

Lake County Department of Public Works
Printing and Mailing of Utility Bills for LCPW
Bid #26228
Addendum #1 – April 23, 2026

Questions and Clarifications:

1. Question: You mentioned 35 files per month, with print/insert/mail completed within 24 hours of data receipt, totaling approximately 18,000 bills per month. Could you clarify the timing and frequency of the mailings?

Answer: Files are generated daily, approximately 5-7 files per week.

2. Question: Will the 35 files be received and processed individually throughout the month, each with a 24-hour turnaround?

Answer: Yes.

3. Question: Or will files be held and processed in batches (e.g., twice per month)?

Answer: No. See answers to questions #1 and #2 above.

4. Question: Will bills and notices follow the same schedule, or will they be handled as separate mail drops?

Answer: Notices are processed once a week on Tuesdays.

5. Question: Will ACS and mail tracking be required?

Answer: ACS and mail tracking is not required. However, this could be considered a value-added service.

6. Question: Will utility bill printing be simplex or duplex?

Answer: Utility bills are 2 printed pages and can be duplex or 2 single-sided pages at the discretion of the vendor.

7. Question: Is perforation required for utility bills?

Answer: Yes.

8. Question: Will notices printing be simplex or duplex?

Answer: Late notice – simplex, shutoff notice – simplex

9. Question: Is perforation required for notices?

Answer: No.

10. Question: Will the supplied PDFs be print-ready?

Answer: Notices are PDF files and should be print-ready.

11. Question: Could you confirm an estimated or average sheet count for each mailing? In the service requirements it references a one-sided bill form, and there are two example pages provided, so two sheets of paper are assumed.

Answer: The sheet count for each mailing varies based on the billing cycle. Utility bills are 2 printed pages and can be duplex or 2 single-sided pages at the discretion of the vendor.

12. Question: If the above is confirmed as a simplex two sheet mailing, could the work be performed at duplex with one sheet to save costs?

Answer: Utility bills are 2 printed pages and can be duplex or 2 single-sided pages at the discretion of the vendor.

13. Question: The sample bill displays a portion to be retained by the LCPW customer, is this to be perforated paper or cut out by LCPW customer?

Answer: Perforated.

14. Question: Please define bi-monthly. Is the print and mail frequency twice per month, or every other month?

Answer: Each billing cycle is billed every other month(bi-monthly). Cycles are billed bi-monthly, and bill files are generated daily, approximately 5-7 files per week.

15. Question: Around 35 file transfers are expected to be received for two print outputs, are these files coming in daily or in batches? Please describe ideal workflow in more detail.

Answer: Each billing cycle is billed bi-monthly (every other month). Cycles are billed bi-monthly, and bill files are generated daily, approximately 5-7 files per week. LCPW will provide the bidder with approximately 35 data files per month.

16. Question: To reduce processing efforts and costs to the LCPW, is the LCPW open to reducing the file transfer count to include more records per file?

Answer: No.

17. Question: Only CASS is referenced, would LCPW also like the vendor to run NCOA processing as well?

Answer: The addition of NCOA processing is not required. However, this could be considered a value-added service.

18. Question: To reduce materials costs, is LCPW open to an envelope change with a mailing cover sheet?

Answer: Bids should be based on the requirements outlined in the bid documents. Cost saving proposals could be considered after award.

19. Question: Item 1 in the cost table asks for "Bills printed/folded/mailed". Should this include the cost for the outgoing and return envelopes?

Answer: Yes.

20. Question: Similarly, Item 2 in the cost table asks for "Late Notices Printed/Folded/Mailed". Should this include the cost for the outgoing envelope?

Answer: Yes.

21. Question: What is the frequency in which Lake County submits their billing/notice jobs?

Answer: Billing files are generated daily, approximately 5-7 files per week. Notices are generated weekly on Tuesdays.

22. Question: The RFP document states about 35 data files will be transmitted each month. Can the County provide more detail here regarding the time frame in which these are sent? Would that be 35 files in a single day or 1-2 files sent each day of the month?

Answer: Billing files are generated daily, approximately 5-7 files per week.

