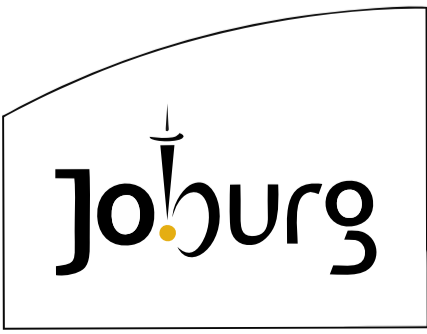
- Barely understandable;
- Not user-friendly;
- Not customer-orientated;
- The use of terms like sundries, surcharges, municipal levy, network chargers which are entirely meaningless to the customer if not briefly or simply narrated;
- Sometimes, customers receive more than one invoice within the same month;
- Nausea inducing, if customers have to go through them after billing adjustments or reversals being made - too many pages or long bills.

We have made it easier for our customers to be able to understand and interpret their municipal statement by introducing a guideline on how to read a bill which is one of the crucial aspects for the regionalisation programme. We will be rolling out billboards in all main Revenue Customer Service Centers in an effort to educate customers on how to read the municipal statement.

We truly need to educate our customers to know all about the City's municipal statement. If you live in a house and have access to electricity, water and waste removal services, then you should receive a monthly bill from the City, and the amounts payable depending on your usage.

Our municipal statement is very complex to comprehend for staff, councillors, residents and customers. These days there is more and more pressure and criticism on the City to produce an accurate bill to ensure increased acceptability of our bills. But the problem is often a lack of understanding of how we produce this bill. To assist customers with understanding their bill, we have compiled a glossary of terms to assist in reading residential or commercial electric bills.

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