



Town Of Carolina Beach

Utility Billing and Collection Policies

This is a summary of Utility Billing policies and procedures. If you may have any questions or concerns regard said policies, please contact the Utility Billing Manager at 910-458-8291.

Set up service: To set up service in your name an account holder must be at least 18 years of age. Service is only set up into a tenant or owner’s name. If an account is in a tenant’s name and the tenant notifies the Town of Carolina Beach that they have moved out, then the account will be reinstated into the property owner’s name. To set up service, an application must be filled out and all required documents must be turned into the billing office. The application can be found on our town website at www.carolinabeach.org and can be mailed to info@carolinabeach.org. The customer must provide a copy of their lease, recorded deed, or closing disclosure. They must also provide proof of identification so that a billing representative can confirm identity before setting up service. The Town of Carolina Beach does not accept month to month leases or short-term renters. The lease must have lease date terms of at least 6 months or more to set up service in the tenant’s name.

Payment Options: You can pay your bill using cash, check, money order, or debit/credit card in person at the Town of Carolina Beach Billing Department. The billing department is located at the Town of Carolina Beach Town Hall at 1121 Lake Park Blvd N Carolina Beach, NC 28428. The billing department’s normal business hours are Monday – Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. You can mail a check to our billing department at the same address. There is also a drop box located in the second entrance to Town Hall, where you can drop off a check, cashier’s check, or money order payment into. This drop box is checked every business day for dropped off payments. You can also make a payment on the Town of Carolina Beach Website, www.carolinabeach.org. You can also pay via phone with a debit/credit card by calling the billing department at 910-458-2983.

Utility Rates: You are billed a monthly base rate based on the rates and fees schedule approved in the town's budget each fiscal year. The water and sewer rate are based on the amount of water usage that is consumed during the billing period. There is a base rate for water and sewer determined by the water meter size and size of sewer connection, this base rate includes any usage for 0 gallons used to up to 3000 gallons used. If there are more than 3000 gallons used in a billing period, then there is a rate for water and a rate for sewer per 1000 gallons that will be charged. If you have an irrigation meter, there is a base rate for 0 gallons used to 1000 gallons used and then if you use more than 1000 gallons you are charged a water rate per 1000 gallons. There is a base refuse rate that is based on the number of receptacles that you have onsite. There is a base stormwater rate that is based on the number of impervious surfaces located on your property.

Bill Dates: The service period for each bill is the 15th of the month to the 15th of the month. All bill dates will be in the past as billing is based on usage. The bill date is always the last business day of the month.

Due Date: The due date is 15th of the month, unless the 15th falls on a weekend or holiday. The due date would then be the next business day.

Auto Payment: You may set up autopayment with the Town of Carolina Beach. You would need to register for an account with our online portal found at www.carolinabeach.org. If you set up autopayment with the Town of Carolina Beach, the payment would be processed on the due date each month. If you set up autopayment with a card, there is a \$4.50 service fee that the online portal charges for the transaction. If you set up autopayment with a checking account, there is no service fee.

Deposits: A deposit is required for tenants that set up services. After receiving an application for service to be set up, a representative will run a utility credit check to determine what your deposit would be. For Residential an excellent credit scores the deposit is \$150.00, some risk is \$250.00, and greatest risk is \$300. For Commercial an excellent credit scores the deposit is \$185.00, some risk is \$350.00, and greatest risk is \$400.00. You would be required to pay the deposit and set up fee as a tenant to set up service. The account will not be set up until payment is paid in full. Payments for deposits can only be made via cashiers check or money order. Deposits are per property address. Deposits cannot be transferred from one location to another.

Paperless Billing: Your first utility bill will be printed and mailed to your preferred mailing address. After you receive your first bill, you may enroll in paperless billing on our online portal at www.carolinabeach.org.

Setup fee: There is a non-refundable \$55.00 set up to set up services. This setup fee is added to your first bill. This is required per property. If you have a previous account with you will still need to pay the set-up fee to open an account at the new property.

Late Fees: Upon failure to pay the amount charges within the set forth (30 days), a 5% late payment penalty shall be charged to the user. Once late payment penalties are added, they cannot be removed.

Returned Payments: There is a \$25.00 return payment fee that will be accessed if payments are returned for any reason. After two returned check/ACH payments, the customer will no longer be accepted in the form of a personal check or ACH payment. Payments would need to be made via cash, cashier check, or money order.

Payment Distribution: Due to having more than one service on your bill, when a payment is made the payment is applied in a distribution order. The payment is first applied to the sewer portion of your bill. Second the payment is applied to water. Third the payment is applied to storm water and then last your payment is applied to refuse.

