ValueBill® Basics

MANUAL FOR PRODUCTION OF POSTCARD WATER AND SEWER BILLS

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Introduction

Thank you for buying The Value Series of Products. The route and billing programs have been in use since 1995. Produced as an "in house" software our billing and route management programs have grown in scope since inception. You notice our current version is 2.0. We normally increment in tenths and hundreths of decimal points so you may see a version on your software like v2.0.8 These small increments mean that are software has seen literally hundreds of additions and improvements. It is the way is should be when the programming company actually uses their own program on a daily basis. If something isn't quite as you would expect (or like) feel free to make suggestions to our email. It is our commitment to grow our programs to their fullest potential. Just like you, we intuitive programs, that offer more than expected.

This manual was written for those that have at least a basic understanding of current systems like the Mac OS or Windows. I believe you will find our program quite functional and well equipment to manage your water and sewer bill production.

Thanks again.

Directions for Software Installation.

Windows Users

For Installation, insert the CD into your drive.

Copy the WinBill Folder to your hard drive.
Run the Windows control panel “Fonts”.
Add all the fonts from the c:\Winbill\fonts directory.
(or copy the fonts in the omnis font folder and paste to the control panels font folder)

Important: These fonts are required to be installed before running the software. ValueBill will not run properly without them. Further make sure your system preferences for fonts size is set to small.

Next, right click the h20.lbr and select properties.
Un-check read only, Check archive. Click On apply.
Close the Window.Double Click the Omnis application.
Go to the file menu and select open library.Double Click H20.lbr.

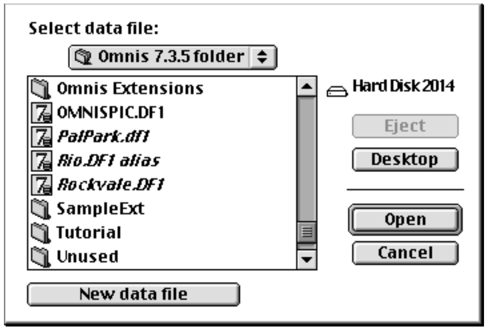
Logon Is: Demo
Password is: Demo

Mac Users

Double Click You Installer or copy the entire folder to your harddrive.
Find H20.lbr and double click on it. Log on is same as above.

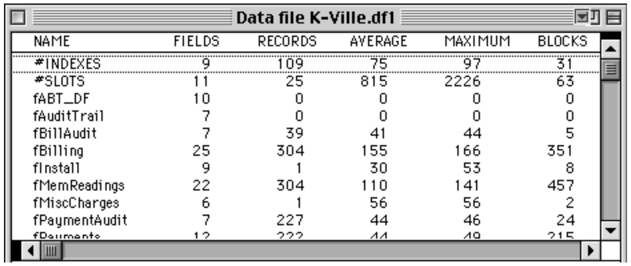
Getting Started

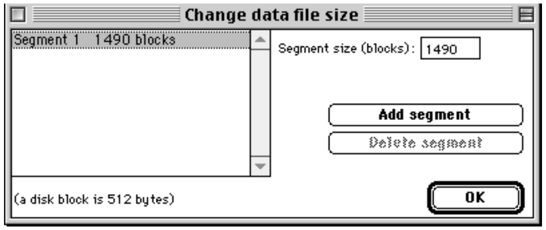
Once your software is installed you will need to create a data file. We do not recommend using demo data files. You will find the open data file under the File Menu. Selecting this will produce the following screen.



Push the “New data file” button and name your new data file by your city name ending with the suffix .df1 (means data file 1). The file is automatically sized to hold 450K of information. (not much) If you believe your requirements will be higher you may resize the data file at any time in the utilities menu.

To resize your data file, go to the utility menu and select examine data file in the data file tools submenu. This window will appear.

