



City of Toccoa

UTILITY ACCOUNT POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide a comprehensive approach to utility account management.

1. Authority:

The Finance Director, or his/her designee, will be responsible for enforcing this policy with guidance from the City Manager. The Toccoa City Commission has approved these policies. The staff is expected to use prudent judgement in applying these policies and making exceptions as circumstances vary. However, the customer is ultimately responsible for payment of all services rendered.

2. Application for Service:

An application for Service must be completed for all new utility accounts, including natural gas, water, wastewater, and solid waste. Application must be made at Toccoa City Hall, or the Toccoa Natural Gas Service Center, and personal and property identification information will be required. For commercial and industrial customers, the registered owner shall furnish the Federal Taxpayer Identification Number or responsible person's Social Security Number on the service application. No application will be approved until all past due accounts are paid in full, and an account establishment fee is paid.

3. Account Security Deposit:

Deposit amounts will be established by the Toccoa City Commission, and will be applied as follows:

- A. A deposit will be required of all active locations or any location that has been in delinquent status at any time over the past twelve (12) months.
- B. A Customer transferring utility service from one location to another will not be required to pay a deposit, as long as the customer does not have a history of non-payment. Any existing deposit will be transferred to the new account once the account has been established.



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- C. A customer that has a history of non-payment may be required to pay an additional deposit that will be determined by the City Commission.

4. Deposit Refunding:

Deposits will be applied as credit to the customer's account after utility service has become delinquent or terminated. If the account becomes delinquent and the deposit amount is insufficient to cover the total amount due, service shall be disconnected. A refund of the remaining deposit on hand will be made by check to any customer once the account is terminated and final bill has been applied.

5. Establishment of Services:

Once the Application for Services has been approved and deposit payment made, then service can be established. Before any service is connected, any outstanding balance must be paid in full. Generally, service will be turned on the same day that application is made.

6. Utility Billing Due Dates, Late Fees, and Delinquent Accounts:

- A. Each customer has twenty (20) days from the **billing date** to pay without late fee. If paid after twenty (20) days, then a 10% late fee will be charged for water, wastewater, and solid waste, and a 1% late fee for natural gas.
- B. Accounts are considered delinquent if not paid by the thirty fifth (35th) day past the **billing date**. A delinquent service charge, as established by the Toccoa City Commission, will be assessed. At this point, the service may be disconnected and deposit applied to the balance. Before service is restored, all past due charges, late fees, and service charges must be paid in full; additional deposits may be required.

7. Service Disconnection:

All accounts over thirty-five (35) days from the **Billing Date** are considered delinquent and eligible to be disconnected. No additional warning notification will be given before service disconnection.



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No service will be disconnected on account balances less than \$50.

Please note 35 days is only for current charges. If your bill indicates a previous balance forward, an amount due immediately, or account is past due, then the account is already considered delinquent and could be up for disconnection.

- A. All commercial/industrial customers will receive a one-time courtesy call before service is disconnected. A commercial or industrial customer must have the appropriate deposit to be considered commercial or industrial customer.

8. Payment Arrangements:

- A. Payment arrangements may be permitted for customers if the City is contacted prior to the account becoming delinquent. Generally, the length of time allowed for payment arrangements will be two (2) weeks, and arrangements are available only once per year. In cases of verifiable extreme hardship, exceptions may be made at the discretion of the staff. Such discretion shall support the circumstances of the hardship in question and justify the action taken.
- B. During the arrangement term, the customer's current utility bill must be paid on time. Failure to meet the deadlines will result in service disconnection.

9. Insufficient Funds:

- A. All customer checks, electronic checks (e-checks), credit card transactions, and bank drafts shall be covered by sufficient funds. A charge, as established by the Toccoa City Commission, will be assessed for all returned items. If a returned item is for a deposit or an arrangement payment, then service will be disconnected immediately. If the item is for a regular payment, then the customer will be notified in writing and the account must be paid in cash or cash equivalent within five (5) business days; however, a second returned item in a twelve (12) month period will result in immediate disconnection, and the customer will be required to use an alternate method of payment for a period of six (6) months.



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B. This does not preclude the City from any remedy it might have under the law of Georgia with regard to return items due to insufficient funds, to include criminal sanctions and claim for damage pursuant to O.C.G.A 13-6-15

10. Past Due Collections:

An account that shows no usage and no payment for a period of sixty (60) days will be terminated. The City will aggressively pursue collection of all delinquent funds. The City Staff, City Attorney, and/or collection agency will be utilized to collect all accounts sixty (60) days delinquent. Accounts may be written off the financial books after thirteen (13) months in delinquency status but the collection process will continue.

CURRENT SERVICE CHARGES:

Residential Water Deposit	\$75.00
Residential Gas Deposit	\$150.00
Commercial Water Deposit	\$150.00
Commercial Gas Deposit	\$450.00
Industrial Water Deposit	\$450.00
Industrial Gas Deposit	\$750.00
Delinquent Penalty One Utility (35 days from billing date)	\$25.00
Delinquent Penalty Both Water & Gas (35 days from billing date)	\$50.00
Account Establishment Fee	\$25.00
Returned Item Fee	\$30.00