



HouseHoppers Consulting (Pty) Ltd | Registration No.: 2015/350398/07 | Vat No.: 4150274076 | PO Box 1334  
Strubensvalley, 1735 | Email: [info@househoppers.co.za](mailto:info@househoppers.co.za) | Tel: 086 124 6873 | Website: [www.househoppers.co.za](http://www.househoppers.co.za)

## ACCOUNT OPENING DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION

Below and attached you will find all that is needed to open your utility accounts. Please read through the utility information document very carefully as it details the full process. Please also be aware that the timeframes given are guidelines only. Househoppers facilitates the process but is still very reliant on the City of Johannesburg to process the work, which may be hampered by unforeseen delays from time to time.

### SECTIONAL & FULL TITLE ACCOUNT OPENING REQUIRES THE BELOW:

- **Information Sheet** *(Attached)*
- **Resolution Letter** *(Attached)*
- **Company or Trust Documents** *(if applicable)*
- **Copy of ID** *(all purchasers who appear on the offer to purchase)*
- **Transferring Attorney Letter** *(Can be obtained from your transferring attorney- This will be a letter addressed to The City of Johannesburg)*
- **Previous Owners Utility Account Numbers** *(These are important to ensure that the correct accounts are opened for the correct property)*

### FULL TITLE ACCOUNT OPENINGS REQUIRES THE BELOW:

- **Date stamped Water and Electricity meter photos** *(Please use a digital camera that will allow a date stamp and ensure that the reading and serial are clear)*

### ESKOM ACCOUNT OPENINGS REQUIRES THE BELOW:

- **Electrical Certificate of Compliance** *(Can be obtained from your transferring attorney)*
- **Previous Owners Eskom Account Number**

### ACCOUNT OPENING PRICING:

- **Rates and Refuse – R850.00**
- **Water and Electricity – R850.00**
- **Eskom – R300.00 additional** *(If electricity falls under a Eskom supplied area)*

Should we need to source other documents on your behalf there will be an additional fee of R350.00



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Councils LIS (Land Information System) Department can take up to 2-8 weeks to update as you being the new registered owner. Once updated, we aim to have your rates account opened shortly after.

**Full Title Properties:** Once rates has been opened the relevant utilities will then be linked to your new rates account and a consumption deposit will be raised.

### USEFUL TIPS:

**Full Title Property** – This is a free standing home

**Sectional Title Property** – This is either a flat or a property within a complex.

**Please remember to take the readings on all your meters on date of occupation AND registration.**

For more information or any questions, feel free to contact HouseHoppers on the following:

- Opening of Council Accounts - [openings@househoppers.co.za](mailto:openings@househoppers.co.za)
- Closing of Council Accounts - [closings@househoppers.co.za](mailto:closings@househoppers.co.za)
- Queries and Billing Issues of Council Accounts - [queries@househoppers.co.za](mailto:queries@househoppers.co.za)





Office Line: 0861 2 HOUSE (46873)

Website: www.househoppers.co.za

Postal Address: PO Box 1334, Strubensvalley, 1735

The City of Johannesburg  
Johannesburg Water  
City Power  
Eskom

## RESOLUTION LETTER TO ASSIST WITH ESKOM AND CITY OF JOHANNESBURG ACCOUNTS

To whom it my concern,

I, \_\_\_\_\_ ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ give my permission, that \_\_\_\_\_  
employee of Househoppers, has my full permission to do the following applicable items on my behalf  
for my account/s:

- Complete and sign application forms
- Apply for refunds
- Opening of accounts
- Accessing of online statements
- Any general queries to do with the below address:

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**By signing this form, I confirm that I have received, read, understood and agreed to the Househoppers terms and conditions as well as give full permission HouseHoppers and its Employees to deal directly with Eskom and The City of Johannesburg with regards to my accounts on my behalf.**

Yours faithfully:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Sign: \_\_\_\_\_



HouseHoppers is an independent rates consultancy company which aims to assist buyers and sellers in opening and closing their utility accounts. Our thorough knowledge of the City of Johannesburg and Eskom workings, aids us in providing you with a stress free process without ever having to personally visit the necessary offices.

**PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU READ THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION TO ENSURE THAT YOU UNDERSTAND THE PROCESS, AND TO AVOID ANY MISUNDERSTANDING AND UNNECESSARY FRUSTRATION. THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG PROCESSES ARE VERY DIFFERENT IN COMPARISON TO NORMAL CORPORATIONS. THE OPENING AND CLOSING PROCEDURES ARE DETAILED SEPARATELY FOR YOUR EASE OF REFERENCE. THIS IS A LIVING DOCUMENT THAT IS REVISED OFTEN TO KEEP UP WITH THE EVER CHANGING COUNCIL PROCESS. PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU HAVE THE LATEST VERSION.**

We aim to provide you with feedback every 2 weeks. Although this is not always possible, we will at the very least send progress reports when progress has been made on the account. Should you require feedback other than the before mentioned times, please feel free to contact the coordinator handling your file

## Account Openings

City Of Johannesburg, Joburg Water, City Power and Eskom

When purchasing a property in the city of Johannesburg it is necessary for the buyers to attend to the opening of new utility accounts at the City of Johannesburg municipality, and if necessary Eskom too. These accounts are not opened automatically and do require personal visits to the offices, which HouseHoppers does for you. There are two different kinds of account openings- full title (free standing house and clusters homes) and sectional title (townhouse and apartments). The difference in the two is that Full title accounts includes rates, refuse, sewer, water and electricity whereas sectional title account only has rates and refuse- as water, electricity and sewer are billed through the complex's Body Corporate. It is also possible to have a full title property where water or electricity is billed through the complex.

### GENERAL:

- COJ accounts can only be opened after the transfer has registered into the new owners' name. It is best to open the accounts as quickly as possible to avoid any unnecessary interruption of supply, although generally there is a 4-8 week leniency period before you are disconnected.
- The accounts are opened from the date of transfer only- **NOT date of occupation**- if you occupied the property prior to transfer you will need to reimburse the seller for any consumption up until date of transfer. To calculate the split charges between the two accounts please see the note on **occupational rent split charges** below.
- Please do not make any payments into any account that is not in your name. Reimbursing of charges during occupational rent should be paid to the seller and please be sure to keep all proof of payments just in case. Please note that accounts can and will only be opened in the names of the registered owners of the property.
- It is advisable to record all meter readings on date of occupation and date of transfer and generally best to do it photographically with a camera that is able to include a date stamp. These readings are only ever used if there is a discrepancy with the billing on the account. The start readings on the account are never exact but are normally fairly accurate.
- Eskom accounts are opened with the same readings that the seller closes their accounts with. If these readings are incorrect for any reason, your account will be opened with incorrect readings.
- Please be aware that the following rates scenarios will incur additional HouseHoppers fees--1) If a property is a double stand; a double rates update fee will be charged --2) If rates accounts are found to be in the previous, previous owners names; a double rates update will need to be done --3) If the LIS has not been updated, a separate query will need to be logged with the GIS department to have it updated and additional charges will be incurred 4) if the property was recently sub divided and the original accounts are not correct.

### WATER AND ELECTRICITY:

Accounts can be opened once the transfer has taken place and once the ownership details have been updated between the deeds office and the COJ. Once the ownership details have been updated and the LIS system reflects the new owner we are then able to proceed and open a new rates account for the property for which we receive a new account number. The water and electricity are then added to the new rates accounts. The water and electricity services do require a consumption deposit to be paid into the account. This deposit is held in security on the account until the account is closed at which time it is then refunded. Deposits must be paid directly into the newly created COJ account via EFT or a direct bank deposit. Please note the COJ no longer accepts any form of cheque payments. All accounts that are opened are opened from a nil balance which means that purchasers cannot inherit any debit balances from a seller.

Buyer's accounts are opened with the exact same information as the seller's accounts. If there were any errors with the seller's account these same errors will be passed onto your account, (incorrect meters linked or incorrect information). It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that all the details are correct and if any are not correct to please notify us so that it can be fixed. We do not receive copies of the account after they have been created and billed. The correction of existing errors will be billed as separate queries. Water and electricity accounts are generally billed within a month or two. If you do not receive an invoice, please notify HouseHoppers so that we can investigate as we will be unaware unless we are notified.

For more information call **HouseHoppers** on **086 124 6873** or visit our website **[www.househoppers.co.za](http://www.househoppers.co.za)**



Eskom accounts should be opened from the date that the previous owner closed their account or on date of transfer. This should be done very shortly after you have moved in. New accounts are opened using the same readings with which the seller closed their Eskom account, so if there is a discrepancy with the readings it will cause an issue with the billing on the 1st account. Eskom also require a consumption deposit of which the minimum is R2550. It is advisable to pay this deposit once we have it to you as you could run the risk of being disconnected. Your first bill should be received within approximately 1 month (accounts are only billed once a month towards months end) if not please notify us so that we can investigate.