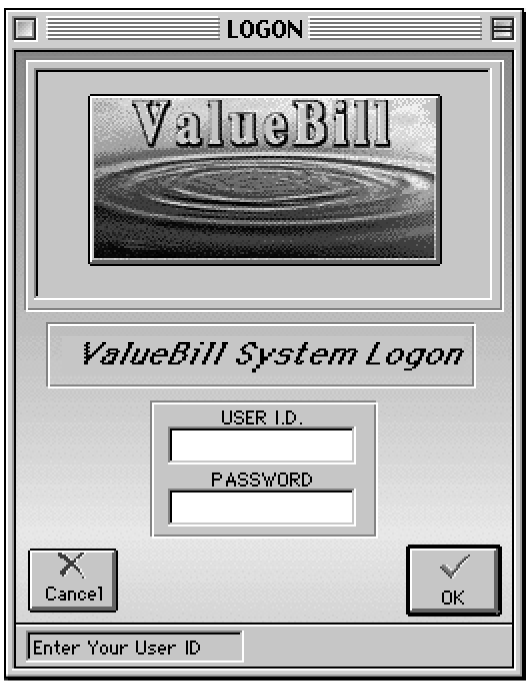




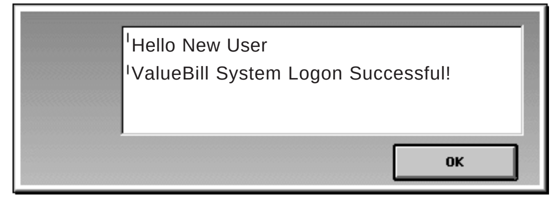
Now select the Change Data File Size in the Data File Menu. This window will appear. Simply highlight the "segment size" in the upper right hand corner and type in your new number of blocks you wish to allocate to the data file. We recommend 1000 blocks per 20 meters. This will be enough space for about 2 years. More blocks may be allocated at any time given enough free space on your hard drive.

Creation of the data file will prompt the program to bring up the logon screen.

Your temporary sign on is as follows: User ID: Demo
Password: Demo

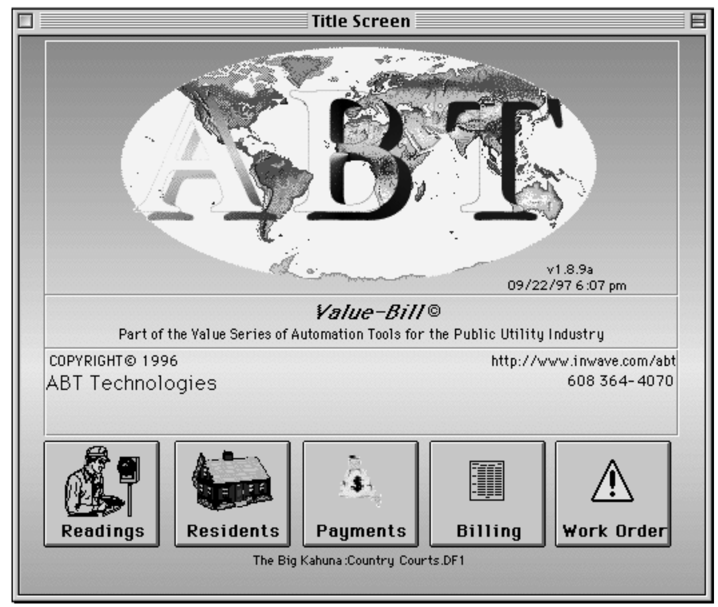


Upon acceptance of your user ID and password you will be greeted by the following:



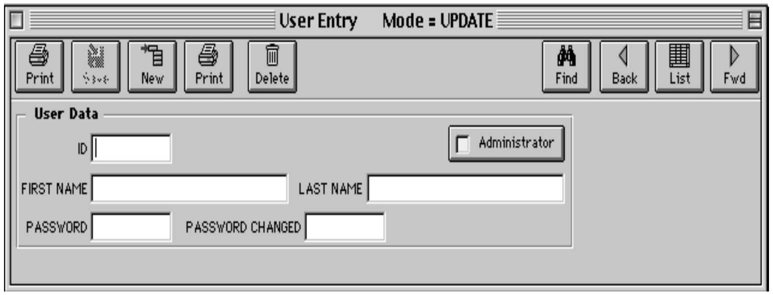
Click OK button to go to the Title Screen.

