



TOWN OF BURGAW UTILITY POLICY

(APPROVED FEBRUARY 12, 2019)

REQUEST FOR SERVICE

Any customer requesting services will complete an application and agreement for services. The customer will provide:

- a. Photo identification
- b. In accordance with NC GS 105A-3 (c), Social Security number or Federal Tax ID, if applicable, for a business account
- c. Signature on the application agreeing to all terms of current policy and any subsequent changes made to the policy
- d. Online credit check. The current cost to the applicant is \$5.00.
- e. The customer may pay a deposit of \$300.00 to waive the credit check.

Customers requesting same day service must complete the application process before 2:00 pm in order for Public Works employees to provide service.

Account information changes - Any changes of account information, mailing address or account name should be made in writing by the account holder to avoid mistakes.

- a. Notwithstanding the exceptions below, all residential utility accounts must be in the name of the individual who is at least 18 years of age who resides at the address associated with the account.
- b. For rental property (residential and commercial), the current tenant may be allowed to keep the utilities in their name during their time at the location, even though they are not the property owner. Required documents at time of application is current lease agreement or a letter from the owner of the property giving the tenant the “authority” to have service in their name.
However, if the account has multiple delinquent tenants (more than 2) in a time frame that is considered excessive by the town (in 1-year period), the utility account will be required to be in the name of the property owner/landlord, until further notice.
- c. Upon the death of any utility customer, a surviving spouse must transfer the service into their name within 90 days of the date of death. In the event that service is not transferred within 90 days, the town reserves the right to discontinue service and apply the deposit (if applicable) to all outstanding balances owed to the Town in the name of the deceased individual’s estate.
- d. Under circumstances where service is transferred into the name of the surviving spouse, no new credit check or deposit will be required, however, all held deposits will be transferred into the name of the surviving spouse.

- e. Unless otherwise provided by this section, existing service may not be continued in the name of the deceased person unless provided by Section 2 (c). In the event that no surviving spouse resides at the address of service, the account will be closed 90 days after the date of death. Any deposit held by the town shall be applied to any outstanding balance. Any remaining portion of the deposit shall be mailed to the estate of the account holder at the address associated with the account.

Business accounts – Business accounts are required to provide a Federal Tax ID and signature of an officer if it is a corporation or the social security number and signature of the owner of an unincorporated business. Business accounts are also required to list a billing contact name and number for any reason Town Hall must contact regarding any emergency pertaining to the utility account.

The Town may decline service to any applicant if the owner of the property or the applicant has delinquent water accounts at any location with the Town.

CUSTOMER DEPOSITS

Deposits for residential customers are determined by the online credit check and range from 0 to \$150.00 based on the results. The fee for the credit check and the deposit must be paid in full prior to services being connected. If a credit check cannot be completed because a social security number is not provided, the deposit will be \$300.00.

If the person requesting service has had an account with the town for more than two years, and it's in good standing, the Town will waive the deposit on the new account. It is a requirement that the new account is in the same name as other accounts.

Business deposits are based on anticipated usage of the business or similar business:

<u>Gal. Mth. Usage</u>	<u>Deposit</u>
0-3000 gals.	\$125.00
3001-9000 gals.	\$250.00
9001-25000 gals.	\$700.00
25001-50000 gals	\$1250.00
50001-100000 gals.	\$2500.00
100000-**	\$2500.00 min

** Deposits for high volume users will be determined on a case by case basis based on the best information available. For existing businesses that change ownership or discontinue service in one name and reestablish service in other name, the deposit will be based upon the average monthly usage over the last 12 months of service. For new businesses, deposits will be based on the anticipated usage, as determined by town staff, based on any existing similar uses present in the Town of Burgaw. Similar uses used for comparison will be determined based on the nature of the business conducted, number of employees, square footage of business, as

well as other factors that are typically present with similar uses. Deposits may also be based on usage of similar businesses outside the Town of Burgaw.

Note: All previous balances associated with an existing business must be paid in full prior to the establishment of a new account in the event of a business relocating within Burgaw.

Master meter deposits for multi-family complexes are \$150.00 per unit. All newly constructed multi-family complexes are required to be on a master meter for the entire complex

Irrigation meter deposits are \$25.00.

All deposits are maintained by the Town until two full years of the account remaining in good standing (ie: no late fees; payment arrangements). After such time, the deposit will be refunded as a credit to the account. If account goes delinquent within the first two years, the deposit must stay on the account until termination of service.

At any time after a deposit credit has been issued, accounts that then have habitual or excessive delinquencies will be reevaluated for a deposit requirement.

