

Cutoff Day - Q&A



Listed below are answers to the most common questions about the process of disconnection for non-payment and the reconnection process.

Q1: Why does the date for cutoff change each month?

A: **Deadline for payment is actually the 12th of the month before 5:00pm.**

As a courtesy to customers, when the 12th falls at the end of a week, on a weekend, or on a holiday we extend the deadline so customers will not be without water during a weekend or holiday.

A chart with dates is provided on the back of each bill and automated information is available each month via an option on our telephone system.

It is safest to always pay before 5:00pm on the 12th!

Q2: If I do not have the money to pay my bill, can I get an extension of time or make a partial payment to avoid disconnection of service?

A: No, A bill becomes delinquent (late) on the 5th of the month following the bill date. The account goes into cutoff status on the 12th of the subsequent month (45+ days after the bill date). Because the customer has at least 2 bills outstanding when the account goes into cutoff status, no extensions or payment arrangements are allowed.

Q3: If I am assessed a fee, can the fee be waived or reversed?

A: No, Fees will not be waived or reversed unless assessed in error by SGWASA.

Q4: Why was my service disconnected?

A: Your service was disconnected due to non-payment of all or part of a previous bill that has been delinquent (late) for at least 30 days. You normally receive a subsequent bill showing a past due balance.

Q5: I mailed my payment before the deadline, but you did not receive the payment in time. Why do I have to pay the fee since it was not my fault?

A: You are responsible for getting the payment to our office on time. We cannot control or anticipate mailing delays. We offer direct draft, online payment, and payment at our office. If the cutoff deadline is soon, we do not recommend mailing the payment. Additionally, we do not reverse the late fee or cutoff fee due to USPS delays.

Q6: My service was disconnected but I never received a bill in the mail. How is this fair?

A: Not receiving a bill or mail is not justification for non-payment.

When you establish service with SGWASA, we provide a copy of your Application with instructions on the back about when and how you will be billed. If you do not receive a bill in the mail, it is your responsibility to call us to let us know. We will verify our billing address via the USPS website and check to see if the mail was returned to us for some reason. If not, you should check with your local post office. When you contact us, we can provide a duplicate bill and inform you of any amounts due.

Q7: Why is there a “water cutoff admin fee” assessed?

A: This fee is approved by the Board annually and is assessed to offset operating costs associated with non-payment, including the administrative costs.

Q8: When is the fee assessed and how much is the fee?

A: This fee is assessed at 5:00pm on the final day to pay (normally 12th of the month). Payments received after 5:00pm (including online) must include the **\$50 fee** or services will be disconnected.

Q9: I paid overnight before my water was turned off. Why do I still have to pay the fee?

A: Even if your water has not or will not be physically turned off, administrative costs have been incurred. After 5:00pm, the fee becomes part of the payment required to be paid to avoid service interruption.

Q10: I paid on cutoff day before my water was physically turned off.

Why was my water turned off after I paid and later turned back on?

A: Paperwork is created the previous night and distributed to utility staff before we open to the public on the morning of cutoffs. Once the paperwork is distributed, every customer on the list must be disconnected even if they subsequently pay.

Q11: Why can't you call your crew and tell them not to turn me off when I pay?

A: Although this seems like a logical and more efficient method, there are numerous reasons why this is not good practice. We tested this procedure and found that it was actually inefficient with a high potential for errors leading to customer service issues. Listed below are some of the reasons supporting our current procedure.

- Phone calls lead to a high probability for error such as the wrong customer (service address) being turned on or off.
- Not all SGWASA staff involved with the process have SGWASA cell phones.
- Repetitive calls slow the staff and impede their progress.
- Some of the areas we service have poor or no cell phone reception (dead zones).
- It is difficult for staff to answer calls while trying to work outside and they often do not have the cutoff list or a pen with them outside the vehicle.
- Often when a utility crew member finishes an assigned work area they assist a coworker in a different service area; therefore the admin office does not always know which utility staff member to call for a particular address or service area at any given time.

Q12: I paid the required balance, when will my water be turned back on?

A: Unfortunately there is no way we can provide a specific time or window of time when your service will be restored. It depends on numerous variables such as how many customers were on the cutoff list, how spread out the addresses are, the timing of your payment, and primarily how quickly the disconnection process is completed. If you pay before 5:00pm on cutoff day, service will be restored before the crew leaves for the workday; however this may be late afternoon or even late evening.
Please do not call our office repeatedly asking when you will be turned back on.

Q13: Can you reconnect me sooner or move me “up in the list”?

A: No, this would be unfair to other customers awaiting reconnection and disrupts procedures.

Q14: I paid before 5:00pm but my service was not restored. Who should I call?

A: After hours, you can call the on-call telephone number 919-690-0444 or 919-690-0445. You will be routed to the non-emergency 911 dispatcher who will pass along your message to our on-call staff. The on-call staff will have a control list of customers who paid and were approved for reconnection and should return your call soon.

Please note: If the administrative office has not verified payment or approved you for reconnection on the list, the on-call staff cannot reconnect your water overnight.

Q15: I could not pay before 5:00pm but paid later. Who should I call?

A: Call our admin office at 919-575-3367 the following morning to ensure we received sufficient payment to turn your water back on. We will initiate reconnection.

Q16: I paid after 5:00pm, can my services be restored overnight?

A: No, your service will not be restored until the following day. See Q12 above.

Please do not contact our emergency numbers because they cannot reconnect service.

Q17: Where is SGWASA located? How can I reach you?

A: SGWASA's offices are located in the same building as Butner Town Hall in Butner, NC.

South Granville Water & Sewer Authority (SGWASA)

415 Central Avenue, Suite B

Butner, NC 27509

Phone (919) 575-3367

Fax (919) 575- 4547

Hours: (M-F) 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Q18: Does SGWASA have a website where I can start learning about their policies and fees?

A: Yes and customers are encouraged to visit SGWASA's website at www.sgwasa.org to learn more about our services, fees, and procedures.