

DISCONNECTION POLICY FOR NON-PAYMENT

Effective September 1, 2023

1. This policy is drafted to:
 - a. Minimize the number of service disconnections (and subsequent reconnections) performed,
 - b. Clarify procedures within the Department of Public Utilities where they are not clearly stated in the County Code,
 - c. Ensure uniform application and understanding of utility service disconnection procedures for all stakeholders,
 - d. Enhance employee safety during utility service disconnections,
 - e. Minimize costs to DPU during the disconnection period, and
 - f. Ensure an appropriate level of service is provided to public utility customers.
2. All utility disconnection for non-payment must be performed in strict accordance with applicable sections of:
 - a. Virginia Administrative Code 20VAC5-330-40
 - b. New Kent County Code Section 38-15
3. In no case will this policy supersede any emergency declarations or utility disconnection moratoriums proclaimed by the Governor of the Commonwealth or County Administrator. Likewise, the Director of Public Utilities or their designee may suspend, postpone or cancel utility service disconnections due to unforeseen circumstances at their discretion.
4. In no case will utility service to a building be discontinued without first providing 10 days written notice via USPS first class mail to the account holder for that building.
5. Generally, the billing and disconnection schedule will proceed as follows:
 - a. Water meters will be read on the 3rd Wednesday of even numbered months.
 - b. Bills will be dated and mailed on the first day of odd numbered months.
 - c. Bills will be past due and late fees will be assessed 31 days after the date of the bill (first day of even numbered months).
 - d. Disconnection notices will be dated & mailed 60 days after the due date (first day of even numbered months).
 - e. Utility service will be discontinued no less than 10 days after the date of the termination notice (middle of even numbered months).
6. DPU will make every reasonable effort to communicate the billing due date & utility disconnection date through the County's social media and other communication outlets, however, failure to do so is not an excuse for customer's failure to remit timely payments.
7. Customers who have received a commitment for financial assistance from the Department of Social Services, LIHWAP, or other similar agency will not be disconnected, in accordance with the agreements with those agencies or at the discretion of the Director or their designee. It is the customer's

responsibility to prove adequate documentation of the commitment for assistance from the providing agency.

8. Utility service disconnections will be performed during normal working hours, and will not be performed on Fridays or on the day immediately preceding a County holiday.
9. On the day of utility disconnections (in this order):
 - a. All payments received to date are posted,
 - b. The reconnection fee is added to each delinquent account, and
 - c. Utility disconnections commence by approximately 8:30 am.

Once reconnection fees are assessed, they will not be removed regardless of whether utility service has been physically disconnected.

10. Commercial establishments that provide essential public services (restaurants, grocery stores, day cares, medical facilities, etc.) will be given a courtesy notice and the opportunity to pay the past due amount prior to physical disconnection.
11. Utility service will not be restored until the entire past due amount, including all service charges, penalty and fees are remitted. In certain instances, the Director of Public Utilities or his designee may use fair and reasonable discretion to restore utility services when a medical, financial or other hardship can be verified. Any unpaid account balance will be carried forward to the next billing cycle or remitted on an approved schedule.
12. Payments received after 4:30 pm on the date of utility disconnections will be scheduled for reconnection the following day, unless the customer requests "after hours" reconnection. After hours reconnection will be available between the hours of 4:30 and 5:30 pm, if the applicable after hours fee is added to their account balance, and will be posted to the next bill. Since the Treasurer's Office closes at 4:15 pm, payments must be made via one of the remaining approved payment methods (online or check delivery to DPU). Cash is not accepted at the DPU office and therefore will not be accepted for after hours reconnection. After hours reconnection is only performed on the day of utility disconnections.
13. Payments received after 5:30 pm will be scheduled for reconnection on the next business day.
14. All payments will be via normal payment methods and payment in any form will not to be collected by DPU field staff.
15. In the instance that a check for utility service payment is returned and utility service is disconnected for non-payment, payment in the form of a check will not be accepted for reconnection.
16. Bills or payments lost or delayed in processing or delivery do not exempt a customer from their obligation to make timely payments, from incurring penalties & fees or from utility service disconnection.

Signed:


C. Michael Lang, PG
Director of Public Utilities

Date:

8/28/2023