The title screen gives access to all regularly used functions of the program.



Before entering resident information you should enter the behind the scenes information starting with Users under the ValueBill Menu maintenance.

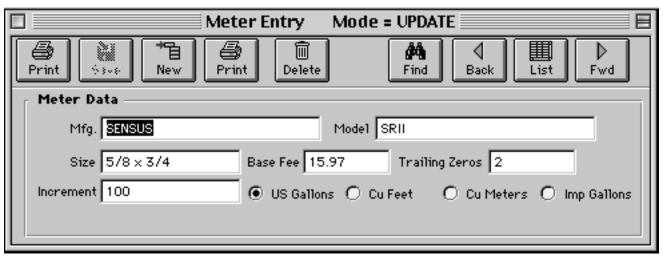
Start by clicking the “NEW” button. Enter an ID such as initials, then your first name, last name, and password. System Daemon should click the administrator button. Non-administrator users are not allowed into maintenance sections of the program ie rate tables, users, utility info, etc...



To check the user list click the “List” button to pull up the following window. To modify user information, double click the name in the list. Make your changes in the user window and then click save.

Entering Basic Information

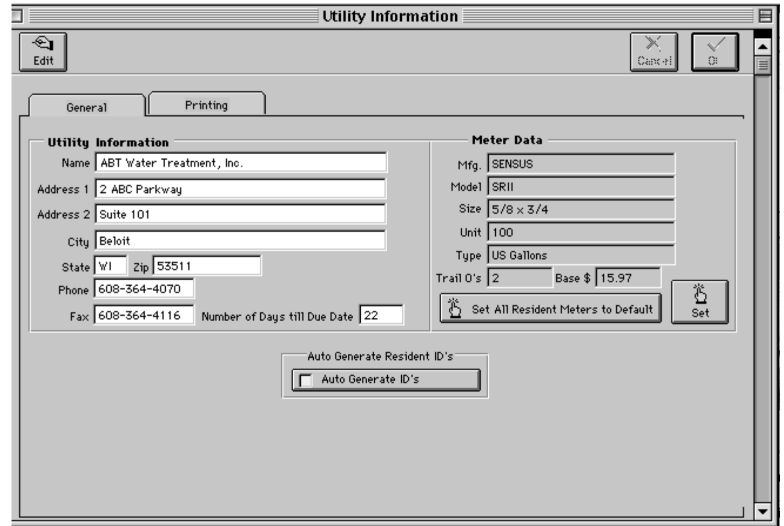
Meter Types: Go to ValueBill Menu to Maintenance sub-menu



Enter your different meter types here. Click New to enter a new meter. The base charge for Water and Sewer should be entered here. When you have entered your meter type information go to the next step in the basic information set up.

Next Enter your Utility General and Printing Information. Go to ValueBill Menu to Maintenance sub menu.

Utility Information entered here is globally printed on every bill.