BILLING PROCEDURES

Water readings are downloaded each month via Beacon automated meter reading software. The readings are gathered as of the 10th day of the month and then processed by the Accounting Technician/Billing Clerk through the utility billing system.

The readings will then be reviewed for excessive use and other anomalies. The Accounting Technician/Billing Clerk then prepares a list of meters for Public Works to be re-read and/or examine for leaks. Adjustments and corrections are made, as needed, before bills are prepared.

Bills are mailed before the last day of the month.

All bills are payable upon receipt and are due by the 10th day of the month. The town has a grace period until the 15th day of the month at 5:00 pm. If the 15th falls on a weekend, all fees are due the prior business day before 5:00 pm. **On the 16th, or next business day, an administrative fee of \$35.00 is imposed on all delinquent accounts. All fees must be paid in full before the 21st day of the month to avoid disconnection of service.**

Failure to receive bill in mail does not excuse responsibility for timely payment or prevent disconnection. A second notice will not be given.

BILLING ADJUSTMENT PROCEDURES

LEAKS

Usage charges questioned within six months of billing may be eligible for adjustments to sewer charges. Adjustments are made for inside and outside city limit customers with water & sewer service with the Town of Burgaw.

Adjustments are made on high bills due to identifiable water leaks that do not enter the sanitary sewer system.

The following outlines the procedures for making adjustments:

- a. The days in question are viewed for usage on Beacon. The excessive flow, above the daily average, is calculated and reviewed for adjustment.
- b. To obtain daily average, the customer's account is averaged for two months prior to leak (or history available) for average consumption. If no history is available, the customer will be required to pay a minimum bill for that month and billed based on usage for future bills, until two months after repairs have been completed for an adjustment on the beginning month's charges.
- c. The leak has been discovered and repaired. Adjustments are allowed only if a preventive repair has been made to the source of the water leak.
- d. Adjustments made to an account for repairs will not exceed more than two in a twelve-month period.
- e. Documentation of leak and repair may consist of plumber's bill, recent receipts for plumbing repair parts or Town staff verification in writing.
- f. When a leak is confirmed to have not entered the sanitary sewer system, the applicable sewer charge is calculated based on the process described above for calculating the two month average consumption. When applicable, the current bill will reflect any sewer charge adjustments.

Except in extenuating circumstance, no consideration will be given to usage not questioned within six months of billing.

FILLING OF SWIMMING POOLS

The Town will provide adjustments to customer's utility bills related to the filling of swimming pools according to the terms below. All inquiries regarding the filling of swimming pools should be directed to the Town's Accounting Technician/Billing Clerk.

- a. The customer must notify the Town prior to beginning the filling of the pool.
- b. All water utilized as part of the pool fill up will be charged on a per gallon basis according to the Town's approved fee schedule.
- c. Customer must provide the Town with exact dates and times that pool fill began and ended as well as pictures of the filled pool.
- d. Customer must provide the town with verification of the pools dimensions. Verification includes, but is not limited to, shop drawings or technical specifications of the pool, aerial photo of the pool along with dimensions and depth information, etc.
- e. The sewer charges will be adjusted by the amount of the usage during pool fill-up. However, average daily usage will be deducted from the adjusted amount in order to account for the domestic sewer that is used at the residence during the filling process.
- f. Adjustments will not be made on pools less than 1,000 gallons.
- g. Adjustments made for a leak in the pool after initial fill-up will be done only if the owner produces a receipt from materials bought for repair or plumber's receipt.
- h. Pools with maintenance problems will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

SUSPECTED METER ERRORS

Upon the determination by the Town that a meter error may exist, the Town will remove the water meter for accuracy testing. The accuracy of the meter will be tested and verified by a qualified third party of the Town's choosing. In the event that the meter test at an accuracy level of 100% or less, the customer shall pay the full cost of the meter testing plus a \$200 administrative fee to cover the cost of removing and reinstalling the tested meter. Any meter tested which indicates a reading over 100% will result in a credit being applied towards future billing to the active account. If the account is inactive, a refund will be issued to the customer.

DELINQUENCY PROCEDURES

A list of delinquent customers will be prepared after 5:00 pm on the 15th day of the month and the administrative fee will be imposed on those accounts.

- a. On or around the 21st, a shut off list is prepared. Any customer who has not paid all fees by 8:00 am on the 21st will be cut off, unless a payment arrangement was made prior to the 15th. The shut off list will be reviewed by the Accounting Technician/Billing Clerk prior to Public Works shutting off service. Accounts will not be shut off on Fridays or the day before a holiday.