Water disconnects for non-payment: If the previous balance is not paid by the cutoff date stated on the bill, service will be disconnected, and late charges will be applied. The cutoff date is located on each monthly bill. The entire account balance and a \$50.00 re-connection fee must be paid before service is reinstated. An additional \$75.00 will be charged for re-connection after normal business hours. If you are unable to make payment on your utility bill, please contact customer service at (910)458-2983 to discuss payment options. The last date to pay before cutting off is listed on your monthly bill along with the date of disconnection. If water is disconnected and water is turned back on by the resident without payment, the meter will be locked or removed. Tampering with a meter is a criminal offense and you may be charged civil penalties along with paying for damages that occurred to government property.

Leak Adjustments: Adjustments are made to the sewer portion of bills only. If you have a leak, present a copy of the plumbing repair receipt (or other acceptable document) showing the date and type of repair. An adjustment will be considered based

on that information. The amount of adjustment is determined by the average one-year usage prior to the leak. Customers are allowed one adjustment per 12-month period, but adjustments can be granted on two bills if the leak occurred between billing periods. Please send plumbers invoice or copies of repair receipts to info@carolinabeach.org for adjustment review.

Pool Credit Adjustment: The Town of Carolina beach will also consider a sewer credit based on the meter water usage used to fill a newly constructed pool or when refilling a pool that has been completely drained for a repair. Credit is not available for filling a pool for routine maintenance. Credit is also not provided to fill a kiddie pool, splasher pools, or hot tubs. Documentation from the company performing the work must be included. Customers must also provide the dimensions of the pool, the volume that was used to fill the pool, and the dates that the pool was filled. If approved, the adjustment to the account will be based on the average usage for the prior twelve billing cycles and the customer may only receive one pool credit per twelve-month period. Request for pool credit must be submitted within 90 days of the date the pool was filled.

Billing Error: If you believe there is an error with your bill, please contact our billing department at 910-458-2983 or info@carolinabeach.org. If there is a clerical issue or issue with the meter itself, the Billing Supervisor or Public Utilities Director may remedy the bill.

Irrigation Meters: An irrigation meter can be installed so that a customer is not charged sewer for irrigating or water only use. If a property does not have an irrigation meter installed a customer may apply to get one installed. The customer or contractor would have to fill out an irrigation meter application and pay the said fees approved in each year's fiscal budget. Once the application is complete and the payment is made, a work order is generated to have a technician install the irrigation tap and meter. The customer is responsible for having their irrigation lines connected to their side of the meter.

Hydrant Meters: if someone would like to rent or use a hydrant meter within the town limits of Carolina Beach, a customer may fill out and pay a deposit for a hydrant meter. The customer would have to list the date needed and location for the hydrant meter use. Once the deposit is paid and application is filled out a work order is generated for a technician to meet with the customer to install the hydrant meter to the requested Town of Carolina Beach fire hydrant. Once the project is completed and the customer does not need the hydrant meter anymore, then the customer would need to contact the technician or billing office to have the meter removed and returned to the operations department. A manual bill is then generated with fees based on usage and dates used.

The deposit is applied to the manual bill. If there is a remaining balance, the customer must pay the remaining balance. If there is a credit due to the customer, a refund check is issued 30 days after the manual bill is created.

Overpayments: If a customer makes a payment that is more than the account balance, it will be applied to their account as a prepayment and will run on a credit until the account is closed. The overpayment will only be refunded to the customer once it is closed. The amount of the overpayment must be \$5.00 or more to be refunded. The overpayment on a closed account will be refunded at least 30 days after the payment is posted to the account to ensure that the payment received is not returned.

Bankruptcy: Once the Town of Carolina Beach has received your petition date for bankruptcy, the Town of Carolina Beach will contact you. Depending on the type of bankruptcy filed, your account will be closed 20 or 30 days after the petition date. At the time of closing the account, the water will be disconnected unless you would like to re-open the account back into your name in which you would need to pay a \$150.00 deposit to open the account back into your name. Your balance on your previous account will attempted be collected by the bankruptcy court and your new account balance is eligible for normal billing and collection remedies.

Meter Tampering: Per North Carolina General Statute 14-151.1, it shall be unlawful for any unauthorized person to alter, tamper with, or bypass a meter which has been installed for the purpose of measuring the use of water or knowingly to use water passing through any such tampered meter or water bypassing a meter provided by the town for the purpose of measuring and registering the quantity of water consumed. Any person violating any of the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. Whoever is found in a civil action to have violated any provisions of this section shall be liable to the town in triple the number of losses and damages sustained, or an amount defined in the town's annually adopted rates and fees schedule, whichever is greater.

Security of Sensitive and Confidential information: In accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act of 2003, the Identity Protection Act of 2005, North Carolina General Statutes (NCGS)75-60 of the Identity Theft Protection Act, NCGS 14-113.20 Identity Theft and NCGS 132-1.10 of the Public Records Act (together, the "Act"), the Town is required to safeguard certain information of customers, vendors, employees and other individuals who provide such information to the Town. The purpose of this policy is to communicate to employees and third parties their responsibility for protecting sensitive and confidential information pursuant to the Act and a response plan if there is a breach of information subject to the act.