



## **Catawba County - Utilities and Engineering Charge (Billing) Account Policy and Procedures**

The Utilities and Engineering Department functions associated with billing include Building Services, Plan Review, Permit Center, Erosion Control, Landfill, and Water and Sewer.

- An application for a charge account providing all required information must be completed.
- The Utilities and Engineering Department will securely maintain all completed applications in accordance with Catawba County Identity Theft Red Flags Policy.
- The Social Security number of the account holder, or the Corporate EIN if applicable, will be used in accordance with North Carolina General Statutes §132-1.10 and §105A-3, the Debt Setoff Clearinghouse Program, for the purpose of garnishment should a debt become delinquent. If the Social Security number or Corporate EIN is not provided, an account will not be opened.
- If an account is rejected the applicant will be notified in writing within 30-days.
- Account balances are due as indicated on the statement.
- No person or entity may put charges on another person or entity's account.
- Monthly statements will be sent by first class mail or emailed, whichever is directed on the account application or as directed to the Finance Department by the account holder.
- The account holder is responsible for keeping contact information up to date with the Finance Department for billing purposes (828-465-8277).
- If an account becomes 30 days past due, the County will attempt to notify the account holder by email or first class mail. If the account is not paid current within the time indicated in the notification, the County will permanently revoke billing account privileges. One attempt will be made to contact the account holder by phone prior to the account being turned over to the County's Legal Department for collection.
- If an account is closed, the account holder may pay by cash, certified check, debit or credit card, in person or by phone.

All fees associated with the collection of an account through the Catawba County Legal Department must be reimbursed to Catawba County. Fees associated with the collection of an account include, but are not limited to, mailing fees, filing fees, court costs, and attorney fees.

Any monies received by Catawba County from an account holder with a delinquent account will first be applied to the oldest past due balance on the account(s), regardless of the implied direction of payment.

If a customer presents a check that is returned by their bank, the account shall immediately be suspended and the account holder must make all future payments by cash, money order, certified or cashier's bank check. In addition to the amount of the check, returned checks are subject to a processing fee of \$35.00 as allowed under North Carolina General Statutes 25-3-506. If legal action is required to collect a returned check, all check writing abilities and account privileges will be permanently revoked. Catawba County will seek criminal charges against anyone who writes a returned check as payment for a delinquent account.

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.

**Questions concerning these policies and procedures may be directed to the Utilities and Engineering Department at 828-465-8261 located at the Government Center in Newton, NC.**