- b. The Public Works Department will record the meter reading for each meter, shut off the service and send the completed list to the customer service clerk. The Public Works Department does not collect money. All accounts scheduled for shut off must be disconnected.
- c. A list of paid accounts is maintained by the Customer Service Representative and relayed to Public Works for reconnect. All disconnects on the shut off list will be completed prior to Public Works conducting any reconnections.
- d. After 2 business days, if customer has not paid for service to be reconnected, a list of delinquent accounts is sent to Public Works to have the meters locked.
- e. Reconnection of service will occur between the hours of 1:00 pm and 5:00 pm on the day meters are shut off for non-payment and between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm on regular work days. Meters will not be reconnected until all fees have been received. If delinquent bills are paid after 3 pm, the Town will try to reconnect service by 5 p.m. No reconnects will be done after 5:00 p.m.

WAIVER OF ADMINISTRATIVE FEE

The assessment of the administrative fee as referenced above may be waived under the following circumstances:

- a. The administrative fee can be waived once a year on request by the customer prior to the 15th at 5:00 pm, if the account has not been delinquent in the previous 12 months.
- b. The administrative fee can be waived for a customer with a good history of paying before the due date, who is willing to have future payments made by bank draft.
- c. The administrative fee can be waived by the Town Manager based on extenuating circumstances.

DISCONNECTION OF SERVICE

The account holder that wishes to disconnect service must complete a disconnect form prior to moving. If this process is not completed, the account holder will be responsible for all usage until the services are taken over by a new customer or the owner of the property.

The Town may disconnect utility service for one of the following reasons:

- a. Failure of the customer to pay bills for utility service as required by this policy.
- b. Failure of the customer to allow Town employees access to meters at reasonable hours for the purpose of reading or maintenance and repair.

- c. Upon discovery of meter tampering including unauthorized connection for service, bypassing the meter or altering its function.
- d. Failure of the customer to repair plumbing systems after being advised by Public Works of leaks which result in excessive water use.
- e. Emergency repair and maintenance as required by Public Works.
- f. Service may be terminated due to a returned check if repayment and returned check fees are not paid within 14 days.

Service will only be restored when a new customer has made proper application for service at that location and all fees and deposits have been made.

UNAUTHORIZED WATER AND SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM USAGE

Any person(s), firms, or corporations tampering with, damaging, etc., the Town's water or sewer system is guilty of a misdemeanor and may be subject to a penalty of up to \$1,000 per day, a \$75 administrative fee and applicable water consumption charges. Examples include, but not limited to:

- tampering with water meter and using unmetered water;
- cutting, breaking, or otherwise altering any water pipe;
- illegally discharging into the Town's sanitary sewer system, or the Town's stormwater collections system.

If evidence is found that the water meter has been turned on after disconnection or if a lock has been cut after it has been locked by public works for non-payment, the account owner will be assessed a \$500 tamper fee. The tamper fee and all outstanding balances must be paid before water will be restored. If the fee and balances remain uncollected, the meter is subject to removal by public works.

COLLECTION REMEDIES

Once it is determined that a person(s), firms, or corporation is responsible for a delinquent billing amount related to the authorized or unauthorized receipt of water and/or sewer services from the Town of Burgaw, the following statute of limitations shall be adhered to:

- a. Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 25-2-725, the Town may demand payment(s) for water service for four (4) years retroactively from the date that the delinquency occurred or was discovered.
- b. Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 1-52, the Town may demand payment(s) for sewer service for three (3) years retroactively from the date that the delinquency occurred or was discovered.

- c. Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 105A, the Town may submit a claim in the name of the responsible party of the delinquent account to the state's debt setoff program.

RETURNED CHECK OR BANK DRAFT

The Town charges a fee of \$25.00 for returned check or bank drafts. The return check and the NSF must be paid with cash or money order. After two returned checks or bank drafts, the Town may accept only certified checks, money orders or cash for payment of the account.

DEPOSIT REFUNDS

After an account has been closed by customer request or terminated by Town policy, any deposit is applied to any outstanding bills or fees. Remaining funds are refunded to the customer after the current billing period is complete. No interest will be paid upon deposited amounts.

CLEANING AND REPAIR

The Town will turn service on for seven days, for the purpose of cleaning and repairs to an unoccupied dwelling. The current charge is \$30.00. If the town determines there was excessive usage of water during these seven days, additional charges will be incurred. If service is required for more than seven days, the Town will require that regular application processes be followed.

