

WATER/SEWER BILLING POLICY TOWN OF PURCELLVILLE

Effective June 2007

The purpose of this written policy is to maintain consistency when handling late water/sewer payments. All Town Staff shall strictly enforce this policy.

The Policy is:

1. **Water/Sewer Bills** shall be mailed bi-monthly on February 1st, April 1st, June 1st, August 1st, October 1st and December 1st. Payment is due the first business day of the following month. **The Town is not responsible for mail lost or damaged by the US Postal Service.**
2. **Account Payments**: All account payments must be paid to the Town's Finance Department either via mail, drop box or the office during regular business hours. Police officers and Public Works Department employees are *not* authorized to receive payments.
3. **Disconnect Notices** for water/sewer accounts shall be mailed via regular mail to those customers with an unpaid balance after the original bill due date. This notice will include a late fee of 10% as described in the Water Billing Fee Structure Policy and notification of the cutoff date. This will be the **only** notice the customer will receive prior to service disconnection.
4. **Cutoff Day** will be scheduled approximately 10 days following the original bill due date and never on the day before a holiday, weekend or any other day that the Town Office is closed. In order to avoid disconnection of water service, the customer must pay the delinquent account balance **by 10:00 AM** on the cutoff day.
5. **Reconnection Fee**: The Town of Purcellville will disconnect any water/sewer account with a delinquent balance greater than \$20.00 as of 10:00 AM on the cutoff day stated on the Disconnect Notice. An additional reconnection fee of \$50 will be charged to accounts that have not been paid by 10:00 AM. This reconnection fee will be applied to the water bill even if the water has not yet been disconnected to the property. For instance, if a customer arrives with the payment at 10:15 AM on the cutoff day, they will be required to pay the reconnection fee, although the service to the property may not yet be disconnected. Town staff may cancel the cutoff order for a property once the payment has been made, in its entirety, inclusive of the reconnection fee.

6. **Service Reconnection**: Water connections will be restored within 2 hours once all charges have been paid in full and under the following circumstances:
 - a) The water bill, late fee and reconnection charge are paid to the Town's Finance Department during the regular business hours. Any payment made after regular business hours will be processed the following business day. *The water will only be reconnected if all the fees have been paid in full.* **Reconnection of water service will only occur during regular business hours.** The Finance Department cannot authorize overtime for reconnection of any water service due to a late water bill payment.
 - b) If an emergency situation exists where a resident cannot be without water overnight, the Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager or the Director of Public Works have sole authority to authorize personnel for overtime to reconnect a water account. Staff should contact the Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager or the Director of Public Works if they believe an emergency situation may exist. The customer will be charged an additional fee for the personnel overtime incurred by the Town.
7. **Good Payment History Penalty Waiver**: A customer may appeal to the Director of Finance to receive a penalty waiver for good payment history, if the account has been established and in good standing for no less than twenty-four months. The customer must request this waiver, it is not automatically applied. The customer is only permitted one waiver per twenty-four month period. Finance staff shall waive the penalty minus a \$20 administrative service fee at time of request upon review of account history.
8. **Online Banking Payments**: Customers choosing to utilize their banking institution's online bill payment service will be subject to penalties based on date of receipt of payment by the Town. These services do not provide postmarked envelopes and do not prove to arrive timely. The Town will not abate penalties based on date of check or date that the funds were withdrawn from the customer's bank account, due to the fact that these are scheduled dates set by the banking institution and do not reflect real time deposits made by the Town. Customer are encouraged to instruct their banks to have payment arrive 10 days prior to the actual due date to ensure timely delivery.
9. **Estimated Bills**: The Town reserves the right to estimate water/sewer bills when it is not possible to read the meters due to snow or other inclement weather. When meters are not read, the bills will be estimated based on the customer's average usage for the previous 12 months. Special meter readings and subsequent adjustments when the estimated bill is larger than expected *will not* be permitted. As the estimated bill is based on average use, it should adjust automatically for the next billing.

10. **Deposits:** A deposit is required for all accounts including rental/leased properties. The property owner may not waive a deposit for a tenant. The only way the deposit can be waived for a tenant is for the property owner to place the account in his name and assume all responsibility for the bill and deposit. The deposit must be paid prior to service connection. Deposits will be applied to the final water bill. Property owners may request a deposit refund after 2 years of proven good payment history. This request must be in writing and is subject to satisfactory account review by staff.

Deposit by category:

Residential (Owner & Rentals)	\$150.00
Business/Commercial	\$150.00
Restaurant	\$500.00
Laundry (In house services)	\$1,000.00
Apartments	\$1,000.00