



The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic continues to affect our society in unprecedented ways. Please remember that the Town always places the highest priority on the health and safety of our Citizens and Staff. We hope you and your families are staying safe and doing well!

With that said, there are a couple of **utility bill**-related items included here for your information.

**(1) Temporary Electric Rate Reduction** – The Winterville Town Council unanimously approved a temporary electric rate reduction during the April 13, 2020 Regular Board Meeting. The Council's action will result in a 10% reduction for all Winterville electric customers for the April and May 2020 "usage periods." Customers should see the reduction in their May and June 2020 bills. The temporary reduction was approved as a way to offer customers some temporary relief from hardships realized as a result of the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Mayor Doug Jackson wants citizens to know "The Town Council recognizes we're all in this crisis together and believes we should help Winterville's citizens all we can during these circumstances."

The Town is currently requesting that citizens pay their utility bills online or by phone. For your convenience, we have temporarily waived all processing fees related to utility payments. If neither of these methods are an alternative, payments can be made at the Town Hall drive thru window located at 2571 Railroad Street, Winterville, NC 28590.

**(2) Temporary Suspension of Utility Disconnects and Waiver of Late Fees** - As most of you know, on March 31<sup>st</sup>, Governor Roy Cooper signed an Executive Order which requires all utilities in North Carolina to stop the disconnection of customers for non-payment of utilities and waive penalties, fees and interest on past-due accounts. This time period for this directive was sixty (60) days from the date of the Order. The Town of Winterville is included in this directive.

Though none of us could imagine the true impacts of COVID-19, the Town of Winterville knew that businesses and citizens would definitely be impacted. On March 17, 2020, the Town enacted a local State of Emergency and took initial steps in support of our citizens and businesses by voluntarily choosing to suspend disconnections and waive late fees for Winterville utility customers.

**What does this mean for you as a customer?** First, it does not mean that you are not responsible for the bills incurred during this time period. Please keep in mind that any and all bills received for usage of Winterville utilities are due and are the responsibility of the account holder. However, we realize that many of you may be experiencing financial difficulties as a result of the COVID-19 crisis, but we strongly encourage you to continue to pay on your accounts to avoid large, unmanageable balances. Governor Cooper's Order allows customers a six (6) month time period to repay amounts accumulated during the sixty (60) day period referenced above. If you are experiencing financial hardships and are having difficulties paying your Winterville utility bill, please call (252) 752-7166 and speak with a Customer Service Representative who can develop a solution to best meet your needs.

Remember to Take Care and Stay Safe!

Terri L. Parker  
Town Manager