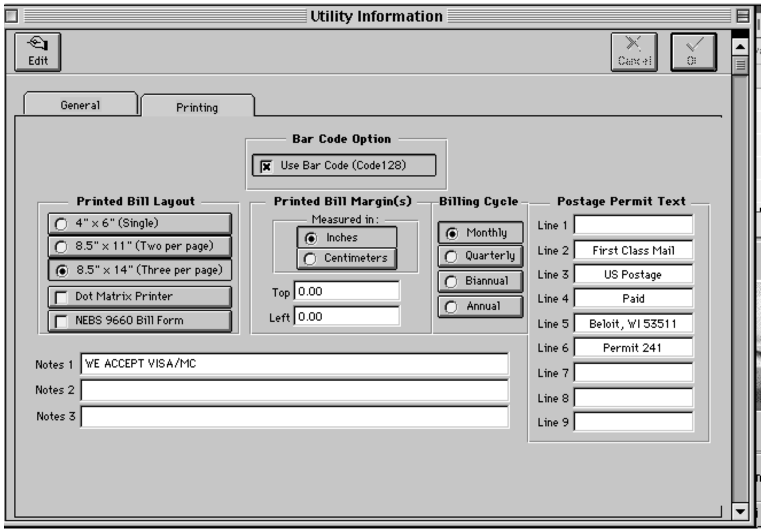
Auto ID: generates a unique numeric ID for each resident as they are entered in the resident screen. If you want to use your own resident ID do not click the Auto generate ID.

Bill Due Date: The number of days entered here will be added to the bill processing date. This number should be check before each bill processing cycle.

Set global meter data after resident information is entered

Meter Data: If you have entered meter information into the meter window you may select 1 global meter to set to all residents. To select a meter type click the “set to default button”. A list of all currently available meters should appear. If the list is blank you must enter meter information in the meter window under the maintenance sub menu. This may be useful for submetering where all meters are the same. If you are a small utility with a majority of one type of meter you could use this to set all residents to this meter type and then modify the information for those residents that have a different meter type. Meter type information may be modified in the resident screen.

Information entered here is globally printed on every bill.



Postage: Postage permit information may be entered from line 1-9

Notes: Notes 1-3 are printed on every bill. Use for misc. information such as hours when bills may be paid.

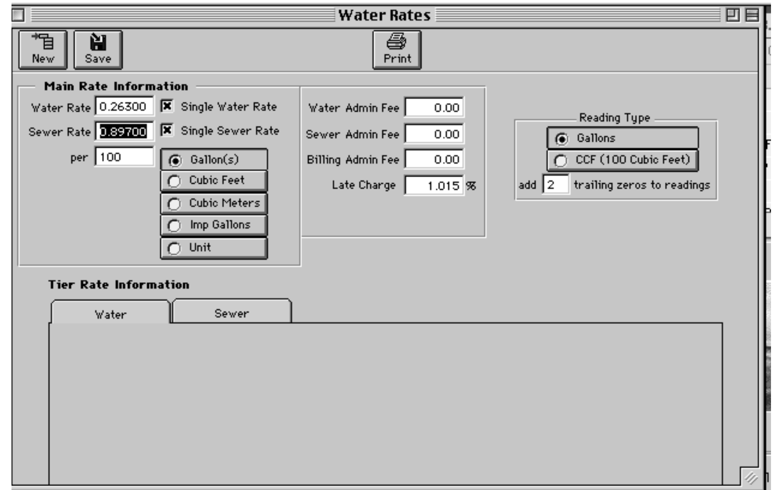
Measurements: use to fine adjust bill printing.

Billing Cycle: Relate your billing cycle to the tier rate section of the rate screen. Must select one cycle for both water and sewer.

Bill Layout: Select for printing 1-3 postcard bills per page.

Water Rate Table

Checking single rate for water and sewer allows one rate for all customers. If you need tier rates skip to the next section.