23. Question: Can you provide monthly volume distribution by cycle (not just annual totals)?

Answer: There are currently 48 total billing cycles, and the monthly volume varies.

24. Question: What is the historical variance (%) in bill and notice volumes over the last 3 years?

Answer: LCPW is providing bill and notice volumes for the previous 3 fiscal years below:

County Fiscal Year	Number of Bills	Number of Notices
2023	141,841	29,664
2024	131,250	29,303
2025	113,491	29,064

25. Question: Are there seasonal spikes (e.g., summer water usage)?

Answer: Seasonal spikes in usage may impact the number of bills, but not significantly.

26. Question: What percentage of bills include inserts, and how many inserts per envelope on average?

Answer: Tentatively none, but LCPW reserves the right to implement inserts in accordance with the bid documents General Service Requirements - Specifications.

27. Question: Are late notices sent on a fixed schedule or trigger-based (variable volume)?

Answer: Late notices are sent weekly, on Tuesday.

28. Question: Will volumes increase due to new developments or rate changes?

Answer: Per the General Terms and Conditions, Section 7, Volume/Estimated Quantity, the County does not guarantee any specific amount and shall not be held responsible for any deviation. Lake County does not guarantee that the County will buy any or all estimated quantities or total amounts.

29. Question: Can you provide sample data files (.txt and .pdf) and file specs?

Answer: Sample data files can be provided to the awarded contractor.

30. Question: Are all 35 monthly files uniform in format, or do formats vary?

Answer: Files are uniform in format.

31. Question: What is the average record count per file?

Answer: It varies, approximately 200 to 3,000.

32. Question: Are there any exceptions handling requirements (e.g., rejected records, bad addresses)?

Answer: No.

33. Question: Who is responsible for data validation and cleansing?

Answer: LCPW is responsible for providing validated billing data from our billing software system.

34. Question: What % of files historically require reprocessing or corrections?

Answer: LCPW has not historically experienced this.

35. Question: Does the 24-hour SLA include weekends and holidays?

Answer: No, it does not include weekends and holidays.

36. Question: What is the expected cutoff time for file receipt?

Answer: LCPW typically sends files during our normal business hours (Monday-Friday from 8am to 430pm local time). However, there are times when files may be sent outside of business hours, and we will communicate with the awarded contractor regarding these situations.

37. Question: What happens if files are received late or incomplete?

Answer: Bidder will print, insert and mail all water and sewer bills for LCPW within 24 hours after successful receipt of the data file from LCPW. If the vendor notices incomplete files and alerts LCPW to this, data will be resent and the 24-hour requirement will start from the re-sent time.

38. Question: Are there penalties for missed SLA performance?

Answer: No. However, per General Terms and Conditions, Section 6, Termination, Lake County reserves the right to terminate this bid as set forth below. Termination Due to Material Breach: In the event that this Agreement is terminated due to the Consultant's material breach, Lake County shall be entitled to purchase substitute items or services elsewhere and charge Consultant with losses the County incurs, including attorney's fees and expenses, notwithstanding any damage limitations the parties may agree to elsewhere.

39. Question: What % of files historically require same-day reprints or corrections?

Answer: LCPW historically has not had this experience.

40. Question: Will Lake County fund a postage escrow account upfront, or is vendor float required?

Answer: Per the Specifications, Section 6 Postage Rates: All postage costs will be incurred by the bidder shall be billed at cost to LCPW as part of the monthly bill. LCPW will allow bidder to set up an escrow account for postage, if needed. The bidder will provide a monthly manifest detailing the total bills printed, mailed and the dollars billed to LCPW for postage services. LCPW stipulates that the price of the contract may change only as a result of changes in the United States Postal Service postage rates. It is dependent upon the Service Provider to keep LCPW informed of any changes in the postal rates. The bidder must mail the bills starting at the USPS 5-Digit Rate (or lowest) as qualifies to obtain the largest postage discounts. The bidder must have postal software in-house to process and sort. The bidder must CASS certify each cycle. Bar coding, arranging and sorting of the mail shall be utilized to qualify for the lowest postage charges consistent with USPS standards. It is required that the bidder have an on-site USPS MERLIN system for verifying mail quality prior to entry into the USPS distribution system. The mail should be delivered to the USPS within 24 hours of receipt of SFTP file from LCPW. The bidder shall make periodic recommendations for improving mail delivery, postage savings and reducing mailing costs.