BULK WATER PURCHASE: HYDRANT METER

In order to provide for the bulk water purchase from the Town, the following procedures shall apply for person(s), firms, or corporations that request over 10,000 gallons of water or requires temporary access to water for a period of less than one (1) year. Customers requiring temporary water access for more than one (1) year must have a permanent water service installed at that location. All appropriate permits and fees must be paid for by the contractor and in accordance with Town policy. For bulk water purchases of less than 10,000 gallons please reference the next section of this policy. All customers will be required to complete a hydrant meter service application (appendix A) for the use of fire hydrant metering devices.

The use of a hydrant meter shall be contingent upon strict adherence to the following requirements and conditions:

Failure to comply with the conditions below will result in the immediate suspension of hydrant meter privileges.

- a. An RPZ backflow and/or air gap is required during all hydrant usage pursuant to this policy. Only Town of Burgaw hydrant meters with approved backflow assembly provided by the town may be used to obtain water from a fire hydrant in the Town service area.
- b. Hydrant meter assemblies are subject to availability.
- c. Customer will be billed on a monthly cycle by Town of Burgaw billing for all water usage and rental fees at the current applicable outside Town rate per the Town fee schedule. The customer will send their readings to Town Hall by the 7th day of each month. Readings can be sent by fax to 910-259-6644, by e-mail to customer.service@townofburgaw.com, by mail to Town Hall at 109 N. Walker St., Burgaw, NC 28425, or bring the hydrant meter to Public Works at 207-B S. McRae Street to be read.
- d. Customers will be charged additional fees, as described below, if the returned equipment is damaged or equipment is missing.
- e. Customers will be allowed to rent the hydrant metering devices by the day or month.
- f. Non-refundable rental rates for the hydrant meter and backflow preventer assembly are listed in the table below, no pro-rating will be allowed on monthly accounts.
- g. In addition to the rental charge, the customer is responsible for paying for the actual amount of water used (consumed) and will be billed by the Town based on the meter readings for the rental period.
- h. Absolutely no discharge into the sewer collections or storm water systems is allowed.
- i. Rental and consumption charges shall be billed monthly or at the end of the applicable rental period, whichever comes first.
- j. Rental rates are for the actual time customer has the meter, regardless of usage, and will be billed monthly.
- k. No meter shall be used unless temperature is 35 degrees Fahrenheit or above and rising. When temperature falls to 35 degrees Fahrenheit, hydrant shall be closed and the hydrant meter shall be disconnected from the hydrant. Failure to comply may be subject to a fine.

- l. Customers shall be trained in proper usage prior to issuance of a hydrant meter assembly. At no time shall the customer tamper with the meter. Use of water withdrawn from fire hydrants will be used only for the specific purposes stated on this application and only at the locations described on this application.
- m. At no time shall any hydrant meter/backflow assembly be disassembled, repaired or altered by anyone other than Town of Burgaw staff.
- n. At no time shall any hose be left connected to a fire hydrant that is not connected to a hydrant meter assembly.
- o. Only use an approved hydrant wrench. Do NOT use a pipe wrench, crescent wrench, etc.
- p. Before installing the hydrant meter, open the hydrant slowly and let the water flow for approximately 30 seconds to clear the line of debris.
- q. When opening a hydrant, turn the wrench slowly counterclockwise until the wrench stops turning, then back off ¼ turn.
- r. Make sure you regulate the water flow by turning your hydrant meter's gate valve,
- s. NOT by partially opening the hydrant or adjusting the ball valves on either side of the backflow. No pipe wrench is to be used.
- t. A hydrant must be turned completely on or it will drain. The draining is through a valve under ground level and will damage the area surrounding the hydrant and/or the hydrant itself.
- u. Large 3" hydrant meters shall NOT be connected directly to the hydrant. You must use the "S" tube or a fire hose to attach the hydrant meter to the hydrant. However, 5/8" hydrant meters can be directly connected to the hydrant.
- v. Do not leave your hydrant meter on the ground. The hydrant meter should be supported and no less than 12" off the ground at its lowest point to allow for proper backflow prevention and drainage. The customer is responsible for providing the materials to support the hydrant meter.
- w. The fire hydrant or hydrant meter should NOT be left on overnight or unattended. Customer is responsible for ensuring the meter and hydrant are secured when not in use. Customer shall be responsible for all water registered through meter in the event that meter is cut on by someone other than customer.
- x. When closing a hydrant, turn the wrench slowly clockwise until the wrench stops turning, then back off a quarter turn.
- y. Be sure to replace and tighten all hydrant caps hand tight after use.
- z. Do NOT let anyone drive over or place materials on the fire hose connecting the hydrant meter to the hydrant. It may cause severe damage to the hydrant meter, hydrant, and water lines in the area.
- aa. Report all broken fire hydrants IMMEDIATELY; call Public Works at (910) 259-2901 or Town Hall at (910) 663-3445.
- bb. Customer shall ensure that the meter is registering and that no leaks are present. Any broken or leaking meters/backflow shall be returned immediately to the Town of Burgaw for repair.
- cc. Any damage to the Town's fire hydrants and/or potable water system caused by negligent use of a fire hydrant may result in a fine as described below. Lessee will also be held liable for all Town costs for the repair and/or replacement of all related water mains and devices.