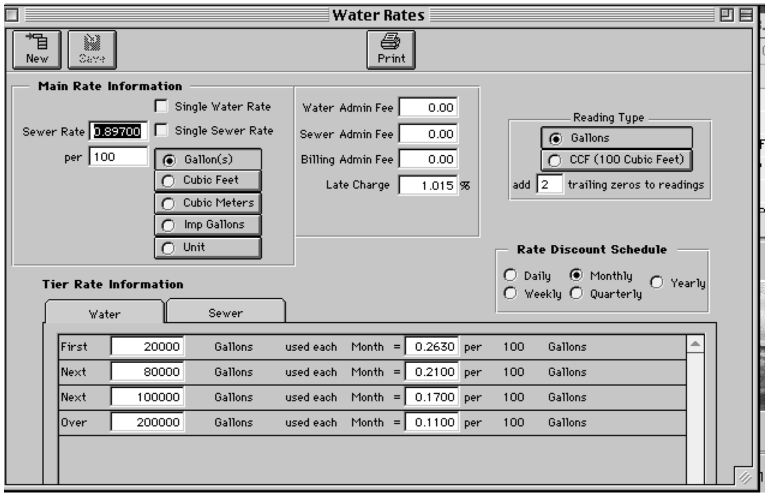
Single Rate -If you use a single rate system simply click on the single rate check box and enter your rate.

Base Fees - Water & Sewer Admin Fee(s) are included in the water rate portion of the bill and does not appear as a separate line item. This would be the place for regular meter base fees.

Misc. Fees - Billing Admin Fee is a separate line item on the bill. Use this for special fees like hydrant maintenance, fire protection, etc..

Trailing zeros - for ECR meters should be determined by calling your meter representative. The meter rep can tell you how many active wheels are on the meter and how many zeros you should add to the meter reading. Hand written readings would only use the preprinted zeros on the meter.

Tier Rate - If you have a tier rated system de-select the single rate check box to enter your progressive rate to the table at the bottom of the screen.



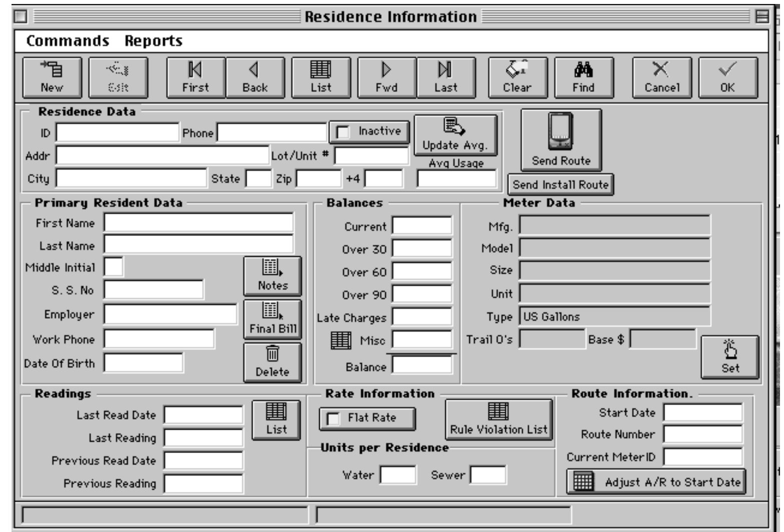
Example:

In this example your first 20,000 gallons is charged at 0.263 cents per 100 gallons. The next 60,000 gallons is charged at 0.21 cents per 100 gallons. (The computer figures the difference between 20 and 80 thousand gallons.) Simply type your tier breaks into each line with the corresponding rate for that tier.

Reminder: the meter base charges, increment, and trailing zeros are entered into the meter information screen.

Resident Screen

The resident screen houses all customer information. The all important customer ID should never be changed once billing procedures have begun. The customer ID is link to the reading and billing screen functions and all reports. Once all resident information has been entered print a resident list report which includes ID#s.



ID - If you selected auto ID in the utility set up, ValueBill™ will generate a unique numeric ID ending with -01. If you decided to generate your own ID or have ID's from a previous system, you should ad the suffix -01(that's dash zero one). This will help later for automatic resident changes.

Lot/Unit # - use for apt. # or mobile home lot #.

Name address etc... - no special requirements here, just lots of typing.

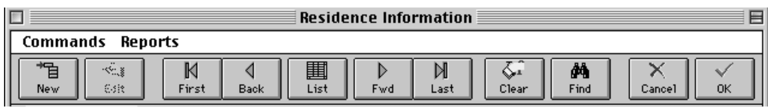
Readings Section - This information is added as readings and bills are processed.