41. Question: What is the average mail piece weight (with and without inserts)?

Answer: The current average bill mailer consists of the window envelope, 1 double-sided 8 1/2" x 11", 24# bond sheet of paper and a remittance envelope.

42. Question: What % of mail qualifies for 5-digit pre-sort rates today?

Answer: LCPW does not currently track this.

43. Question: Are there any non-standard addresses or international mailings?

Answer: Not currently.

44. Question: Who absorbs cost if mail does not qualify for automation discounts?

Answer: All postage costs will be incurred by the bidder shall be billed at cost to LCPW as part of the monthly bill.

45. Question: What are the minimum inventory levels expected for forms and envelopes?

Answer: Bidder will agree to purchase and maintain a sufficient supply of billing forms with return mailing envelopes to ensure an uninterrupted supply for printing requirements.

46. Question: Who owns obsolete stock if design changes occur?

Answer: LCPW does not ask for the obsolete materials.

47. Question: How often have form or branding changes occurred historically?

Answer: No design changes within the current contract term.

48. Question: Are inserts always provided by the County, or must vendor print them?

Answer: LCPW will provide bidder with any additional forms to be inserted with the bills. The bidder must agree to receive a drop shipment of the inserts necessary to supply a one-month cycle of bills. LCPW will work with the bidder to design the inserts, in electronic or printed format, to conform to the specifications required for successful insertion by the equipment used by the bidder.

49. Question: What are the specs and tolerances for insert compatibility?

Answer: LCPW will provide bidder with any additional forms to be inserted with the bills. The bidder must agree to receive a drop shipment of the inserts necessary to supply a one-month cycle of bills. LCPW will work with the bidder to design the inserts, in electronic or printed format, to conform to the specifications required for successful insertion by the equipment used by the bidder.

50. Question: Can you provide a detailed implementation timeline and milestones?

Answer: The successful bidder must be ready to accept the first production data file within four (4) weeks from date of receipt of all required information from LCPW.

51. Question: Will there be a parallel run period with the incumbent vendor?

Answer: No.

52. Question: Who is the current vendor, and can we speak with them during transition?

Answer: Information on the currently awarded contract is available online
<https://www.lakecountypurchasingportal.com/awarded-contracts/contractsdetails/?Contract=5176>.

53. Question: What internal resources will Lake County dedicate to onboarding?

Answer: This will be determined after the contract is awarded.

54. Question: What happens if implementation extends beyond 4 weeks?

Answer: Upon award of contract, the successful bidder must be ready to accept the first production data file within four (4) weeks from date of receipt of all required information from LCPW.

55. Question: Who is responsible for costs of reprints due to data errors?

Answer: If the error is determined to have originated prior to proof approval, LCPW will assume responsibility.

56. Question: What is the historical error/reprint rate (%)?

Answer: LCPW does not track this data.

57. Question: What is the process for customer complaints tied to print/mail errors?

Answer: Lake County Public Works Utility Billing staff will address any questions or concerns from customers.

58. Question: Are there penalties or service credits for errors?

Answer: No.

59. Question: Is there a defined acceptable error threshold?

Answer: No.

60. Question: Given the fixed pricing and no surcharge clause, how should vendors account for paper and labor cost increases during the initial term?

Answer: Prices throughout the initial term of the contract shall remain firm/fixed.

61. Question: Can exceptions be made for extraordinary cost increases (e.g., paper shortages)?

Answer: No.

62. Question: Will the County consider tiered pricing based on volume bands?

Answer: No.

63. Question: How will the County evaluate “unbalanced bids”?

Answer: Bidders shall not submit a bid which contains irregularities of any kind, including unbalanced bids. By an unbalanced bid, it is meant that one or more separate items are substantially out of line with the current market price for the materials and/or work covered hereby. The County reserves the right not to award any items or to negotiate unit prices that appear excessive or unbalanced.

