

Policy: CS-06-06
Policy Title: Procedure for Handling Non-pays
Policy Purpose: Set forth guidelines for collection process
Implementation Date: 03/17/2006
Revision Date: N/A

TOWN OF WESTFIELD
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
Procedure for Handling Non-pays

Utility bills are rendered and payable monthly in arrears. Customers are notified by a billing message on their statement when their account becomes delinquent (30- 60 days past due) instructing them to pay any arrears by the due date.

One week prior to the due date customers with balances 60 days past due are mailed a separate disconnect letter stating the shut off date. Owners of rental property are also notified at this time of tenants whose services are in danger of being disconnected. Prior to the shut off date the customer is only required to pay any balance 60 days past due to avoid being disconnected

The day following the due date, typically 3 days prior to the shut off date once all payments are posted, an orange door hanger is delivered to the premises advising the customer of the date the service will be disconnected as well as the amount of the reconnect charge should the service be turned off.

If payment is not received, or a payment arrangement is not made on or before the shut off date a red door hanger is hung and the water is disconnected. Once a service has been disconnected the entire outstanding balance including the \$20.00 reconnect charge is required in guaranteed funds to get the service turned back on. Payments made before 4:00 p.m. will be turned back on prior to the close of the business day. Payments received after 4:00 p.m. will remain off until the following morning. A list of customers shut off for non-payment is given to the on call person should he/she receive a no water call from any of the addresses shut off.

Several attempts are made to collect unpaid final balances, however, if the mail is returned as not deliverable or if the customer fails to pay the final bill and has moved out of our billing area the amount is entered in the bad debt database to be charged off. The Hamilton County website is checked to verify owner information. If the property was unbeknownst to us a rental property the property owner is then mailed a lien letter to the address on the website. The lien letter gives the owner 10 business days to respond or a lien is filed at the Hamilton County Courthouse and additional charges are added to the outstanding balance. Once a lien is filed it can only be paid at the courthouse and the service address will not be changed over to a new customer until the lien is satisfied and documentation of payment has been provided.

Bruce A. Hauk, Director