

BILL PRINT AND MAIL SERVICE FOR WATER OPERATIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Shelby County is seeking a service to print and mail water customer bills monthly. Shelby County provides water services to approximately 14,500 customers. Service will include printing and mailing (US postal and via email) bills to customers using the most cost-efficient service. A sample of the current bill and return envelope is attached.

BID PROPOSAL

The bid proposal should include:

1. *Management Summary* – Provide a cover letter indicating the underlying philosophy of the firm in providing the service.
2. *Approach* – Describe in detail how the service will be provided. Include a description of the major tasks and subtasks. Describe quality assurance and control check points within the printing and inserting operation. Include what process is used to ensure that the correct undamaged data production file was received. Comment on daily backup rotation and storage of data.
3. *Corporate Experience and Capacity* – Describe the experience of the firm in providing the service, give the number of years that the service has been delivered, and provide a statement as to the firm's capacity to fulfill the terms of the proposal and/or the need for expansion to handle the service.
4. *Staffing* – Describe the qualifications and experience of the key personnel performing the work. Include the customer service organizational structure and describe the chain of command for problem resolution.
5. *References* - Give at least three utility customer references for contracts of similar size and scope. Include the name of the organization and the name and telephone number of a responsible contact person.
6. *Additional Data* – Provide any additional information that will aid in evaluation of the response.
7. *Cost Data* – Use the attached Bid Form to submit formal unit cost data.

Submittal of an extensive and elaborate bid proposal isn't necessary. A clear, concise bid proposal in the specific proposal format is requested with all the necessary information included.

SPECIFICATIONS, TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. The contractor should base bid proposal responses on approximately 14,500 utility bills a month. Bills are generally processed once per month around the 25th of each month.

2. Shelby County requests bid proposals for the service inclusive of processing, laser printing in highlight color on form, folding, inserting, along with remittance envelope, sorting and delivery of bills to the USPS on a monthly scheduled basis.

3. The term of this full service contract shall be for a period of one year, commencing on an agreed upon date. The contractor will provide final billing proofs utilizing Shelby County data for review by Shelby County. Although Shelby County desires proofs and production within 60 days from award of the agreement, include your best turnaround time available. This bid may be extended annually upon agreement of both parties for a total bid term of three years.

4. Shelby County reserves the right to evaluate the vendor's qualifications. Only those vendors/contractors who, in the opinion of Shelby County meet the minimum necessary qualifications will have their price and contract/agreement proposal evaluated.

5. License Requirements: The contractor shall furnish with their bid proposal a copy of their appropriate state or county business license.

SCOPE OF BID PROPOSAL

1. All data, forms, layouts, statements and envelopes will be in the format established and confirmed in writing by Contractor and Shelby County before production begins. The contractor will provide a bill form that is 8 ½ by 11, 24# bond, with perforation. The bill design will include an approximate scan line for remittance processing, a message area (allow for changes monthly), and a Shelby County logo. Return envelopes should be designed to allow payment stub insert to show the Shelby County address in the return window and security tinted inside. The contractor will print bills, CASS certify each cycle, fold and insert into carrier envelopes using advanced technology. Bills should be bar coded and sorted for the lowest postage and delivered to the USPS.

2. Contractor will notify the Shelby County in writing, and receive approval from the Shelby County, of any required changes to forms or envelopes prior to implementation.

PROGRAMMING

The contractor will provide a quote for initial programs required to print billing information from the data/print file provided by Shelby County to the approved Shelby County Water bill form. Shelby County will compensate the contractor for program changes involving bill layout changes requested by the Shelby County after the initial program has been put into place. Provide quote for the programming fee for set-up and changes on the Bid Form.

COMPUTER RELATED PROCESSING REQUIREMENTS

Contractor must be able to accept transmittal of ASCII fixed field formats or FTP site. Shelby County uses utility billing software, Computer Network Inc (CNI). It will be the responsibility of the contractor to assist Shelby County during the configuration process. Contractor will agree to assist Shelby County if the utility billing software changes.

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

1. Contractor will print, insert and mail all water bills within 24 hours after successful receipt of the data/print file from Shelby County.
2. The contractor shall provide Shelby County a document, or another method, indicating the number of bills received electronically for printing, as well as the postage breakdown as USPS Automation Qualified starting at First Class 5-Digit Rate of the billing cycle prior to the mailing of bills.
3. The contractor should have an on-site USPS MERLIN system for verifying mail quality prior to entry into the USPS distribution system. The bill and return envelopes must be in accordance with the requirements of the USPS. The contractor shall provide Shelby County with confirmation reports.

RECORD RETENTION AND DATA BACKUP

Contractor will retain Shelby County billing data/print file until the contractor receives the next data/print file.

CONTRACTOR INVOICE PROCEDURE

The contractor will provide Shelby County a monthly invoice broken down by each data/print file or cycle sent by Shelby County. The invoice will detail the number of bills processed and the amount of postage paid for each data/print file along with any other itemized charges.

POSTAGE RATES

1. All postage costs will be incurred initially by the contractor and billed at a cost to Shelby County as part of the monthly bill. Shelby County will allow vendor to set up an escrow account for postage, if needed. The vendor will provide a monthly manifest detailing the total bills printed, mailed and the dollars billed to Shelby County for postage services.
2. The contractor must mail the bills starting at the USPS 5-Digit Rate (or lowest) as qualifies to obtain the largest postage discounts. The contractor must have postal software in-house to process and sort. The contractor must CASS certified each cycle.
3. Bar coding, arranging and sorting of the mail shall be utilized to qualify for the lowest postage charges consistent with USPS standards. The contractor must be OP Certified by the USPS.
4. The contractor shall make periodic recommendations for improving mail delivery, postage savings and reducing mailing costs.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The contractor on behalf of itself and its employees agrees to keep confidential all records and other information with respect to Shelby County Water Operations and its customers. Shelby County on

behalf of itself and its employees agrees to keep all information with respect to the contractor's system confidential. However, if either party is required to produce any such information by order of any governmental agency or other regulatory body, it may, upon not less than five (5) days written notice to the other party, release the required information.

PAPER AND PRINT QUALITY AND REQUIREMENTS

1. Printing shall be laser quality with a resolution of at least 600 x 600 DPI. The paper should be of a brightness factor to allow for a contrast ratio of paper to print to ensure reliable OCR scanning.
2. Bills will be printed on 8 1/2" x 11" paper, 24# bond, with perforation.
3. The contractor must have the ability to print variable messages and data on the bills by utilizing highlight color text when requested.
4. Envelopes should be a double window (#10) that will allow for the outgoing address on the bottom, with the return address and Shelby County logo in the top window. Payment stubs will be designed with the Shelby County Water payment address revealed when inserted into vendor provided return window envelopes. The appropriate size return window envelopes must be security tented on the inside.
5. Data formatting on the customer bill and return envelopes will be in accordance with the requirements of the USPS. Any data receipt problems, print or insert errors should be reported to Shelby County immediately upon recognition of such errors.