#### OCCUPATIONAL RENT SPLIT CHARGES:

If the purchaser took occupation prior to registration, then the seller should bill the purchaser directly for all consumption up until date of registration only; thereafter the Council will adjust the bills accordingly. Please remember to take readings on date of registration; these will only be used should a query arise as the Council has their own way of calculating the split charges. The Council regards occupation rent as a private agreement and they do not concern themselves with the split charges between buyers and sellers. They only concern themselves with the charges prior to transfer for the seller and charges after transfer for the buyer. To calculate what amounts should be billed to purchaser prior to registration, take the entire bill for the water and/ or electricity, including the service charges and Vat, and divide the amount by the number of days stated on the bill and pro rata the amount. Please remember that consumption is billed in arrears and on odd days (18th- 15th of a month) so there may be an additional bill after registration for consumption. Rates, sewer and refuse are not normally billed to the purchaser during the occupational lease period (but this may vary depending on the contract you signed). The seller is also liable for the rates, sewer and refuse for the month that the property was registered.

#### ERF SUB DIVISIONS AND CONSOLIDATIONS:

In the case of a sub division or consolidation, new rates accounts must be created for the newly sub divided/ consolidated stands. When this is done the water and electricity meter still remain on the original stand, which technically no longer exists due to the sub division or consolidation, and will need to be moved to the new stand that is created. This is a complicated process which involves moving meters between premises (ERF's). The fees for this will differ to that of normally account opening. We will bill you to open the rates (not water or electricity) and then an additional fee to move the meters between premises: each service is done at a different department; therefore there will be a separate fee for each service

#### SUMMARY FOR ACCOUNT OPENING (8 Weeks)

- 🕒 HH to receive ALL documents before the file is invoiced
- 🕒 Payment required before work will commence
- 🕒 Ownership and LIS to be updated
- 🕒 Opening of rates account
- 🕒 Opening of water and electricity (1-2 weeks)
- 🕒 Client to pay deposits
- 🕒 1st invoice (can take up to 2 months to receive an account)

If your account has been opened and you do not receive a bill in the stipulated time, please let us know as any outstanding accounts may be disconnected and may incur unnecessary interest charges. The onus is on the account holder to ensure that they receive accounts. Please notify us if you do not receive an account so that we can investigate.

*Please note that once the accounts are open and active any further queries on the account will be charged for as a separate query. HouseHoppers cannot be held liable for any errors with the billing process.*

Although HouseHoppers has a thorough knowledge and understanding of Council processes and procedures and we are most certainly able to speed up the process, we are still at the mercy of the Council to process the work. Errors and issues are very common when dealing with the COJ. There may be unexpected delays from time to time which we cannot be held liable for and ask for your patience and understanding whilst we work on your behalf with one of the most difficult companies in South Africa.

