



## **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. The Disclosure by the account holder of their Social Security Number or Employer Identification Number is voluntary.
- If an account is rejected the applicant will be notified in writing within 30-days.
- Account balances are due as indicated on the statement.
- Absent written legal authorization to do so, 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.
- The account holder is responsible for keeping their contact information up to date with the Finance Department for billing purposes.
- If an account becomes 30 days past due (based upon the date on the statement), the County will first attempt to notify the account holder by email and then by first class mail. If the account is not paid current within the time indicated in the notification, the County will attempt to make contact by phone prior to the account being turned over to the County's Legal Department for collection.
- If an account becomes 30 days past due more than three times within any twelve-month period, the account will be permanently closed.
- If an account is closed, the account holder can pay by cash, debit or credit card, business or personal check or money order.

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.

Any 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. Catawba County will seek criminal charges against anyone who writes a worthless check as payment for their 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.**