

The City of Lancaster provides five (5) utility services including gas, water, sewer, sanitation, and storm water within our corporation limits.

For general information, City wide, please go to www.ci.lancaster.oh.us

What to do when you **SMELL GAS?**

A natural gas odor smells like rotten eggs or oily petroleum. Should you suspect a gas leak **INSIDE THE RESIDENCE OR BUSINESS, EVACUATE** the building immediately. **DO NOT OPERATE ANY ELECTRICAL DEVICES SUCH AS LIGHT SWITCHES, DOORBELLS, OR ANSWER TELEPHONES. DO NOT HANG UP THIS PHONE. JUST LAY PHONE DOWN AND WE WILL DISCONNECT YOU FROM THIS END. DO NOT START YOUR VEHICLE OR OPERATE ANY DEVICE WITH OPEN FLAME INCLUDING SMOKING. ONCE YOU ARE AT A SAFE LOCATION, CALL "911" IMMEDIATELY AND WAIT FOR THEIR ARRIVAL.**

If leak is **OUTSIDE THE RESIDENCE OR BUSINESS, WALK AWAY** from the area. Once you are at a safe location, **CALL "911"**.

Establishing Service(s)

Q - What is needed to establish service(s) in my name?

A – *You will need valid photo identification such as a driver's license or state, college or military identification card; A signed copy of your lease agreement (if renting) or settlement statement (if buying); Payment (if applicable) for deposit and service charge; Payment (if applicable) for any past due balances under active and inactive accounts. Contract for Service completed and signed by lessor and all lessees. Forms are available under <http://www.ci.lancaster.oh.us/641/Rules-and-Forms>.*

Q – Am I required to pay a security deposit?

A – *Deposits are required for "new" customers defined as any individual that has not had service(s) in his or her name with the City of Lancaster in the last three (3) years; Service(s) terminated for unpaid bills; Customers establishing "new" service after bankruptcy (does not apply to existing service); Customers establishing service(s) with outstanding unpaid bills.*

*Please note you may **NOT** pay a security deposit **via credit/debit card or e-check** as our office does **NOT** have the capability of processing these types of payments in our office. Recommended forms of payment are cash, check (no starter or counter checks) and money orders, however, **checks will NOT be accepted** when paying off an **outstanding balance** in order to receive service at a new location.*

Readings and Billing

Q - When will my meter be read?

A - *Monthly readings are obtained around the same time each month.*

Q - My meter is inside and I am gone during the day so how will my meter be read?

A - *If the meter reader doesn't have access to the meter, your meter will be estimated. Estimation is based upon what was consumed at that same service location approximately one (1) year prior. Water meters are typically inside but we are able to obtain actual readings via a small black box on the outside of the home.*

Q - When will I receive my monthly bill?

A - *Once readings are obtained, the bills are generated and mailed the next business day. Bills are available to view online as well. You may opt to go paperless by registering and enrolling at <https://smartbillcorp.com/oa/frmLogin.aspx?ws=lancaster>.*

Q - When will my bill be due?

A - *The due date will be approximately 15 days after the date the bills were generated or approximately two days after the date the meter(s) were read.*

Payment Information

Q - What are my payment options?

A - *In person - our office accepts cash, checks (excluding starter and counter checks), and money orders.*

Direct Payment option – the amount of your monthly bill is drafted, on the due date, from your checking or savings account. This option is processed in house and there is no charge to our customers for utilizing this option. You must complete and sign a Direct Payment Plan Form via <http://www.ci.lancaster.oh.us/641/Rules-and-Forms>. As noted on the form, this method of payment may take up to 30 days to set up and or discontinue.

Phone option - You may pay by phone, 24 hours a day by calling [\(740\) 415-3099](tel:7404153099), however, a \$4.25 convenience fee per transaction will be charged from the credit card processor. (The City of Lancaster Utilities Collection Office does NOT retain any portion of this fee.) There is a maximum limit of \$500.00 per credit card transaction.

Online option - Customers may pay their bills online and enroll in automatic payment options by visiting our website at <https://www.iwebms.net/lancaster>. A \$4.25 convenience fee will be charged per transaction from the credit card processor. (The City of Lancaster Utilities Collection Office does NOT retain any portion of this fee.) There is a maximum limit of \$500.00 per credit card transaction.

[IMPORTANT - If your account is in **disconnection status** and you are paying via credit/debit or e-check, please make sure you **pay at least two (2) business days before the disconnection due**

date to allow for processing. Credit/debit and e-checks are NOT posted to the utility account the same day they are made and may not prevent disruption of services.]

Fairfield National Bank Locations – as long as you are paying the full amount owed and displayed on the bill you may pay at any location including the drive-thru's. You may NOT pay Notices of Disconnection at the bank.

Q - What happens if I don't pay my bill on or before the due date?

A - There is a nine (9) day grace period. On day ten (10) after the due date, a 5% penalty is assessed on current charges.

