

## **RICHLAND COUNTY UTILITIES DEPARTMENT'S DELINQUENT ACCOUNT POLICY**

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a procedure concerning any and all accounts that carry a past due balance.

### DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy the following words are defined as such:

Customer- any person, firm, or corporation using or receiving water and/or sewer from Richland County Utilities.

Delinquent Account - any account with a balance carried over from a previous billing cycle.

Past Due Balance- any account balance that carries over from a previous billing cycle.

### RULES, REGULATIONS AND ALLOWANCES

1. Accounts are due and payable on the due date as listed on the water service bill.
2. Accounts are considered delinquent after 5:00 PM on the due date that as listed on the water service bill.
3. A 10% late fee penalty will be added if the account is not paid within ten (10) days after the due date.
4. A thirty (30) day delinquency may result in termination of service.
5. A reconnection fee will be assessed if the service is disconnected.
6. Services will not be disconnected for delinquency immediately preceding a weekend or a holiday.
7. Delinquent accounts may be scheduled for immediate disconnection of service.
8. A delinquent account that has had no activity or correspondence from the customer for thirty (30) days after being locked will be made a final account and processed for further collection action

### REASONS FOR LOCKING A DELINQUENT ACCOUNT

Accounts can be disconnected for any of the following reasons:

1. Failure of the customer to pay any past due bill.
2. Discovery of tap or meter tampering including bypassing the meter or altering its function.
3. Failure of the customer to permit Richland County employees to access their meter(s) at all reasonable hours.
4. Discovery of a condition which is determined to be hazardous or unsafe to the public health.
5. Failure of the customer to provide Richland County Utilities with the correct and/or complete billing information.
6. Service will not be disconnected for delinquency immediately preceding a weekend or holiday, except for instances determined to be hazardous or unsafe to the public health.

### PROCESS FOR IDENTIFYING A DELINQUENT ACCOUNT

A monthly audit of all accounts will be conducted to determine a list of delinquent accounts.

### PROCESS FOR UNLOCKING A DELINQUENT ACCOUNT

1. The customer must pay the entire past due balance plus any applicable reconnection and/or penalty fees before service can be re-established.
2. Cash, personal checks, certified checks, money orders or credit/debit card payments will be accepted on any service that has been disconnected for delinquency. No third party checks will be accepted for delinquent accounts.
3. All payments during normal working hours (8:00 AM to 5:00 PM) can be made at either the Richland County Finance Department (located on the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor at 2020 Hampton Street), by phone during normal business hours (803-576-2094 or 2099), or by visiting the website ([www.rcgov.us](http://www.rcgov.us)).
4. Personal Checks will not be accepted for payment on a delinquent account if a check on that account has been returned to Richland County Utilities for any reason within one (1) year preceding the locking of the delinquent account.

5. Reconnections will only occur during normal working hours (Monday through Friday, 7:00 am – 4:30 pm). Reconnections will not occur during the weekend or Holidays. Resumption of service will occur by the close of the following business day after the balance is paid. If a past due balance is paid on Friday at 3 pm, personnel have until the close of business on Monday to resume the service. Personnel will not accept cash for delinquent account.
6. Any account locked in error will have service re-established as soon as possible during the same business day.