Balances - This information is added / updated from reading and billing and updated when payments are posted.

Rate Information - This section is for changing default information entered in the rate window.

Route information - This information is for automatic data collectors. leave blank if you are recording written readings.

Unique Buttons in the Resident Screen



New - To enter a new customer

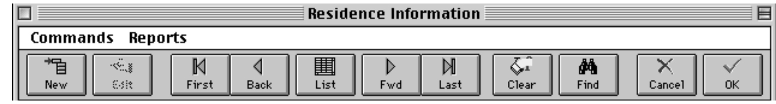
Edit - to edit customer information. Please be selective when editing information. As mentioned before, editing a customer ID is not wise once billing procedures have begun. Editing to update the resident screen does not update other current information held in the reading or billing screens. Only edit customer information as part of the update procedures outlined later in this manual.

First - Takes you to the first customer in your list

Last - Takes you to the last customer in the list

Forward and Back - for moving 1 customer at a time.

List - use the list after finding a particular section of customer.



Clear - This clears all previous search parameters.

Find - Find by just about any field. Searches may be done by "starts with" such as a last name search Jones may be done by click find and typing J into the last name field.

Use a contains type search for hard to remember information. Multiple field searches are allowed. For example type J into the first name field, TAB and type J into the last name field. Hit Return. This would find John Jones, Jim Johnson, etc...

Cancel - Canceling will eliminate any changes and leave your data untouched.

OK - Clicking OK will save any changes made to your data.

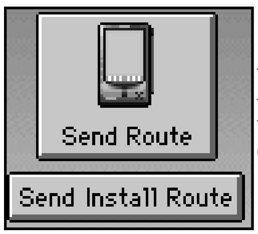
More Unique Resident Buttons

Notes - Click the notes button to open the notes/work orders screen. Use to track complaints, questions, etc.

Misc Charge - Click the misc charge list box to see a description list of misc charges.

Delete - Click the delete button to eliminate a resident from the data file. This will <u>not</u> delete reading or billing information for this client.

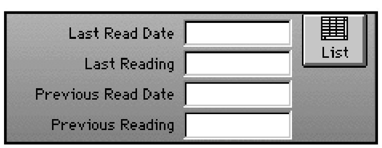
Averages - Update averages after each billing period. The average usage for each customers is display directly below the button. This average will be used when a reading is not taken.



Send Route - Resident Route information may be sent to the ValueRead™ hand held data collection system by clicking this button.

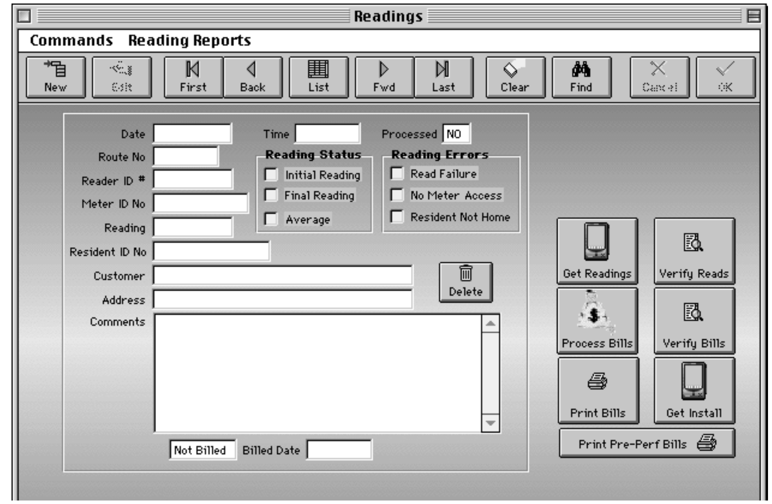
Send Install Route - This will send any names from the installation manager portion of the program to the ValueRead™ system.

