



Town of Columbus

PO BOX 146 · Columbus, NC 28722

Customer Accounts Policy

1) Deposit

- a) **There is a \$150.00 deposit for service addresses located within the town's corporate limits, and a \$200.00 deposit for service addresses located outside the town's corporate limits.**

Deposit is due at the time of application for water service. This deposit will be applied to any unpaid balance at the disconnection request of the account holder. Any credits to the account exceeding \$5.00 after the deposit is applied will be refunded separately within 30 business days.

2) Bills

- a) **The Town will read meters around the 15th of each month, and bill accordingly for the usage during that time period.**

- b) **Water/sewer/garbage bills will be sent out around the 20th of each month and are due by the 10th of the following month.**

The Town will accept payment in the form of check, cash, credit, or debit, and the drop box in the front door may be used when the office is closed if paying with check (any payment dropped after hours must include the customer account number in order to be correctly applied to your account).

Payment can be made online at www.columbusnc.com by clicking on the Official Payments icon or via phone by calling 1-844-224-6770.

- c) **Any bills not paid by the 10th of the month will be charged a 10% late fee.**

The late fee will be applied on the 11th.

- d) **If the bill is not paid by 5:00 pm on the 20th of the month, a disconnect penalty fee will be added to the bill.**

- e) **Any accounts that remain past due will be automatically turned off without further notice on the 21st of each month.** (If the 21st falls on a Monday, Friday, weekend, or holiday, service will be disconnected the following business day)

Service will not be restored until the account is paid in full, which may include current bill charges that are not yet past due as well as any late and disconnect fees.

Disconnect fees are charged according to account history as follows:

1st time being disconnected = \$10

2nd time being disconnected = \$35

3rd and all subsequent occurrences = \$75.

- (1) Extenuating circumstances: It is understood by the Town that there are occasions when payment in full of a bill may present an unsurmountable hardship for a customer. In these cases, it is the policy of the town that a customer may make application for a Payment Agreement in which the customer will make arrangements to pay their bill in full at a later date.

The following guidelines will apply:

- Customer must complete and sign the provided form requesting an agreement
- Agreement must be reviewed and approved by the appropriate town staff
- Customer must agree to make payment in full of any past due balances prior to the 5th of the following month. *(If payment is promised after the 5th of the*



Town of Columbus

PO BOX 146 · Columbus, NC 28722

month, it is understood that the entire account balance must be paid in full at the time the agreement is due.)

- No customer shall be granted more than two (2) payment agreements in any fiscal year (July 1- June 30)
- Failure to make payment as agreed will result in immediate disconnection of service, disconnect charges applied to the account, and permanent revocation of ability to apply for payment agreements.
- The Town of Columbus reserves the right to deny approval of payment agreement for any reason.

(2) State of Emergency: Notwithstanding the additional provisions of subparagraph (e) above, should the Town declare a State of Emergency, the following guidelines shall apply so long as the State of Emergency continues in effect:

- Water shall not be disconnected as a result of nonpayment
- There shall be no additional late fees charged to an account for nonpayment during the State of Emergency (this does not affect late fees incurred prior to the issuance of the State of Emergency or following)
- Accounts that elect to pay water bills online during the State of Emergency on any business day on which Town Hall is officially closed to the public due to emergency reasons shall receive a credit equal to the cost of the online convenience fee for credit card usage
- Upon termination of the State of Emergency, any accounts past due in payment shall make a payment plan with the Town to provide for repayment of water service fees, and the total amount past due shall be paid within twelve (12) months of the termination of the Town State of Emergency.
- No provision herein shall be construed as a waiver of the Town's right to collect water bill payment on any account, further, water bills shall continue to be distributed during the Town's State of Emergency and customers are obligated to continue paying those accounts.

f) The Town of Columbus does not prorate bills.

If water is on and usage is 0 to 3,000 gallons, the account will be billed for a full month's base fee.

3) Garbage / Sanitation

a) *If you live within the city limits, a garbage/recycling fee will be added to your water/sewer bill each month.*

(Fee is determined by the Town's adopted schedule of fees for the current fiscal year.)

b) **Garbage collection will be each Tuesday morning, and all receptacles must be placed curbside for pickup prior to 7:00 AM.**

*You must provide your own garbage cans, and all garbage must be bagged. Cans are available for lease directly from the solid waste contractor.

c) **Recycling collection will be each Friday morning, and all receptacles must be placed curbside prior to 7:00 AM.**

*You must provide your own bins; materials do not need to be sorted or bagged.

4) For any after-hours emergencies, please contact Polk County Dispatch at 828-894-0187