64. Question: Can pricing be separated for print, insert, postage handling, special handling / exceptions?

Answer: A completed bid price sheet must be provided per page 2 of the bid documents.

65. Question: What % of customers are currently enrolled in paperless billing?

Answer: 48% of LCPW customers are currently enrolled in paperless billing (16,216 of our 33,759 customers).

66. Question: Are there API or integration requirements beyond SFTP?

Answer: To the best assessment of LCPW no. LCPW data files will be transferred to the bidder via SFTP. It will be the responsibility of the bidder to assist LCPW during the configuration process of the SFTP link and to provide an SFTP site for upload. LCPW will bill in bi-monthly cycles of approximately 18,000 bills per month and as such LCPW will transmit approximately 35 data files to the bidder each month. Each one of these data files will be treated as a separate billing, and each shall be subject to the requirements set forth in this bid. LCPW uses Advanced CIS Infinity by Harris Computer system.

67. Question: What are the County's expectations for backup production facilities and RTO/RPO targets?

Answer: The execution of the contract is the awarded contractor's responsibility.

68. Question: Has the County experienced prior service disruptions?

Answer: No.

69. Are there mandatory DR test requirements?

Answer: To the best assessment of LCPW no.

70. Question: What is the County's top 3 pain points with the current vendor?

Answer: The County will not discuss the status of the incumbent contractor during the solicitation process.

71. Question: Where does the County see the biggest opportunity for cost savings?

Answer: Determination of the total base bid amount is solely the responsibility of the bidder.

72. Question: What would define a successful first 6 months of this contract?

Answer: Bidder will print, insert and mail all water and sewer bills for LCPW within 24 hours after successful receipt of the data file from LCPW. The bidder shall provide LCPW 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. Upon award of contract, the successful bidder must be ready to accept the first production data file within four (4) weeks from date of receipt of all required information from LCPW.

73. Question: Are there KPIs beyond SLA (cost per bill, delivery time, error rate)?

Answer: Only what is in the bid documents will be considered.

74. Question: Who is the current vendor for these services?

Answer: Information on the currently awarded contract is available online <https://www.lakecountypurchasingportal.com/awarded-contracts/contractsdetails/?Contract=5176>.

75. Question: Why is the County currently out for bid?

Answer: The current contract is expiring with no remaining renewal options and a new contract must be solicited via openly publicized competitive process per the Lake County Purchasing Ordinance.

76. Question: What does the County currently pay for these services?

Answer: Information on the currently awarded contract is available online <https://www.lakecountypurchasingportal.com/awarded-contracts/contractsdetails/?Contract=5176>.

77. Question: What is the current postage rate that the County pays?

Answer: Information on the currently awarded contract is available online <https://www.lakecountypurchasingportal.com/awarded-contracts/contractsdetails/?Contract=5176>.

78. Question: When do you expect to make an award decision for this bid?

Answer: Bids are due May 1, 2026. Target County Board Award date is June 9, 2026*.
*Dates subject to County Readiness.

79. Question: Item 3. SUBMITTALS references an 'Electronic copy of the complete bid submission'. Will you please clarify this ask? Is this simply the vendor's completed response?

Answer: Yes. All submissions must contain each of the forms listed under this section, fully completed, or will be deemed non-responsive.

80. Question: Are there any production or service issues that have led you to go out to bid for these services?

Answer: The current contract is expiring with no remaining renewal options and a new contract must be solicited via openly publicized competitive process per the Lake County Purchasing Ordinance.

81. Question: Item 3. Performance Requirement states in part 'Upon award of contract, the successful bidder must be ready to accept the first production data file within four (4) weeks from date of receipt of all required information from LCPW.' Does 'all required information from LCPW' refer to contract or information gathered during the implementation process? Will you please clarify the expected timeline? Does the County have an expected "go-live" date?

Answer: Upon award of contract, the successful bidder must be ready to accept the first production data file within four (4) weeks from date of receipt of all required information from LCPW.