**While the impossible does take time, miracles take a bit longer.**

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. HouseHoppers is an independent rates consultancy firm which aids consumers in opening accounts, closing accounts/ obtaining refunds, and problem solving billing errors. We act as facilitators and with our thorough knowledge of City of Johannesburg processes and workings we are able to speed up the process. While still at the mercy of the City of Johannesburg to process the work, we cannot be held liable for any processing errors done by the COJ.
2. Timeframes provided are guidelines only. Househoppers aims to resolve all work and queries as quickly as possible but there may be unforeseen delays from time to time.
3. Househoppers work is based on information supplied to the company by the client, should any information be incorrect Househoppers will not be liable for any errors as a result thereof.
4. Househoppers is required, by law, to follow all and any processes and procedures set out by the City of Johannesburg. This supersedes any "desired" outcomes. All fees due for work processed, and accepted by a client, will be payable should the "desired" outcome not be achieved, and if the work has been corrected in accordance with COJ policy and procedures
5. All Househoppers fees are required in advance before any work will commence. Please ensure the correct reference is used when making payments. Fees for queries are due immediately on presentation of an invoice. HouseHoppers fees will not be refunded under any circumstances, including but not limited to the following; low or nil refund due to unforeseen circumstances; any delay in any process or accounts that have already been opened unbeknown to the consumer/ HouseHoppers (Househoppers does not check the existence of an account prior to starting the process). If a fee is refunded, at the discretion of Househoppers, for any reason, it will be refunded less an admin fee and less work that has already been processed on your file. Any fees that are not settled within the stipulated time will be referred to a debt collection agency which will result in additional fees being charged, The fees will remain for the account of the client
6. The City of Johannesburg changes their policies and procedures often and without notification, this does cause problems and delays in our process. Househoppers cannot be held liable for this as it is beyond our control.
7. Househoppers aims to provide feedback when progress has been made on accounts or at least every 4 weeks. Should you require feedback between these periods please feel free to contact your HouseHoppers coordinator directly.
8. Any account which involves the creation of a new rates account (opening, closings or queries) is dependent on the LIS (Land Information) system being up to date with the new ownership details. Should it not be updated within the required time and should HouseHoppers need to intervene to get it updated, additional charges will be incurred as it will constitute a separate query
9. **Account opening:** When new accounts are opened they are opened with all the exact information as the previous account. If there are errors on the previous account the same errors will appear on the new account. The correction of these errors will constitute a separate query. Sub Division and consolidation accounts differ slightly from the normal account opening and closing procedure; and also warrants different fees to process the work.
10. **Account closings and refunds:** All accounts to be closed by HouseHoppers must be stipulated. HouseHoppers cannot be held liable for any omitted accounts. If an attorney requires payment to obtain archived or other documents, the client is responsible for these payments. Obtaining documents on behalf of clients is a courtesy service we offer and we cannot be held liable if attorneys do not honor requests for documents timeously. We will do our best to assist clients with obtaining documents but the responsibility ultimately lies with the client to ensure that all documents are forthcoming. No monies should be paid into COJ accounts after the clearance figures have been paid. If monies have been paid after date of transfer additional HouseHoppers fees may be applicable to have these additional amounts refunded. Buyer information is required to ensure that accounts are closed correctly. HouseHoppers will not be held liable if this information has not been supplied and it delays the process. HouseHoppers cannot be held liable if refunds are rejected due to incorrect COJ processing. Refund amounts are estimated at the beginning of the process. These are very basic calculations and do not include a full investigation into the account which could reveal billing errors and which could alter the initial estimated refund. Readings are needed when closing an Eskom account. If they are not submitted to HouseHoppers and Eskom uses the readings closest to the closing date, HouseHoppers cannot be held liable for the under or overcharges. There are several steps involved in obtaining the refund and each step is handled by a different coordinator.
11. Accounts are closed from date of transfer and no other date. If occupation is given prior/ after this date, the consumption charges must be recovered directly between the buyer and the seller. Additional fees will be applicable for recons done for occupational periods.
12. City Of Johannesburg may require further information (other than what is required initially) during the opening, closing or query process and this may cause unforeseen delays. City Of Johannesburg may require further information (other than what is required initially) during the process and this may cause unforeseen delays.
13. HouseHoppers does not take responsibility for lost or damaged original documents that are provided to HouseHoppers, Househoppers prefer copies of all documents.
14. Once a file has been archived in our office an additional fee will be charged to retrieve it. Clients will be notified prior to archiving.
15. Investigation fees are payable upfront. No investigations proceed prior to payment being received. The investigation fee will not be refunded under any circumstances.
16. Valuation files are backdated to the current valuation roll only, in accordance with the rates Act Council do not open previous valuation rolls for amendments or adjustments. Should this be required it will need to be addressed on a legal basis of which Househoppers is not qualified to do.
17. HouseHoppers work is based on physical facts and information from council and the client, if there is insufficient evidence to resolve an issue, the matter would need to be addressed on a legal basis for which Househoppers is not qualified to do. Work already processed on the file will need to be settled in full.
18. Househoppers cannot guarantee the successful locating of job cards. We will endeavor to locate the required job card or explore alternative solution to resolve the billing issue, however no guarantee can be given in accordance with clause 16.
19. If any fees remain outstanding, Househoppers will not proceed/start a file until such time that the fees have been settled in full.
20. HouseHoppers cannot be held liable for any disconnections at a property especially due to non-payment of accounts. Although accounts are flagged to avoid this, it can be overridden by the credit department. HouseHoppers will not be liable for any loss/ damage or inconvenience caused. Whatsoever.
21. It is the client's responsibility to ensure that all documents are filled out correctly and the correct information supplied. HouseHoppers will not take responsibility for incorrect information supplied which results in any delays or errors.
22. HouseHoppers cannot be held liable for any delays caused relating to meter installations when the cause of the delay is COJ related., including but not limited to errors on COJ's/ City Power. JHB Water or Eskom systems and any shortage of stock items etc.
23. It is the client's responsibility to inform HouseHoppers of any installations that have taken place.
24. The completion and resolution of a query is valid for 30 days, being a billing cycle on COJ system, Househoppers does not take any responsibility for any additional errors on the account whether related directly to the initial query or not.
25. Any entity that provides HouseHoppers authority to work on an account, also remains responsible for the payment of Househoppers fees.
26. Interest reversals can only be done with the correct facts off council system.
27. The HouseHoppers service is mandated to complete the work stipulated and discussed. If additional queries should arise prior to, after or during the process, these will be billed as separate queries as they are not included into the mandated service price.
28. An account opening (from a new account or existing account) pertains to an account opening only and not any other services, including but not limited to a valuations query, resolution of billing query, address change etc.
29. The work mentioned in our email is the only work quoted for any separate work will occur additional fees
30. This is a living document and is altered from time to time due to the ever changing nature of the business. Please ensure that you have the latest version.