Readings List - Clicking the list button will generate a list of all readings for the current resident.



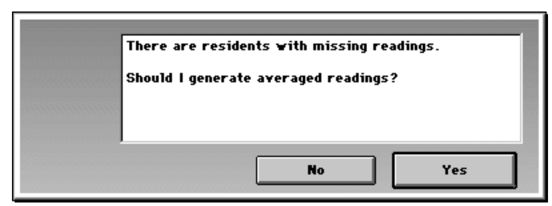
Readings Screen

ValueRead™ users should use the Get Readings button to download readings. Manual Users should data enter reading information for each customer by clicking the NEW button, entering data, and then click OK. After Readings are in, follow the verification protocols outlined below.

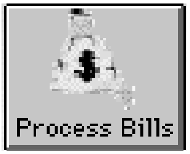


Verify Reads - Checks the current unprocessed readings against the current active customer list. If all customers have readings you see this dialog box.

If there are missing reads you will see the following. Clicking No will generate a missed readings report, and allow you to enter the information for the missed readings. Clicking Yes will generate reads based on customer average and a missing readings report.

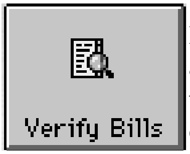


Bill Processing



Do Not Click the Process Bills button until:

1.) Read verification is complete
2.) Due date is adjusted in the Utility Window
3.) Posting any payments currently not posted
4.) Issuing and posting customer credits



Bill verification routine checks the current bills against the current active customer list. If all customers have bills for the current period you see this dialog box.

If there are missing bills you will be prompted to print a report of customers with missing bills. Print the list and then manually enter any missing bills in the billing screen.

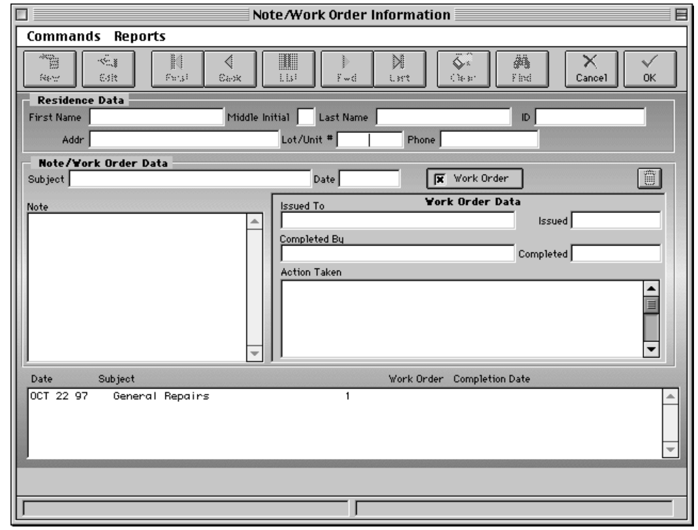
Processing bills will place a new amount into the current due in the customer screen based on your rates. Past do amounts are moved from current to over 30, over 30 to over 60 etc...   Past due amounts will show on the bill as an arrears. Credits will be shown as negative receivables.

Printing Bills

To Print Bills, click on the Print Bills button in the reading screen. You will be prompted by a series of windows for setting up your printer parameters. Because of the variety of available printers we can not give exact instructions for your particular printer. Typically, the print job should be run from the multipurpose tray or envelope feeder. Bills should be printed landscape through the printer to prevent jamming of the internal mechanisms of the printer.

Work Orders / Notes

Notes and work orders should be implemented from the customer screen. I f you find the customer in their resident screen and then press the notes button, ValueBill will automatically open the Work Order screen for entering a note or Work Order. Click new and then tab to the subject field. Name and time is automatically filled in. To make a note into a work order simply click the Work Order button and fill in the information fields that appear.



Print the Work Order from the reports menu. When a Work Order is completed, you may use the find button to find the customer and then edit the work order to add additional information about actions taken.

Notes: