



# UTILITY POLICY

Town of Hertford

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## Section One – Rights and Responsibilities

### Town of Hertford's Ordinance for Policy Approval

The Town of Hertford wants to treat its citizens in a fair and indiscriminate manner, while recognizing the distinct needs and requirements of each customer. To provide some uniformity of service, the town has adopted a customer service policy. This most recently adopted version of the consumer policy will serve as a reasonable response to customer needs while meeting the requirements of good business practices for the Town. Ultimately, the Town Manager accepts the responsibility as the final authority on this policy.

However, every customer has the right to appeal that decision to the Town Council.

Additional Utility Rules and Regulations can be found in Section 6 of the Town Ordinance

The Town also intends to adhere to all rules and regulations of the American National Standards Institute (**ANSI**) and the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE) entitled the "National Electrical Safety Code (NESC)" as amended. Further, all operations are prefaced upon safety for the public and employees alike. Safety guidelines are detailed in the American Public Power Association (APPA) safety manual as amended.

### Authority

The adoption of these policies requires the approval of the Town Council. As fee schedules, rates and other specific policies are updated, it will be the responsibility of the Town's Manager to make sure the policy manual is revised. Most changes other than fees and rate schedules are delegated to the Town Manager without requiring prior approval of the Town Council. The Council expects to be kept informed of all grievances which are not resolved, by the Utility Supervisor or Town Manager.

The Town Manager's responsibilities include metering, operation and control of municipal electric lines and electric property. They set the standards of quality for construction and maintenance of the electric system and plans for electric system improvements.

The Utility Director is authorized as the hearing or grievance officer for customers. The Utility Director is authorized to hear concerns and complaints, settle disagreements, and reconnect any customer disconnected for non-payment while the concern is investigated, if they deem it necessary. Hearings are addressed in Section Four, *Customer's Rights Prior To Discontinuance of Service*.

All grievances must be heard and addressed by the hearing officer prior to an item appearing before the Town Manager and the Town Council.

The North Carolina Statutes included in this document are binding for municipalities that own and operate electric distribution systems. The North Carolina Utilities Commission Guidelines cited are not regulations for Town's and are included only as comparative guidelines. The Public Utilities Regulatory Policies Act (PURPA) provisions included are mandatory only for cities with sales exceeding 500 million kilowatt-hours per year (Gastonia, Greenville, High Point, Rocky Mount, and Wilson).

## Scope

- This policy is not meant to be all-inclusive but offers direction and guidance for the Town Manager and employees of the Town.
- This policy has been adopted by the Town Council for all customers of the Town.
- The intent of this policy is to provide the customer, the electrical and building trades, and the employees of the Town a helpful guide with uniform procedures for providing utility service. The Town desires to treat its citizens in a fair and indiscriminate manner while recognizing that each customer has distinct needs and requirements.
- Front-line employees of the Town have been empowered and well-trained to use this policy to deliver high quality service to customers. Employees are expected to deal with each situation with empathy and understanding, listening carefully to the needs and requirements of individual customers. Ultimately, the Town Manager accepts the responsibility as the final authority on this policy. However, every customer has the right to appeal that decision before the Town Council.
- This policy is not meant as a substitute for personal initiative on the part of employees. It will serve as a guide for reasonable response to customer needs while meeting the requirements of good business practices on the part of the Town.

## Definitions used in this policy

**Employees** -The front-line employees of the Town, charged with the responsibility of delivering services to the citizens and customers while ensuring good business practices and considering the needs and wants of customers.

**Town** - The Town governing body and its employees.

**Board Council** -Those officials elected to represent the citizens of the Town.

**Utility**-The Town of Hertford Utility Department.

**Town Office** - Municipal building located at 114 West Grubb Street.

**Utility Service** - Electric, Water, Sewer and Garbage pick up

## Application of this policy

This policy applies to every customer or applicant for utility service. Copies of this policy are available at the Town's office. This policy may be revised, amended, supplemented, or otherwise changed from time to time by action of the Town Council. Customers are encouraged to seek answers to any questions by calling the Town offices.

As detailed in this policy, the Town intends to adhere to all rules and regulations of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE) entitled the "National Electrical Safety Code (NESC)" as amended. Further, all operations are prefaced upon safety for the public and employees alike. Safety guidelines are detailed in the American Public Power Association (APPA) safety manual as amended. The Town is not responsible for any damage caused by turning on Town utility services.

## **Conflict**

Provisions of a special contract or tariff between the Town and a customer will take precedence over these policies.

## **Part of all contracts**

These policies are part of all oral and written contracts for providing and receiving utility service from the Town.

## **No prejudice of rights**

Although the Town and its customers may not always exercise the rights specified in these policies or available to them by law, such non-exercise does not prevent the Town or the customer from exercising those rights later.

## **Unique Rights and Responsibilities**

The customer and the Town have unique rights and responsibilities toward utility service. These responsibilities and rights detailed throughout this publication are summarized here.

### **Customer Responsibility**

- To establish credit in one or more of these ways:
  - a) Lease agreement
  - b) Provide proof of land ownership.
  - c) Provide a letter of credit for 12/24 (residential/commercial) months of good payment history with another utility. (Most recent 12/24 months.)
  - d) Name a qualified person to guarantee payment of bills up to a certain amount.
  - e) Pay deposit.
- Allow utility department personnel access to property to set up and maintain service.
- Pay bills by the Due Date shown on each monthly bill.
- Notify the utility department of another person a customer would like to receive any notice of service interruption for non-payment of bills.
- Notify the utility department if there is someone in the household who is either critically or seriously ill, handicapped or on a life support system.
- Notify the utility department of questions or complaints about service.
- Be aware of town-owned property at the customer's home/business and safeguard it.
- Install, maintain, and repair wiring in the home/business.
- The Town provides utility service for the sole use and convenience of the premises under contract. The customer will ensure that utility service is not

given or resold to a neighbor or tenant. Violation of this policy will be cause for **immediate** disconnection of service.

- The customer must notify the Town that he qualifies and is interested in a different or incentive rate if the Town offers such. And he must notify the Town when electric use changes may make him eligible for a change in rate.

### Customer Rights

- A customer has a right to request his deposit be refunded and applied to the account if he establishes credit by other means, pays bills promptly for 12/24 months, or discontinues service from the Town.
- If the customer is notified of an impending disconnection for non-payment, he has a right to request installment payment designed to pay the account in full according to an agreement with the Town's customer service representative, at the sole discretion of the utility.
- The customer has a right to request, free of charge, historic billing information. If a customer questions a utility bill and a utility department employee cannot find any reason for usage changes, the customer will be given a meter test. The customer has a right to results of this test.
- The customer has a right to request a review of any complaint according to the grievance procedure.

### Town Responsibility

- Apply the deposit to the customer's account when conditions are met.
- Give notice via Code Red at least 10 days beyond the past due date before service is interrupted for failure to pay. The notice may explain the reason for disconnection, the date when service will be disconnected and may explain how the customer can avoid service interruption. The notice will respect a customer's right to privacy regarding publication of debt.
- Avoid disconnection for non-payment during extreme weather conditions. (See Section Four, *Disconnection During Extreme Weather.*)
- Avoid disconnection for non-payment on a Friday or day before a holiday observed by the Town.
- Provide and explain rate schedules, how meters are read, and other additional, reasonable information.
- Respond to questions or complaints from customers. The Town may not agree with the complaint but pledges prompt, courteous and straightforward answers.
- Provide historic billing and usage information when requested by the customer.
- Provide energy usage and conservation information.

### Town Rights

- To access the city's utility facilities.
- To receive notice of changes in address, status of utility service, or problems with utility service.
- To receive timely payment for services delivered to a home/business.
- The appropriate department of the Town can act in court regarding equipment tampering or financial delinquencies.

### Privacy of Billing Data

***All billing data is the property of the Town.***



- Business Accounts - Billing and account information will not be disclosed to the media, other businesses, agency, or individuals without the expressed consent of the individual business account holder.
- Individual Accounts - Billing and account information will not be given to the media, business, agency or individual not included on the account without the permission of the account holder. Current billing information may be released (without any account history) when it is deemed in the best interest of the Town and the individual holder to aid the account holder in paying the current bill.
- Information may be shared at the discretion of the Town with another agency that is included under the limitations of the privacy legislation.

## Section Two – Establishing Service

### Office and Service Hours

The Town office is located downtown at 114 West Grubb Street. The Town office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Routine and regular service work will be performed from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday (8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. from Memorial Day to Labor Day), except for holidays observed by the Town. Service work for unusual conditions may be arranged at other times upon request and might be subject to a fee.

Emergency restoration work is performed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Please call us at 426-5751 (Dispatcher) for emergency service. This does not include restoration of service that has been disconnected due to non-payment.

### Request for Service

**Original Application for Service:** Any customer requesting services will complete an application and agreement for services. The customer will show:

Photo identification, supply a Social Security number (or Federal Tax ID number in the case of a business account), deed, rental receipt, rental contract, contract for sale, and sign the application.

The Town recognizes a joint application for utility service, which allows credit to be established for both husband and wife. A separate application will be requested if more than one connection is requested.

**Accounting Information Changes:** Any changes of account information, mailing address, account name, etc. should be made in writing by the accountholder to prevent mistakes.

**Commercial and Industrial Accounts:** Accounts established for non-residential service will require a Federal Tax ID number and a signature by an officer of the corporation listed in the By-Laws. For a non-incorporated business, the account will be listed in the name of a responsible person (owner, manager, etc.). That person accepts the personal responsibility for payment of the account.

**Service Requests for all Utilities:** Any request for utility service, or a request to add another service connection by a customer will be handled as a request for all services applicable to the location unless otherwise specified. Applications and fees are shown in the accompanying Fee Schedule, Section Seven.

**Place of Application:** Customers shall request utility service at the Town Office or by e-mail.

**Time of Application:** The Town will strive to meet customers' needs for connection of service. Normal connection may be made the same day as the request.

**Out-of-Town Connection Requests:** If a customer wants to obtain service prior to arrival in the Town, the Town may provide service and e-mail a written contract to the customer.

Mailed information should include acknowledgement of the establishment of service and an application for the customer to sign. The customer should also be notified of any required deposit and fees and should pay those fees within 10 days or the service may be discontinued, and the account closed.

Customers can request a verbal explanation of the Town's policies and may obtain a written copy of the guidelines as well.

**Service Requests for New Construction:** The customer will need to meet the requirements explained in the line extension section of the Town's policy.

**Welcome Packet:** The Town will offer each new customer a welcome brochure which includes information about the Town of Hertford, the utility, and conservation tips.

### Connection Scheduling

Connection to the Town's utility system is available during normal business hours. There is service available after normal business hours, and, depending on the situation, it may be at an additional cost-based fee. See the *Fee Schedule*, Section Seven.

### Prior Debts

The Town may not furnish service to an applicant who is indebted to the Town for service previously furnished, or to the applicant or any other member of the applicant's household, until all indebtedness has been satisfied.

### Customer Deposits

**Need/or a Deposit:** The Town employees are charged with the responsibility of prudent management of the Town's finances. A deposit for utility services is collected as security so that all bills will be paid in full by their due date. Employees realize that most customers pay their bills in full and on time, however we seek to protect the good-paying customers from the detriment of uncollectible accounts by other customers. Since the Town's employees cannot know in advance which customers will pay promptly and which ones will not, reasonable, and uniformly applied deposits may be necessary. A service security deposit will be collected before any service is connected when the Town's

employees determine that a deposit may be needed to assure payment of the customer bill. Options in lieu of the customer deposit also have been created.

**Two Month Standard:** A deposit may require an amount of \$300.00 for utility service as determined by the Town.

- **Residential Customer Deposit Alternatives:** Any person who must pay a deposit for residential utility service may:
  - Pay initial cash deposit. (See Fee Schedule, Section Seven).
  - Supply a letter of credit demonstrating good credit with another electric utility.
  - Have a guaranteed agreement signed by a current Town customer who has good credit with the Town and owns their home in the Town of Hertford. The guarantor will be responsible for the amount up to the deposit if the customer does not pay his bill. The guarantor will be notified by the Town of an impending disconnection.
  - Supply the Town a certificate of deposit as security for the deposit.

**Non-Residential Customer Deposit Alternatives:** Any person who must pay a deposit for non-residential utility service may:

- Pay initial cash deposit. (The standard is \$300.00)
- Supply a surety bond equal to the amount specified as the deposit, valid for a two-year period and written by an insurance company authorized to do business in North Carolina. The Town, upon review of the account, may request the surety bond be extended until termination of service.
- Provide a letter of credit with the account in the name of the owner of a sole proprietorship. The letter of credit must be from another electric utility showing good credit.
- Purchase a jointly owned CD for the deposit, held by the Town, with interest paid by a local financial institution directly to the customer.

**Future Deposits:** Any customer whose service is involuntarily terminated for either non-payment, meter tampering, or other reasons will be required to pay a deposit, or an additional deposit, as specified in the above paragraphs, prior to reconnection of service. This includes all customer accounts. The future deposit may be at a higher level based upon experience charge for that with the account, but it may not exceed two-twelfths of the estimated yearly account.

**Note to all customers:** Contact with a Town utility employee prior to disconnection is always more favorable than making arrangements after service is involuntarily interrupted. Payment options may be available prior to disconnection, which will save the customer from additional higher deposit amounts and additional fees.

***Definition of Good Credit is defined as:***

*Good credit can be defined as 2 delinquencies, no bad checks, and no disconnections in the most recent 12-month period for residential customers and a 24-month period for commercial/industrial customers.*

## Refunding Deposits

**Prompt Refund:** A deposit will be promptly be applied and automatically when service is voluntarily discontinued. All outstanding amounts on the final bill will be deducted from the deposit amount.

**Residential and Business Accounts:** The Town will promptly apply the customer's deposit when that customer exhibits good credit. The customer may request this when good credit has been established.

**Account in Arrears:** The deposit will not be refunded if the customer has another account with a past due balance. The remaining credit on the account will be transferred to another account with a balance.

## Electrical Rates

**Establishing Rates:** The Town's rates are set by its local governing body and are designed to be fair, reasonable, just, uniform, and nondiscriminatory. Setting rates locally offers rate regulation that is responsive to the customers of the system.

**Choice:** Where the customer qualifies for two or more rates, the choice of rates lies with the customer.

**New Customers:** New and potential business customers are encouraged to provide the Town utility department with the load characteristics of their facility. The Town may require special conditions and contracts for electric service based upon necessary investment in the electric plant.

**Competitive Rates:** The Town's goal is to provide the best possible electric service to all customers at a rate which is competitive with other energy providers.

Complete rate schedules are available to customers upon request.

## Taxes

Billings of the Town will include all applicable taxes, listed as a separate line item on the bill.

## Billing Cycle Information

- Effective 11/1/2024 bills are mailed out on or before the 30th day of each month.
- A bill is past due if not paid by the 20th of the month. A penalty will be assessed on all past due accounts.
- Service is scheduled to be discontinued if payment is not received by 5:00 p.m. on the 30th of the month. The past due balance must be paid before service is reconnected.
- A charge, as outlined in the Meter Tampering Section of the policy, will be charged to any customer who reconnects his own meter.
- Customers who think a bill is in error or otherwise have reason to protest termination of utility service may contact the Utility Supervisor or his/her designee for an informal hearing at the Municipal Building between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday or telephone (252) 426-5311.

## Billing Adjustments

If the Town has inadvertently overcharged or undercharged a customer for utility service, the Town will correct the error subject to the following procedures:

- If the customer has been overcharged, the Town will credit the customer's account with that amount. The Town reserves the right to pay back the overcharged amount in equal installments over a period to not exceed 12 months. If the time frame of the mistake can be determined, the Town should credit the account for that entire interval, if it is not more than three years. If the time frame of the problem cannot be determined, the Town should refund the excess amount charged without interest during the previous 12 months. If the exact amount of excess charge cannot be determined, the Town should estimate the amount due. If an overcharged customer owes a past due balance to the Town, the utility may deduct that past due amount from any refund or credit due to the customer. If an overcharged customer owes the Town on another account, the Town will apply the credit to that past due account.
- If the utility has undercharged a customer for utility service, the Town will collect the amount due, without interest, in installments over the same amount of time as the undercharge. If the period or usage over which the undercharge occurred cannot be determined, the Town will estimate the amount due. In most instances, the Town will limit its collection period to 12 months before the undercharge was discovered.
- If an undercharge has occurred because of meter tampering, the Town can ask for the overdue amount in a lump sum.
- If the Town receives a request for a waiver of a late fee from a customer, the fee may be waived provided the following conditions are met:
  - a) The customer has not made a late payment within the past 12 months.
  - b) The customer has not received a waiver of a late payment fee within the past 12 months.

## Water and Sewer Adjustments

The Town of Hertford offers to all residential and business customers a credit for loss of water due to a leak in the customer's water system. This credit will only be offered under the following conditions:

- The customer must submit proof of a leak and its repair by submitting a plumbing bill or signing a statement to the effect that there was a leak and that the leak was repaired.
- The town will determine that the meter reading is accurate and that a leak is not apparent by examining the leak detector on the meter.
- The amount of excess water usage will be determined by averaging the last 12 months of water usage.
- The customer, upon request, will be allowed a credit on the sewer charge.
- The credit will only be allowed two billing months.
- The customer, in accepting the credit, will not be allowed another credit, for any reason, for 12 months following the credited bill.
- In the event the customer disputes the amount of water usage where a leak is not claimed or discovered by the town's examination of the meter leak detector, the

customer may receive a credit under the following conditions:

- a) The town will test the meter for accuracy by flowing at least 20 gallons through the meter. If the meter test shows the meter to be accurate, the customer will be required to pay the entire utility bill.
- b) Should the customer insist that the meter is not accurate following the town's test, the meter will be sent back to the manufacturer for testing. If the manufacturer's test report shows the meter to be accurate, the customer will be required to pay the entire utility bill plus the cost to test the meter.
- c) If the meter is found to be inaccurate such that the customer was overcharged, the customer will receive a credit for any overcharge on the water and sewer bill for a period not to exceed the most recent 12 months billing history. If the inaccuracy indicates the customer was undercharged, the town will bill the customer the calculated amount of the undercharge for no more than the most recent 12 months billing history.
- d) The town will allow the customer to spread the amount due for water and sewer charges, if they exceed \$100, over a period of four (4) months in equal payments.

### **Sewer adjustments for filling swimming pools and other uses**

The Town of Hartford will allow water and sewer customers to receive a credit for the sewer portion of their bill for water used in swimming pools where the water used does not enter the Hartford Wastewater Collection System. This credit will be allowed under the following conditions:

- A customer will be given one annual adjustment of the sewer portion of their utility bill upon a written request from the customer stating the time and amount of water used toward the filling or maintenance of a swimming pool.
- A customer may receive a monthly credit, provided that an additional water meter and cut-off are installed on the customer's side of the Town water meter and that the expense of the installation be borne entirely by the customer. The meter must be installed as close to the Town meter as possible. The credit will be applied to the sewer bill based on the amount of water that passes through the customer's water meter.
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### **Drop Box for Paying After Hours**

For customer convenience, a drop box is mounted outside the municipal building at 114 West Grubb Street. A check and billing stub may be deposited in the box, however, for added security, please do not deposit cash in the after-hours depository. Payments put in the box after 5 p.m. will be considered next-day payments.

### **Extension of time for payment of bills**

**Customer Request:** All requests must be made by the person (or their authorized legal representative) in whose name the account is opened.

**Maximum:** Maximum extension will be 5 days from the cut-off date.

**Limit:** No more than 3 extensions may be given within any 12 months. These extensions may not be given in consecutive months.

**Agreement:** If payment is not made by the specified time, service will be disconnected without further notice.

**Optional Customer Assistance:** Customers being assisted by the Perquimans County Department of Social Services and local crisis intervention center are exceptions to this policy. A copy of specific policies relating to these customers is on file in the Town Office.

### **The Town's Responses to Returned Payments**

- The Town will only accept cash, certified check or money order from any customer having two insufficient funds (bad) payments to the town within any one-year period.
  - a) Upon receipt of the second return payment, the customer will be advised that all bills must be paid in cash and will be given a copy of the written policy.
  - b) Cash payments, certified checks or money orders only will be accepted for next year.
  - c) After the one-year period ends, if another insufficient funds payment is received, all future bills must be paid in cash.
- No returned payment will be held more than 48 hours from the time it is received by the Town. This service may be disconnected after 48 hours without further notice.
- Notice to the customer of a returned payment will be made by a written notice on the day the payment is received.
- As allowed by the State of North Carolina, a returned payment charge may be added to the customer's bill for each returned payment. This fee and the utility bill amount will be subject to regular collection policies for delinquent accounts.

## **Section Three – Service Options**

### **Option in Service**

- **Customer Education Service:** The Town may conduct public information meetings on the operation of the Town and its utilities. Meeting notices are posted in the monthly newsletter, the Town website and Facebook page. Customers are invited to attend.
- **Use of Bulletin Board in Town Hall for Community Announcements:** The bulletin board in Town Hall is open for community announcements. To post a notice, contact the Town Executive Assistant at (252) 426-7805.
- **After Hours Service:** For customer convenience, weekday, after hours service and weekend service can be scheduled at an additional cost.
- **24 Hour Emergency Service:** Employees of the Town are on 24-hour call for emergency service. Please call 919-426-5609 (Public Works) or 426-5751 (Dispatch).
- **After Outage Report Callbacks:** If the customer calls the Town to report a service outage at their home or business, an employee may call back and confirm restoration. Just leave a number when reporting the outage.

### **Difficulty in Paying Bill**

- The following organizations may be able to offer assistance to customers who are having difficulty paying their bill:
  - a) Department of Social Services 252-426-737
  - b) Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Raleigh, Inc. 252-426-7717
  - c) Open Door Perquimans County 252-426-7776
  - d) Albemarle Manna Foodbank 252-335-4035



- e) Salvation Army 252-338-4129
- We encourage each customer to seek assistance with paying their utility bills prior to disconnection.

## Options in Billing Payments

To serve the needs of customers, the Town offers options to bill payments. They are:

### Acceptance of Credit Cards

The Town will accept the following bank credit or debit cards for bill payments, deposits, or fees:

- Mastercard
- Visa
- Debit/Bank cards

The Town will accept a card for payment in person or online and will verify each charge or debit account with the issuing bank.

### Acceptance of Checks

The Town will accept checks, money orders and certified checks for bill payments, deposits, or fees. Payments can be made in person or via the 24-hour drop box located at the front of the building.

### Medical Alert Program

- The customer has the responsibility of notifying the Town if there is someone in their household who is either:
  - a) Critically or seriously ill or handicapped.
  - b) On a life support system (heart/lung, respirator, etc.)
- The customer must provide a letter or certification from a doctor or hospital advising of the above condition. These letters will be reviewed and brought up to date each year by the Utility Supervisor or his/her designee. A customer who complies with these notification procedures will have a seal placed on his meter to designate his household as containing a critically or seriously ill or handicapped life support customer.
- The customer has the responsibility to carefully handle his account so that service will not be interrupted for failure to pay. With the medical alert designation, the Town will make every effort to make personal contact with the customer before service is terminated.
- The Town will exercise due diligence in keeping the power flowing to a life support patient. However, due to conditions beyond the control of the Town and its employees (storm damage, loss of generation, etc.), electric power cannot be guaranteed 100 percent of the time. Each customer listed with the Medical Alert program should have a backup plan for the movement of the life support patient if the Town is unable to restore power in a length of time, which is acceptable.



## **Section Four – Discontinuing Service**

### **Transfer of Service**

Customer may transfer service from one location to another if any current bills are not past due. The remaining amount owed and any fees from a previous service may be transferred to the new account.

If the customer has an account that is past due, he or she may have to pay that amount before the account can be transferred. Previous deposits will be transferred to the new account.

### **Closing a Utility Account**

After an account has been closed by either customer request or demand of the Town, all funds (including deposits, refunds, load management, and overcharge credits) will be used against amounts owed the Town on the closed account first. The remaining funds will then be used against any amounts owed on any other accounts the customer may have with the Town. When those accounts have been cleared, a check for the remaining money will be issued to the customer for any net credit.

### **Forced Closing of a Utility Account**

After termination of utility service, the account will be closed. All fees and credits are then added to the balance and a "final" bill will be issued to the customer. Any balance owed to the Town will remain in active suspension until the balance is paid.

All legal means of collection for an account in arrears will be taken whether the account is in "closed" status or not. The customer will be charged for all costs incurred in the collection of account.

### **Debt Setoff for Outstanding Debts**

Customers with outstanding utility service debts to the Town of Hertford will be notified via mail regarding debt setoff. The Town participates in a debt collection program that allows NC Department of Revenue to claim taxpayer's individual income tax refunds. Upon receipt of debt setoff letter, customers have 30 days to file a request for a hearing regarding the debt before involving NCDOR. The Town will continue to seek payments due annually until the debt has been satisfied.

### **Termination of Service**

- **Requesting Discontinuance of Service:** Any customer discontinuance of service will inform the Town Office of the location; date service is to be disconnected and the forwarding mailing address for the final bill.
- **Discontinuance of Service due to Death:** In the event of death of a utility customer, the executor or administrator of the estate should contact the Town to close the utility account and disconnect service, or establish account services in another occupant's name. The account may not remain in the name of the deceased customer
- **Disconnection Scheduling:** Disconnection from the Town's utility system will be performed the same day if the request is received prior to 4pm. A request received after 4pm will be fulfilled the next working day.
- **Final Bill:** A customer's final bill will be mailed in a timely manner to encourage collection and customer understanding.

- Return of Deposit: A customer's deposit will be applied to the final bill. Any remaining amount will be promptly returned after the final billing amount is paid.

### **Customers Rights Prior to Discontinuance of Service**

- Reasonable Opportunity: The Town will discontinue utility service to customers for non-payment only after giving the customer a reasonable opportunity to question the accuracy of the bill until the date of potential disconnection.
- Disputed Bill: If a customer disputes the accuracy of his bill, he has the right to a hearing at which he may be present or be represented by another person of his choosing who may present, orally or in writing, his complaint, and contentions.
- Exceptions: Under special circumstances, the Town may choose not to interrupt service during extreme weather or when the meter serves an elderly or handicapped person about whom the town has prior written knowledge.
- No Disconnection: Disconnections for non-payment will not be made after 4pm on Friday, on holidays observed by the Town or on weekends.
- Hearing: The Town will discontinue utility service for non-payment of a bill only after notice has been given and the customer can be heard on disputed bills.

Any customer desiring a hearing may contact the Utility Supervisor or their designee at the Town Hall, 114 West Grubb Street, or telephone (252) 426-5311. Hearings may be scheduled between 9am and 4pm, Monday through Friday, except Municipal holidays. The Town employee has the authority to settle the issue and reconnect any disconnected account while the matter is investigated.

The customer may be represented in person and/or by counsel or another person of his choosing at this hearing. The complaint may be presented orally or in writing.

The customer will be notified in a timely manner of the results of any investigation regarding a hearing and of any resulting determination regarding adjustment or cut-off. All grievances must be heard and addressed by the hearing officer prior to an item appearing before the Town governing body.

### **Customers Right Regarding Disconnection**

- If a customer disputes the accuracy of a bill, that customer has a right to a hearing as detailed in the previous section.
- Customers are entitled to receive a past due notice on an overdue utility bill. This notice may come in the form of a listing on their current bill, phone call, a written letter or note, or a discreet door hanger.

### **Involuntary Discontinuance of Service**

- Normal involuntary disconnection procedures may be waived the first time a good credit customer appears on the disconnect list. The customer will be notified of the one-time waiver.
- The Town may discontinue utility service for any one of the following reasons:
  - a) Failure of the customer to pay bills for utility service as required in the Billing Information Section of this policy.
  - b) Failure of the customer to pay deposits as required or to increase deposits as required in the Customer Deposits Section of this policy.
  - c) Upon discovery of meter tampering, including bypassing the meter or altering its function.

- d) Failure of the customer to permit the town employee's access to the meter at all reasonable hours. Locked gates, loose dogs, parking cars over meters, etc., are violations of the Town policy.
- e) Discovery of a condition which is determined to be hazardous or unsafe.
- A notice of termination must include a clear explanation of the reasons for the termination, a statement that cut off is imminent and the date it will occur, a statement advising the customer of the availability of an administrative hearing and a right to contest the bill and the termination, and the name, position, title, address, phone number, and office hours of the person or persons to contact regarding the payment, the hearing, and the dispute.
- Federal laws regarding bankruptcy require that the Town not alter, refuse, or disconnect service based solely because of the beginning of bankruptcy proceedings or on the customer's failure to pay for pre-bankruptcy service when a petition for bankruptcy has been filed. However, a utility may terminate a bankrupt debtor's service if it is not provided assurance of payment (a deposit or other security) for future services within 20 days after the date of the order for relief. If the debtor gives adequate assurance of future payment for services, the utility may not terminate the debtor's electric service for pre-petition debts.
- The Town will take extra measures to ensure that handicapped, elderly, seriously ill customers receive their bills, have them explained to them, and are notified of any problems with payment.

*Note:* The Town is encouraged to keep disconnected meters on its regular meter-reading route to deter unlawful utility connections.

### **Allocation of Payments**

Payment is first applied to sales tax (7%), water, sewer, garbage/ (commercial trash), security lights, and then electric service.

### **Disconnection for Prior Debts**

The Municipality can disconnect customers with prior debts only if:

- The current services are in the name of the customer(s) with the prior debt.
- The customer has been delinquent for 10 days and the municipality has notified the customer of their intent to disconnect and has given the customer reasonable time to respond.

### **Disconnection During Extreme Weather**

The Town will not exercise its right to disconnect service for non-payment of any bill when the safety and well-being of a customer may be at stake. For that reason, disconnections for non-payment may not be conducted on any extremely cold winter day or extremely hot summer day.

Extreme conditions are below 32 degrees Fahrenheit or above 95 degrees Fahrenheit.

If a customer's bill remains unpaid on the next business day, the disconnection for non-payment may then occur. This delay in disconnection at a future date does not change the customer's ability for payment of all bills and fees.

The customer is encouraged to contact the Town in advance of disconnection to make payment arrangements, especially when winter day hardships can occur.

## Reconnection

When it becomes necessary for the Town to discontinue services for any of the reasons listed above, service will be restored after payment of (1) all past due bills due to the Town including additional fees and charges required by this policy (2) any deposit as required and (3) any applicable disconnect fees, according to the current Fee Schedule and during normal business hours described above. Because of unplanned circumstances, reconnection is not guaranteed within the same day payment is made on past due accounts; but will be scheduled as promptly as possible.

## Section Five – Construction and Metering Guidelines

### Water and Sewer

#### Metering

- Meters are highly accurate instruments of measurement with expected life spans that exceed 40 years. In very few circumstances do these meters measure incorrectly. Town utility employees would prefer to assist each customer in determining extraordinary usage, but will test any meter upon request, which may involve a fee. A customer requesting a meter test should contact the Town utility office.  
If the customer questions the accuracy of the meter, the utility department employee will consider historic billing, weather, appliances, etc., to justify the reading.

#### Meter Reading

- The Town's meters will be read by a town employee, according to the Town's schedule. Reading dates will vary slightly from month-to-month due to weekends, holidays, weather conditions, and other factors. Monthly billing periods will be assumed to be 30 days but may range from 29 to 31 days.

***The Town's typical meter reading schedule is the 7<sup>th</sup> through the 14<sup>th</sup>.***

If meter-reading corrections are necessary, the Town will promptly make them, and a new bill will be rendered. A credit due to a customer from a meter reading error will be posted to the customer's account.

### Electric

#### Metering

- Meters, which measure utility service, are highly accurate instruments of measurement with expected life spans that exceed 40 years. In very few circumstances do these meters measure incorrectly. Town utility employees would prefer to assist each customer in determining extraordinary usage, but will test any meter upon request, which may involve a fee. A customer requesting a meter test should contact the Town utility office.
  - a) *Electric meters:* If the customer questions the accuracy of the meter, the utility department employee will consider historic billing, weather, appliances, etc., to justify the reading.
  - b) *Master Metering:* All residential electrical services in a Town must be individually metered. Meter locations at duplexes and apartments should be ganged into one

central location. To the extent determined appropriate, master metering of electrical service is prohibited or restricted under the provisions of the federal Public Utilities Regulatory Policies Act of 1978.

## Meter Reading

- The Town's meters will be read by a town employee, according to the Town's schedule. Reading dates will vary slightly from month-to-month due to weekends, holidays, weather conditions, and other factors. Monthly billing periods will be assumed to be 30 days but may range from 29 to 31 days.

***The Town's typical meter reading schedule is the 7<sup>th</sup> through the 14<sup>th</sup>.***

If meter-reading corrections are necessary, the Town will promptly make them, and a new bill will be rendered. A credit due to a customer from a meter reading error will be posted to the customer's account.

## Standard Supply Voltages

- One system of alternating current, 60 hertz, is supplied throughout the Town's electric system.
- The voltage, number of phases, and type of meter which will be supplies, depends upon the character, size, and location of the load to be served and upon the Town's available facilities. Customers are encouraged to consult with the Town's utility department before purchasing equipment.
- The standard secondary voltages are:
  - a) Single phase, 2-wire, 120 volts
  - b) Single phase, 3-wire, 120/240 volts
  - c) Three-phase, 3-wire, 480 volts
  - d) Three-phase, 3 wire, 120/240 volts
  - e) Three-phase, 4-wire, 12/208 volts
  - f) Three-phase, 4-wire, 277/480 volts

The Town adopts the American National Standard Utility Voltages C84.1-1982

## Customer Delivery Points – Electric

- It is the customer's responsibility to provide a location for service connection (delivery point) at the Town's least cost-approach. The customer must inform the Town prior to beginning construction as to the type of voltage and level of service desired. The Town will require information concerning total connected load, cycling loads, motor starting loads and future loads. The Town will inform the customer of any service limitations. Only certain voltage classes may be available and across-the-line starting of certain size motors may be limited. Restrictions on certain types of electrical loads may be necessary if the load produces spurious noise, ferro resonance or other sinewave abnormalities on the electric system. The Town establishes a 60-cycle frequency electric system. Equipment which operates at other than 60 cycles, will not work properly on the Town system.
- The Town must be granted an easement and the right of continuous access to its facilities for the purpose of installation, maintenance, and meter reading. The Town also will have the right to barricade and lock its facilities to prevent interference by any unauthorized parties, including the customer or his employees.

- The Town will need space for the installation of wiring, poles, guys, anchors, transformers, fences, and other apparatus used in furnishing electricity to the customer. The customer may be asked to provide an appropriate security fence enclosure for the equipment. Sometimes the only space available is indoors where the customer will have to bear the expense of constructing the space to meet electrical, fire, explosion, and ventilation requirements. Sometimes the customer will have to construct special floors, hallways, and elevators to accommodate the movement of electrical equipment. The space dedicated to the Town should be secured by the Town to prevent access by the customer or public. Transformer noise levels should be taken into consideration. On occasion, the customer may want to provide a delivery point where the customer wishes, if the customer supports the extra expense with a contribution in aid of construction.
- The customer and the Town must work together to make decisions on what facilities each will supply.
  - a) In establishing service connections, customers must assist the Town in meeting both local building codes and the National Electrical Safety Code. Safe working clearances, personal safety clearances, and safe construction clearances are of special concern.
  - b) The Town will provide, own, and maintain the meter and other metering facilities. The customer will install and maintain the meter base since this is often the point of connection to the customer's wiring. Also, the customer must provide a suitable location for the meter. The Town may ask the customer to provide a two-inch conduit from a transfer pad to the meter location.
  - c) The customer will provide an overhead riser, weather head and conductor to meet building codes and the National Electric Safety Code. The owner will provide the underground conduit and riser to the meter base. The Town will be responsible for making all overhead weather head connections and disconnections.
  - d) The Town will provide instrument transformer enclosures. The customer will provide any necessary weatherproof troughs for wiring connections and be responsible for providing the connectors and making the connections in a trough. The Town will provide, install, own, and maintain all primary metering.
  - e) When the delivery point is to be located on the customers property and a pad-mounted transformer is required, the customer will be responsible for providing a reinforced concrete transformer pad according to the Towns specifications. The customer will also be responsible for providing all conduit turnouts to access the pad. When the transformer pad is at the point of delivery, the customer will provide and install secondary conduit and conductors. The Town will provide the connectors and make all connections.
  - f) *Overhead Installations:* The customer will be responsible for providing and securing a right of way for the least cost installation of the Town's poles, down guys, and aerial conductors. The Town will provide tree clearing of the right of way. The customer may be asked to clear any other obstacles in the right of way. If the customer requests location of the Towns facility at a site other than the least-cost facility, the customer will be expected to pay the difference.
  - g) *Underground Installations:* Customers who request underground services in lieu of overhead services will be responsible for the added costs to provide the underground services. The customer will also be responsible for providing a clear and finished grade within six inches of final grade condition. The customer must provide the specific location of all property lines before construction can begin.

- h) The Town will inform the customer of the level of available fault current that the customer's equipment might experience. Likewise, the customer must inform the Town of the installation of any fault current (short-circuit current) contribution from customer owned motors and facilities.

### **Relocation of Facilities**

The Town may consider a customer's request to relocate the Town's facilities. However, the customer will be asked to bear the expense of the relocation with a contribution in aid of construction under the following terms:

- When a pole is within 25 feet of a property line or a proposed driveway, the Town may agree to relocate the pole at no charge provided the customer provides any additional, necessary right of way and provided the relocation does not affect the structural integrity of any other poles or lines on the electric system.
- For any other relocations of overhead or underground facilities, the contribution in aid of construction will be determined by calculating the total installed cost of the new facility plus removal costs, less any salvage value.

### **Extra Facilities**

- Any time a customer requests the Town provide facilities that are not normally required in the least-cost method of establishing electric service, the Town may ask the customer to cover the cost of those additions by way of an extra facilities contract. For example, more than one delivery point on a contiguous piece of property, more than one service voltage at a delivery point, extra transformer capacity for across-the-line starting of motors, backup or redundant delivery systems, extra metering feature, special poles, switch devices, decorative fences, etc.
- Electric service will normally be supplied to a single delivery point at a single enterprise on contiguous premises; streets, alleys, etc., may be ignored.
- Determination of Extra Facilities: An extra facilities charge will be added to a customer's monthly billing, calculated as 1.7 percent of the installed cost of the extra facilities, but not less than \$10. The installed cost of the extra facilities will be the cost of materials used, including spare equipment, if any, plus applicable labor, transportation, stores, engineering, and general expenses, all if not known.
- If a customer has multiple delivery points, extra facilities charges will be calculated based upon hypothetical cost to meet the customers electrical needs at one delivery point and at one voltage versus the extra cost in meeting the customers' needs at multiple delivery points or multiple voltages.
- The extra facilities contract will be for a minimum of five years. If the customer wishes to cancel the extra facilities contract prior to five years, the total cumulative amount of the unpaid balance may be paid, and the facilities will be removed.
- The Town may refuse requests for extra facilities if, on its determination, the requested facilities are not feasible, or may adversely affect the Town's cost of the reliability of the electric system.
- Customers for whom the Town may be furnishing extra facilities under contracts made before this extra facilities clause was adopted will be exempt from all provisions of this clause, until their contracts expire, or are terminated by the customer under contract terms, or are terminated by the Town for reasons not related to the furnishing of extra facilities.



*Note: 1.7 Percent of the installed cost is sufficient to amortize the installed cost at 8 percent interest over 5 years.*

## **Minimum Wiring Requirements**

The customer must meet all federal, state, and local requirements for wiring including National Electrical Safety Code, other codes and safety standards prior to connection to the Town's utility system.

Temporary service on premises may be available provided the services is for a fixed time and approved by the Director of Public Works and the appropriate office of inspections.

## **Three-Phase Service**

- Three-phase service (at standard Town voltages) may be extended to an establishment if revenues from the loads are sufficient to justify the additional investment. Otherwise, a contribution in aid of construction may be requiring the construction of additional transmission or distribution facilities may be extended when it is economically feasible to the Town.
- Applicants for a three-phase service may need to execute a written contract before the service will be extended.
- When three-phase service is provided to any customer, the customer must be responsible for protecting his equipment from loss of phase (single-phasing) or phase unbalance.

## **Line Extensions**

The Town strives to design, install, operate, and maintain the electric distribution system in compliance with good engineering and operating practices, which are economically feasible for the Town. Line extensions to a home are made safely and quickly.

If the Town's preferred method of service is not acceptable, the customer will pay a non-refundable contribution for the extra cost of providing and maintaining service by an acceptable alternate method. The cost to the customer will be for any amount that exceeds the cost of the Town's initial, preferred method.

The customer's preferred method will need to meet the qualifications of good engineering and operating practices.

## **Overhead Line Extension**

Application for electric service will be classified into one of the following defined classifications, and overhead service will be extended accordingly:

- Permanent/non-seasonal residences: This classification includes permanent non-seasonal residences, including manufactured homes, apartments, and condominiums, which are of a permanent nature, and which require electric service on a regular basis. Single phase electric service facilities will be extended to establishments of these classifications at any premises within the service area of the Town upon request of the owner or occupant. No contribution in aid of construction will be required if the Town's standards for extending service are not met. The Town's standard is: services will be free if the distance from the existing supply line to the customer's meter base is no more than 100 feet. (The board will review unusual circumstances.)



- Manufactured home parks: The Town will supply electric service facilities to the park to the point of lowest cost. If the customer will be asked to reimburse the Town with a contribution in aid for construction. (See the Town's current Fee Schedule)
- Permanent establishments other than residences: This classification includes schools, public buildings, churches, commercial and industrial establishments, controlled environment livestock and poultry housing, or any other establishments determined by the Town to be of a permanent nature, requiring electric service on a continuous basis. Single phase electric service facilities will be extended to establishments of this classification at any premises within the service area of the Town upon request by the owner or occupant. No contribution in aid of construction will be required if the Town's standards for extending service are met.

### Temporary Service

- Temporary Construction Service: Temporary single-phase service, 120/240 volts, may be furnished for construction purposes relating to establishing permanent service in accordance with the following:
  - a) The customer requesting temporary service provides a suitable pole and approved meter loop installed at an agreed upon location.
  - b) Temporary service must be located at a site convenient (within 100 feet) to existing facilities, or the cost to install and remove facilities may be charged.
  - c) Upon payment of a temporary service fee. (See the Town's Fee Schedule)
  - d) The building inspector must approve the installation.
- Other Transient Temporary Service: Temporary service will be furnished for service of short duration or transient nature (fairs, carnivals, special events) in accordance with the total estimated cost installation and removal of the service facilities, less salvage value of the material used or the temporary construction cost, whichever is greater. An advance deposit of the full amount of the estimated bill for service may be needed.
- Recreational, Weekend, Seasonal Residential Developments, or Large Construction Projects: At the request of an owner or developer, overhead distribution primary will be installed upon payment to the Town of a contribution in aid of construction to recover installation costs.

Other Temporary Services: These services are of an incidental nature and not extra facilities.

Single Phase electric service facilities will be extended to establishments of this classification at any location within the service area of the Town upon request by the owner or occupant as follows:

If the establishment is within 100 feet of an existing primary overhead line, no contribution in aid of construction will be required.

(If you require a contribution, the amount should equal one-half of the average cost of primary overhead line extension. Towns should also consider a temporary service rate different from regular rate schedules to offset costs)

### Underground Line Extension

The Town will extend underground service, upon request, at the customer's expense.

- **Service to New Developments:** At the request of an owner or developer, the Town may install underground distribution facilities for service to single residences, apartment houses and condominiums, and in new developments where there is no existing overhead primary service, upon the following terms and conditions:  
A contribution in aid of construction will be the difference between the cost of overhead and underground. Incidental loads such as water pumps, swimming pools, club houses, etc., will be considered as individual services. However, the cost of a special three phase service to any incidental loads will be charged.
- **Areas With Existing Overhead Primary:** At the request of an owner or developer, the Town may furnish and install up to 100 feet of underground primary and service laterals in areas already being serviced with existing overhead primary service when the owner or developer agrees to pay construction fee. The conversion of overhead to underground will be at the discretion of the Town's Public Works Director.
- **Conversion of Service Drops:** At the request of an owner, the Town may replace existing overhead service drops with underground service, upon the following terms and conditions:
  - a) The owner may be required to pay a non-refundable charge to remove the existing overhead service.
  - b) In addition to the removal charge, the owner may be required to pay an installation charge.
  - c) It is the customer's responsibility to accommodate the underground service drop.
  - d) Where the Town's existing overhead facilities are no longer adequate, new underground service may be required and the customer will be required to pay the difference in cost between overhead and underground service.
- **Recreational, Weekend, or Seasonal Residential Developments:** (Same as overhead but a contribution in aid to construction will be required)
  - a) The Town may furnish and install transformers, transformer enclosures, primary cable and terminators, primary bus, connectors (including those for secondary), and metering.
  - b) The owner or developer should provide and install all duct and cable for secondary service from the secondary terminals of the transformers or CT cabinet to the service entrance equipment. The owner or developer may be required to provide and/or install the transformer pad, the duct for the primary cable from the pad to the origin of the underground run, and a conduit from the pad to the nearest location appropriate for the installation of a meter. The owner or developer may be responsible for providing and installing cable terminations and splicing in troughs, current transformer cabinets, transformer pads or other junctions.
  - c) All work by both parties will be performed in accordance with specifications of the Town.

#### Other Requirements Applicable to Any Underground Line Extension

- Where, due to rock conditions in the soil, the trenching work cannot be accomplished by use of standard trenching machines, any excess cost caused by these conditions may be charged by the Town to the owner or developer. Where there are other unusual conditions, such as high-water tables, which require installation procedures not normally

- used, the excess of those procedures may be charged to the owner or developer.
- The owner or developer may reimburse the Town for the cost of installing and removing any temporary overhead facilities requested by him.
  - The cost of cutting through and replacing pavement within the development will be at the owner/developer's expense.
  - The owner or developer will furnish, without cost to the Town, necessary easements and rights-of-way and will be required to have the rights-of-way and all street, alleys, sidewalks, and driveway entrances graded to final grade, and will have lot lines established, before construction of the electrical distribution system begins.
  - The type of construction and the location of the facilities will be at the option of the Town. In the owner or developer desires changes in either location or type of construction, the installations will be made only when the owner or developer pays the Town the estimated additional cost incurred.
  - The Town will have the option of placing transformers above ground, on pads of its specifications or design. The Town will determine the practicality of placement.
  - Shrubs and trees requiring protection during the installation of the underground service will be the responsibility of the owner or developer, and the owner or developer will hold the Town and its sub-contractors harmless against any claims for damage. It will be the responsibility of the owner or developer to re-seed and/or maintain the trench cover.
  - In areas where the work is the Town's responsibility, the Town will take responsibility for re-seeding with common varieties of grass and strawing a grassy area.

#### Payments / Contribution in Aid of Construction

- All payments for any new installations will be made prior to the beginning of construction by Town personnel.
- Contributions in aid of construction to be paid by any customer will be calculated based upon the historical costs of materials, historical cost of labor, overhead, vehicle expenses, engineering, administration, and 10 percent contingency.
- If all or a portion of a temporary line extension requiring contribution in aid of construction is utilized in providing service to a permanent establishment, a refund may be made, providing the permanent establishment is served and the refund applied for within a period of five years from the date of the original extension agreement.

#### Right-Of-Way and Easements

- Customers must provide a right of way suitable for the Town to install and maintain its facilities. That right of way must be dedicated and recorded with the Register of Deeds of Perquimans County. The right-of-way may be in the form of utility easements shown on a recorded final plat, a blanket easement deed, or a dedicated easement deed.
- When the Town must cross property other than that owned by the customer, the Town will administer the acquisition of the right of way. The customer getting service will be responsible for all expenses necessary to get that right of way.
- Right of way easements must contain accurate legal descriptions of the property concerned and must be executed by all the owners of the property in question.

## Section Six – Electrical Equipment

### Options for Energy Efficiency

The Town wants to provide all the electric energy customers need, but no more than is necessary. Energy efficiency is a good idea for controlling future power costs and also makes

good sense environmentally. For those reasons, the Town makes available many energy efficiencies options for its customers.

- **Determining the Cause of High Bills:** Most high bills can be traced to usage in the home or business. Town employees are trained to spot areas of concern and possible savings for customers.
- **Energy Efficiency for New Home Construction:** Customers who are building their homes or professional homebuilders can save money with new energy efficient building techniques. The Town's employees can direct those customers to areas of saving.
- **Energy Audits:** An older home or business may have been constructed using good energy standards 20 years ago, but today's higher costs dictate better thermal efficiency standards. The Town's employees can help.
- **Security Lighting:** Outdoor lighting contributes to a safe nighttime environment in the Town. Town employees can explain how each customer can benefit.
- **Standby Generation Consulting:** Town employees can help the customer safely install backup generation for critical loads.
- **Qualified Generation Policy:** An option of using a generator to create electricity to reduce the amount of demand, which needs to be purchased during the system peak. The amount of generation for each customer is available on a first-come, first-served basis according to the Town's method of allocation, limited in an aggregate amount of all customers to the Town's own allocation of qualified generation.

### Power Quality Enhancements

- **Uninterruptible Power Supply Systems:** Customers with personal computers may want to prevent data loss caused by momentary interruptions of power.
- **Sure Protection Systems:** Customers may want to prevent expensive damage to sensitive equipment caused by lightning, storms, and other power surges.
- **Power Conditioning:** Business can benefit from clean power ideas. Dirty power is electricity that fluctuates, spikes and surges because of normal operation of computers and machinery inside a business.

### Service Interruptions

The Town will make all reasonable efforts to provide continuous and uninterrupted electric service but cannot be liable for loss or damage (direct, consequential, or otherwise) caused by any failure to supply electricity or by an interruption if it is due to any cause beyond the reasonable control of the Town.

If the customer notifies the Town of an outage condition, the Town's employees will promptly begin to restore the energy supply.

The Town will attempt to notify the customer in advance of planned outages for routine maintenance.

Prolonged service interruptions due to maintenance and construction may sometimes be necessary. In some instances, where safety is a concern, the customer may be required to show proof that the premises are safe.

### Customer-Owned Equipment

- **Electric Motors:** The Town should always be consulted on motor installations. The maximum permissible size depends upon the customer's location on the distribution

system and the capacity of the circuit. All motors should be installed with devices which protect against overload or short circuit.

- a) For single-phase motors, automatically or manually controlled, which are started frequently, the following maximum locked rotor currents are permissible:
    - 40 amperes at 120 volts
    - 25 amperes at 208 or 240 volts
  - b) For single phase motors, automatically or manually controlled which start infrequently and operate for long periods, the following maximum starting currents are permissible:
    - 40 amperes at 120 volts
    - 50 amperes at 208 or 240 volts
  - c) Any motor which has horsepower rating not exceeding ten percent of the connected load may be started across the line.
  - d) The Town, upon request, will furnish information regarding (1) higher starting currents, which may be permitted for single-phase motors under specific conditions and (2) starting currents, which will be permitted for three phase motors. Such permitting starting will depend upon the size of the motor, the frequency, the character of the customer's load, and the design of the Town's supply systems in the area. This will generally be equivalent to the maximum starting current, which, in the Town's opinion, can be supplied without causing undue interference with service to other customers, the customer shall provide a starting device of a type which will reduce the starting current to the value required to eliminate such interference.
- **Emergency Generators:** Where auxiliary or standby emergency generator service is installed by the customer, and approved (by the Town), a double throw switch must be used to prevent possible feedback into the main power line. Parallel operation of the customer's generator will not be allowed except where expressly granted by written contract, and where approved suitable automatic protective equipment and appropriate metering devices are used.
  - **Power Quality:** Customers who intend to use equipment that may generate noise, harmonics or surge transience on the Town's distribution system must supply the Town with information regarding the electrical characteristics of the equipment. Customers who create noise, harmonics, or surge transience on the Town's distributions system will be responsible, at their expense, for the filtering and elimination of these problems under America National Standards Institute and Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineer's guidelines.
  - **Protective Devices:** All protective devices will be installed at the customer's expense.
  - **Power Factor Corrections:** Of interest mostly to business identify power factor correction solutions.

## Section Seven – Town Property & Response

### Town Owned Property

All meters and other equipment furnished by the Town will be the property of the Town. Damages to this equipment which arise from neglect on the part of the customer will be the financial responsibility of the customer.

For the safety of the employees who work on the electric poles, no customer, citizen, person, or organization will install or attach any wire, sign, basketball goal or other material to any town owned pole without express written consent from the Town Manager.

### **The Town's Response to a Customer Cutting On/Off Utility Service**

It is unlawful for anyone other than a Town's agent to cut on or off utility services (including electric, or water).

A service charge will be billed to anyone violating this policy to recover the Town's cost for investigating the complaint.

If a meter seal is found to be broken or removed, the Town should investigate to determine if tampering has occurred and then reseal the meter. The customer should be notified of this process.

### **The Town's Response to Meter Tampering**

Tampering with a meter or bypassing a meter is the same as stealing. The aggressive enforcement of this policy is required by the large majority of good paying customers who would be financially burdened with paying for stolen services. The Town will call for prosecution of cases of meter tampering, electric or water theft and fraud to the fullest extent of the law.

A meter tampering investigation charge representing the Town's cost for the investigation and processing of a meter tampering case will be billed to the customer who benefited from the tampering.

Any customer may contest these additional charges by calling the Utility Director for a hearing. A hearing will be scheduled before the Utility Director at any time between the hours of 9am and 4pm on Monday through Friday except on Municipal holidays. Tampering with electric meters and load management devices is prohibited *by North Carolina General Statutes 14-151-1 and North Carolina General Statues 14-159-1.*

*North Carolina General Statues 14-159-1 and North Carolina General Statues 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 electricity, gas, or water or knowingly to use electricity, gas, or water passing through any such tampered meter or use electricity, gas or water bypassing a meter provided by an electric, gas, or water supplier for the purpose of measuring and registering the quantity of electricity, gas or water consumed.*

*Any meter or service entrance facility found to have been altered, tampered with, or bypassed in a manner that would cause such meter to inaccurately measure and register the electricity, gas or water consumed or which would cause the electricity, gas or water to be diverted from the recoding apparatus of the meter installed be the prima facie evidence of intent to violate and of the violation of this section by the person in whose name such meter is installed, or the person or persons so using or receiving the benefits of such unmetered, unregistered or diverted electric, gas or water. It is unlawful for any unauthorized person to alter, bypass, interfere with, or cut off any loan management device, equipment, or system which has been installed by the electricity supplier for the purpose of limiting the use of electricity at peak-load*

*periods, provided, however, if there has been a written request to remove the load management device, equipment or system to the electric supplier and the electric supplier has not removed the device within two days, there shall be no violation of the section."*

## **Section Eight – Fee Schedule**

### **Fees Associated with Utility Service**

Residential Utility Deposit	\$300.00 deposit plus \$25.00 connection fee
Commercial/Business Deposit	Up to 2 times the monthly average bill for this location
Name Change Connection Fee	\$25.00
Water Deposit (Water Only Customers)	\$25.00
Security Lights Costs:	
175W Fixture With Pole	\$10.00 per month
Without Pole	\$ 9.00 per month
250W Fixture With Pole	\$12.00 per month
Without Pole	\$11.00 per month
400W Fixture With Pole	\$18.00 per month
Without Pole	\$17.00 per month
1,000W Fixture With Pole	\$40.00 per month
Without Pole	\$39.00 per month
Returned Payment Charge	\$25.00
Disconnection Fee for Nonpayment	\$25.00
Temporary Construction Service Fee	\$75.00
Disconnection Fee for Nonpayment	\$25.00
Delinquent Fee for Payments	5% of total balance due After Due Date, Accessed on the 11 <sup>th</sup>
*Emergency <b>Water</b> shut-off/on	
During Normal Work hours	at the discretion of the Town Manager
Weekend/Nights	at the discretion of the Town Manager
*Emergency <b>Electric</b> shut-off/on	
During Normal Work hours	at the discretion of the Town Manager
Weekend/Nights	at the discretion of the Town Manager

\*due to customer action

*Approved June 24, 2024*