

**Catawba County
Utilities and Engineering Departmental
Charge Account Procedures**

The Utilities and Engineering Department functions include Administration, Building Services, Plan Review, Permit Center, Erosion Control, Local Code Compliance, Landfill, Recycling, Convenience Centers, Methane Recovery and Water and Sewer.

Questions concerning these procedures may be directed to the Utilities and Engineering Office at 828.465.8261, located at the Government Center in Newton, NC.

Opening and Maintaining an Account

A charge account application associated with the area of billing; i.e. permit center/building services, erosion control, landfill, septage hauling, etc. must be completed prior to assessing charges. Applications may be obtained at www.catawbacountync.gov/depts/u&e or contact the Utilities and Engineering Office at 828.465.8261. For applications pertaining to the Permit Center from the link above, please click Building Services, Forms, Policies & Procedures, and then Permit Center Credit Application. An application for a Landfill account may be accessed from the web site above, then click Solid Waste, Landfill Credit Application. For applications pertaining to septage/sludge hauling from the link above, please click Water & Sewer, Forms & Guidelines, and then Septage/Sludge Haulers.

Account balances are due 30 days from the date of the statement. An account becomes overdue on the 31st day from the date of the statement.

When an account becomes overdue, a letter will be sent via first class mail reminding the account holder that the account is overdue.

If payment is not made before the next billing cycle, a second letter will be sent via first class mail informing the account holder that their account privileges are suspended and full payment of any delinquent amount must be paid within 15 days of the date of the letter. If the account continues past the 15 days of the date of the letter, the account will be turned over to the Catawba County Legal Department for collection and account privileges suspended.

Any monies received by Catawba County from an account holder with an overdue account will first be applied to the past due balance of his/her account, regardless of the implied direction of payment.

Catawba County will seek criminal charges against anyone who writes a worthless check as payment to their delinquent account. The process of seeking a criminal warrant for their arrest will be carried out by the Catawba County Legal Department.

Once an account has been turned over to the Catawba County Legal Department for collection, all communication regarding the account must be addressed to the Legal Department at 828.465.8483.

A delinquent account paid by worthless check shall immediately be suspended and the account holder shall make all future payments by cash, money order, certified or cashier's bank check. If legal action is required to collect on the worthless check, all check writing abilities and account privileges shall be permanently revoked.

Account privileges will be permanently revoked if any of the following actions are taken to settle a delinquent account:

- ♦ Legal action through small claims court
- ♦ Submission to the NC State Debt Set-off program
- ♦ Delinquent balance is written off
- ♦ Payment by worthless check as stated above

The following information is specific to the identified area of operation.

Permit Center Accounts

Permit Center charge accounts include permits and fees associated with Building Services permits, Fire permits, Environmental Health, Erosion Control, and Water and Sewer capital fees.

Applicants must be associated with at least one project¹ prior to becoming eligible to apply for account privileges.

When a Permit Center account becomes overdue the account is placed on hold and the account holder will not be allowed to schedule any inspections for permits associated with that account holder. Additionally, no new permits may be issued to the account holder.

In order to remove a hold status from an account, the overdue balance must be paid. Upon payment, the account will be reactivated immediately allowing the account holder to apply for new permits and schedule inspections on existing permits provided that a collection action was not taken to settle the account that would permanently revoke an account.

Landfill Accounts

Applications must be associated with at least one project² prior to becoming eligible to apply for account privileges.

A company or person may not use someone else's account unless

- a) the hauler/subcontractor is preapproved per project in writing by the Owner or Prime Contractor, and
- b) the project is assigned a specific approval/project number or other identification by the Owner or Prime Contractor, and
- c) the driver/hauler/subcontractor must provide scale attendant approval/project number or other identification upon entry of the landfill, and
- d) the parties involved must both agree that any mistakes made by their waste hauling employees are between them only and that the entity invoiced is liable for the charges. Catawba County will not become involved with invoice correction between the entities.

When an account associated with the Landfill becomes overdue the account is placed on cash only. In order to continue using the landfill, full payment for each disposal must be made at the time of disposal until such time as the overdue balance is paid.

Septage/Sludge Hauling Accounts

When an account associated with Septage/Sludge Haulers becomes overdue the account is placed on hold. Immediately, a letter will be sent via first class mail informing the account holder that the account is overdue and must be paid within 15 days of the date of the letter. If the account continues past the 15 days of the date of the letter, the permit to operate a Septage Management Firm in Catawba County may be revoked by the Environmental Health Department, and notification sent to the North Carolina Department

of Environment and Natural Resources requesting the revocation of the State Septage Hauling Permit. The account will be turned over to the Catawba County Legal Department for collection.

¹ Project, in association with Permit Center customers, is defined as “the completion of the financial obligation (*check clearing, credit card approval*) shall be based on the customer’s occupational discipline (*developer, trade contractor, realtor, well driller, grading contractor, etc.*) for a permit or group of permits that are associated with a phase of building construction or land development.”

² Project, in association with Landfill customers is defined the same as Project¹ with the exception of “...the customer’s occupation (*hauler, land clearing contractor, etc.*) that are associated with solid waste hauling, land clearing, demolition, etc.”