Administrative Fee	\$50.00
Daily Hydrant Meter Rental Rate	\$10.00 / Day
Monthly Hydrant Meter Rental Rate	\$300.00 / Month
Bulk Rate	\$0.0104 / Gallon \$10.40/per 1000 gal

Penalties

Only Town of Burgaw hydrant meters with approved backflow assembly provided by the town may be used to obtain water from a fire hydrant in the Town service area. The use of any hydrant meter assembly other than those provided by the Town of Burgaw will be subject to a fine. Continued use of a hydrant meter, when usage readings are not being registered will be considered a violation and will be subject to a fine in the amount of \$250.00 per day, per violation. It is the responsibility of the customer to notify Public Works at 910-259-2901 or Town Hall at 910-663-3445 when the meter is not registering or recording water usage. All hydrant meter assemblies are the property of the Town of Burgaw Public Works Department. Failure to return the hydrant meter assembly at the end of the rental period will be considered theft of Town property and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law (see following page for current replacement rates).

Hydrant Meter	\$1,000.00
RPZ Backflow	\$900.00
“S” Tube	\$300.00
Gate Valve	\$100.00
Hydrant Wrench	\$50.00
Total Replacement	\$2,350.00

Water Restrictions

All hydrant meter usage may be subject to immediate recall or return in the event of the implementation of water restrictions.

BULK WATER PURCHASE: TANK FILLING

In order to provide for the bulk water purchase from the Town, the following procedures shall apply for person(s), firms, or corporations that request under 10,000 gallons of water. All customers will be required to contact Town Hall to prepay and/or provide credit card information and complete a hydrant meter service application for the use of fire hydrant metering devices. Filling station is located at Burgaw Fire Department.

- a) Filling station and hydrant meter assemblies are subject to availability. The party wishing fill a tank pursuant to this policy will be required to supply all necessary fittings to accommodate a 3” hose.
- b) Filling of a tank must be coordinated with the fire department and is subject to their availability.
- c) An RPZ and/or air gap must be present while filling. Tanks without an air gap will not be filled.
- d) All tank fillings will be conducted by town staff.

Administrative Fee	\$10.00/per tank filling*
Filling Station Rate	\$25.00/1,000 gal.**

*Administrative fee must be paid prior to each tank filling. Fee will not be prorated based on amount of water purchased.

**Town will not pro-rate the rate if less than 1,000 gallons are purchased.

Water Restrictions

All tank filling services are subject to immediate discontinuance in the event of the implementation of water restrictions.

Appendix A

Town of Burgaw
Public Works Department
(910) 259-2901 public.works@townofburgaw.com

Hydrant Meter Check Out Application

Name: _____ DL# _____ Company _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Credit Card # _____

Hydrant Meter: _____ Serial #: _____

Date: _____ End Reading: _____

Return Date: _____ Begin Reading: _____

Total Used: _____ gallons

Backflow included: Yes No Type: _____
Serial #: _____

“S” tube: Yes No Gate Valve: Yes No

Cost:	Hydrant Meter	\$ 1,000.00
	RPZ Backflow	\$ 900.00
	“S” tube	\$ 300.00
	Gate Valve	\$ 100.00
	Hydrant Wrench	\$ 50.00

A replacement fee of \$2,350 will be charged if above equipment is not returned. In order to insure that the equipment is returned a credit card number will be collected at the time of application. A hydrant wrench must be utilized to open the hydrant. Any other device used on the hydrant will cause damage to the hydrant and could result in a violation. The valve must be opened fully in order to ensure proper use of the hydrant.

Check out
Customer Signature: _____ Date: _____

Town Signature: _____ Date: _____

Check in
Customer Signature: _____ Date: _____

Town Signature: _____ Date: _____