

City Council
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For Immediate Release

April 2, 2020

Contact: Laura Morris
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City Utility Billing Update

During the COVID-19 and Stay-at-Home emergency, the City of Lincolnton is working hard to support residents and utility customers. To help ensure residents can remain at home and slow the spread of the coronavirus, the City of Lincolnton will not disconnect residential water, wastewater and/or electric service due to late or non-payment and did not disconnect any utility services in March. In addition, effective April 1 and consistent with the NC Governor's Executive Order 124, the City is waiving penalties including late and default fees in addition to suspending residential utility disconnects for at least the next 60 days (June 1).

Please keep in mind that customers are still responsible for paying for all usage. Customers should continue to make payments on their accounts to avoid accumulating large balances, even if they cannot pay in full. Since utility account balances will not be forgiven, only deferred, customers having trouble paying utility bills in full or on time are strongly urged to make incremental payments during this time.

All customers are encouraged to use the online payment system, and online convenience fees are currently waived. The City will have payment plans available for residents that are unable to pay their bills in full over the next 60 days and details about payment plan options will be released later.

All city services are operating as regularly scheduled and city employees are taking precautions to protect themselves and the community. Some reminders for all residents:

- Please do NOT flush wipes, paper towels or other items in toilets. Only flush toilet paper so our wastewater pipes and pumps do not become clogged.
- This Friday April 3 is First Friday Recycling. Roll all blue recycling bins to the curb on Thursday evening for recycling collection on Friday morning.
- Do not call 911 unless it is an emergency; call **704-735-8202** for non-emergency assistance.

Residents are reminded that this is a serious health crisis. The state-wide Stay-at-Home order remains in effect until April 29th. Violating the Stay-At-Home order is a class-two misdemeanor.

You must stay home except for your job, to get food, medicine or outdoor exercise, or to help others.

The order also bans gatherings to less than 10 people and directs everyone to stay at least six feet away from each other. City Parks and Trails are open, but bathrooms, playgrounds and sport courts are closed. Everyone should practice responsible social distancing while outdoors.

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All residents are urged to Stay-at-Home, exercise judgment and take the following precautions as appropriate:

- **STAY HOME AND CALL YOUR DOCTOR, IF NEEDED**
Most people who get COVID-19 will recover without needing medical care. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that you stay home if you have mild symptoms – such as fever and cough without shortness of breath or difficulty breathing. You can call your doctor to see if you need medical care.
- **MOST PEOPLE DO NOT NEED A TEST**
When you leave your home to get tested, you could expose yourself to COVID-19 if you do not already have it. If you do have COVID-19, you can give it to someone else, including people who are high risk.
- **ISOLATE YOURSELF**
 - If you are sick with COVID-19 or believe you might have it, you should stay home and separate yourself from other people in the home as much as possible.
 - You can stop isolating yourself and go back to your normal activities when you answer YES to ALL THREE questions:
 1. Has it been at least 3 days (72 hours) since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications?
 2. Has it been at least 3 days (72 hours) since you have had an improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath)?
 3. Has it been at least 7 days since symptoms first appeared?

Reference: [NCDHHS Patient Guidance](#)

Practice good hygiene and take everyday preventive actions to reduce exposure:

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds at a time.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are ill.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Do not reuse tissue after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces that are frequently touched.

Continue to monitor information provided by the [CDC](#), [NCDHHS](#), [LincolntonNC.org/Covid](#), [LincolnCounty.org](#) and [LincolnCounty.org/Health](#) in addition to an official State or County communications.

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For questions or concerns regarding your risk for COVID-19, use the following numbers:

- Lincoln County Health Department triage line, Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm: 704-736-8510.
- Atrium Health triage line, 24/7: 704-512-5700
- Novant Health triage line, 24/7: 877-499-1697
- For after-hour concerns or general questions please dial 211 for assistance or call the 24/7 Coronavirus Helpline at 1-866-462-3821.
- Partners Behavioral Health Management- Access to Care line: 1-888-235-4673

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