Disconnection Status - Please note the amount shown on the disconnection notice is also considered the minimum amount needed to prevent disruption of service(s).

Q – Will a partial payment towards my disconnection amount keep my service(s) ON?

A – No, the full amount of the notice **MUST** be paid to prevent disruption of services.

Q – Can I pay disconnection amount with a personal check?

A – Personal checks are accepted when paying on or before the disconnection due date. However, If paying **AFTER** the disconnection due date, the required form of payment is **cash, money order or certified bank check** as personal checks are NOT accepted.

Q – Can I get an extension on the amount owed under my disconnection notice?

A – **NO EXTENSIONS** will be granted after December 31, 2018 as the balance required to prevent disruption of service(s) will be 60-days past due as of the due date on the disconnection notice.

Q - Are there any agencies that will assist financially with my disconnection notice?

A - Yes, please contact the following agencies regarding eligibility:

Community Action

(740) 653-4146

Fairfield Co Jobs & Family Services

(740) 652-7889

Information & Referral

(740) 687-0500

Veterans Services

(740) 652-7920

Fairfield Co Children's Services

(740) 652-7854

**Fairfield Co Board of
Developmental Disabilities**

(740) 652-7220

Q - Can my service(s) be terminated during winter months?

A - *Yes, service(s) can be terminated Monday thru Thursday between the hours of 7:30 a.m. & 4:30 p.m. Service(s) can be terminated on Fridays between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. (Excluding holidays)*

Q - What happens if I haven't paid my Notice of Disconnection amount by the due date?

A - *You will receive an automated "courtesy" call to the phone number on file stating payment has NOT been received and services are still eligible for termination. Service(s) can be terminated Monday thru Thursday between the hours of 7:30 a.m. & 4:30 p.m. Service(s) can be terminated on Fridays between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. (Excluding holidays) Please note - Our office is NOT responsible for invalid or incorrect phone numbers. Utility account holders are responsible for notifying our office of any account changes.*

Q - Can I pay the technician that comes out to terminate service(s) for non-payment?

A - *No, technicians are NOT permitted to accept payment of any kind.*

Q - Does Lancaster Utilities Collection Office participate in the Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP Program)?

A - *No, we are a municipality not regulated by Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) which requires the PIPP Program.*

Restoration of Services

Q - What are the requirements for restoration?

A - *The TOTAL account balance plus reconnection fees (up to \$190.00) must be paid and or secured by an agency before service(s) can be restored.*

Q - Once I have paid to restore, will my service(s) be restored that same day?

A - *No, restoration of service(s) will be scheduled for next business day.*

Q - Do I have to be home while service(s) is being restored?

A - *Yes, you or someone on your behalf, 18 years of age or older, MUST be home when we restore.*

Q - Can I restore my water while my primary source of heat remains off?

A - *No, the primary source of heat must be ON in order to restore the water service.*

Q - What if my gas service has been OFF longer than 60-days?

A - *For re-establishment of gas service, a “DOT” Qualified Plumber of your choosing and expense must contact the gas department [(740) 687-6670, press “O” for dispatching] and must be on the job with the pressure test ON and HOLDING when the gas department personnel arrive. Once gas department passes inspection, service will be turned ON. Lancaster Municipal Gas has provided a list of local plumbing companies that meet these qualifications and is available at <http://www.ci.lancaster.oh.us/dept/gas/>.*

Q – What is a “DOT” Qualified Plumber?

A - *Individual/plumber/contractor who installs, replaces or repairs service lines and meter settings are required to be qualified in accordance with Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations. Department of Transportation Part 192, Subpart N. According to Federal Requirements, only workers with these qualifications are permitted to work on these facilities, even though owned by the customer. The gas service cannot be re-established without written documentation of these qualifications from the individual/plumber/contractor. The written documentation is a card indicating the compliance with “DOT” Operator Qualifications and Drug Alcohol requirements.*

Miscellaneous Information:

Q - Do senior citizens get any type of break on their utility charges?

A - *Sanitation Service ONLY (trash service) - Any one (1) or two (2) persons, sixty-two (62) years of age or older occupying a residential unit may be issued one (1) thirty-five (35) gallon trash cart at a rate of \$9.00 per month versus the one (1) ninety-five (95) gallon trash cart at a rate of \$13.50 per month. Please note additional trash cannot be stacked on top of the trash cart – all trash must fit in trash carts with lid closed. Any changes to your current trash service shall be directed to the Sanitation Department by calling (740) 687-6660.*

Q - What is summer sewer average?

A - *Summer sewer average allows customers to be charged sewer based upon their “winter” water usage typically lower than “summer” water usage. “Summer” water usage is higher due to increased outside activity such as filling pools, power washing, watering grass, etc. This average applies to all residential water and sewer accounts but only affects (reduces) the sewer portion of the bill. This average starts with “readings” taken May 1st with bills due the middle of May through October 31st with bills due the middle of November of each year. The average is figured on the lower usage obtained November 1st through April 30th of each year.*

