

**LINCOLN COUNTY WATER AND SEWER
COLLECTIONS DIVISION
DELINQUENT ACCOUNT POLICY**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a procedure concerning any and all accounts that carry a past due balance.

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, the following words are defined as such:

Customer – any person, firm or corporation using or receiving water and/or sewer services from Lincoln County.

Past Due Balance – any account balance that carries over from a previous billing cycle.

Delinquent Account – any account with a balance carried over from a previous billing cycle.

Account in Default – any account with an unpaid balance carried over for TWO consecutive billing cycles.

After Hours Fee – this fee is for customers who pay all amounts due after 3:00 PM and request same day service reconnection. The reconnection will be made as soon as possible but no guaranteed time can be established.

RULES, REGULATIONS AND ALLOWANCES

1. All accounts are due and payable on the last **BUSINESS** day of each month.
2. Accounts are considered delinquent after 5:00 PM on the last business day of the month.
3. A late fee penalty will automatically be added if the account is not paid by the due date.
4. Any bill not paid within 60 days from the billing date will result in the account being considered to be in default.
5. An automatic default fee will be added to any account considered to be in default and may result in termination of service.
6. An account in default that has had no activity or correspondence from the customer for thirty (30) days after being in default will be made a final account and processed for further collection action.

REASONS FOR LOCKING AN ACCOUNT

Accounts can be disconnected for many reasons; including but not limited to:

1. Failure of the customer to pay any past due bill, amount, and/or associated penalties.
2. Discovery of tap or meter tampering including bypassing the meter or altering its function.
3. Failure of the customer to permit Lincoln County employees to access their meter(s) at reasonable hours.
4. Discover of a condition which is determined to be hazardous or unsafe to the public health.
5. Failure of the customer to provide Lincoln County with the correct and/or complete billing information.

PROCESS FOR UNLOCKING AN ACCOUNT

1. The customer must pay the entire past due balance PLUS any applicable default and/or penalties and fees before service can be re-established.
2. Cash, personal checks, certified checks, money orders, and debit/credit card payments will be accepted on any service that has been placed in default.
3. All payments during normal working hours (8:00 AM to 5:00 PM) shall be made at either the Lincolnton office or the East Lincoln satellite office.
4. Personal checks will not be accepted for payment on ANY accounts, (delinquent, defaulted or regular) if a check on that account has been returned to Lincoln County two times within the preceding twelve (12) month period for any reason.
5. On-call personnel will respond to reconnection requests after normal working hours. On-call personnel will not accept cash for after-hours reconnection of any accounts. Only personal checks, certified checks or money orders will be accepted. A receipt will be given to the customer for the past due amount paid, including any applicable default, after-hours and late payment fees. A copy of the receipt will be retained for department files by the on-call personnel.
6. A Default Fee will be applied automatically to all accounts not paid in full within 60 days from the original billing date. This fee will be applied on the first day of each month. Any accounts that have had their service cut off or locked for non-payment can re-establish service by paying all past due amounts and fees. Payments before 3:00 PM will guarantee reconnection the same day.
7. Any account locked in error will have service re-established as soon as possible during the same business day. All incorrectly assessed fees will be reversed.