

Rates News

Explaining your rates

November 2007

Welcome to Rates News – Wellington City Council's financial newsletter that tells you how the Council is spending your rates and looking after the city.

Remember – your rates are due on Saturday 1 December

Because this payment falls due on the weekend, we will accept your rate payments up until 5pm, Monday 3 December. An additional charge of 10% will be added if this second instalment of rates, or part of it, remains unpaid after this date.

Moving house?

If you are buying or selling a property, there are a few rates-related things to remember.

1. Make sure your solicitor or person acting on your behalf includes the rates split in the settlement statement they prepare for you. Rates are a charge against the property, not the individual. If you are buying a property and the rates are not settled by the previous owner – you can end up being liable for outstanding debt left by them.
2. Cancel any direct debits or automatic payments you have set up. If you have a direct debit, just let us know and we can cancel this for you. For automatic payments or internet/telephone banking, you will need to ensure you update your reference details to your new rates account number. Otherwise you could end up paying money to your old property.
3. If your settlement date is close to a rates instalment due date, please be aware there can be a delay in updating the ownership details. There are times where the invoice may have been sent to the previous owner while we are awaiting the ownership details from the solicitor. In this instance, please contact us and we can let you know what needs to be paid and the due date for this. This will ensure you do not incur any late payment penalties.

Easipay direct debit

Direct debit is an easy, no-fuss way to ensure your rates are paid on time, every time. All you need to do is complete a direct debit authority with your account details, and we can arrange this for you. This can either be a quarterly or a monthly payment to make your budgeting as easy as possible. You can even download a direct debit form from our website www.Wellington.govt.nz

Rates rebate scheme

The rates rebate scheme, set up by the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) and administered by local councils, is designed to assist ratepayers on low incomes by providing a rates credit of up to \$500 a year.

The application form is quite straightforward but we are happy to help you complete it if you are having trouble. You need to submit an application form between now and 30 June 2008 to be considered for the 2007/08 rating year. For more information see www.ratesrebates.govt.nz or contact the rates team by phoning 499 4444.

Top tips for ratepayers who pay their rates by direct debit

- If you need to cancel your direct debit, please do not cancel it at your bank – let us do it for you.
- Σ• If the deduction date falls on a weekend or public holiday, it will be processed the next business day.
- Σ• If you make a manual payment to your rates account, please advise the rates team. This allows us to correct your rates account and ensure you don't pay twice.
- Σ• If you sell your property and buy a new one, please advise the rates team. We will need to cancel your old payment and transfer your direct debit to your new property.

For more information please contact the rates team at rates@wcc.govt.nz or phone 499 4444.

Arrears penalty

Any rates account that had an outstanding balance at 1 July 2007 and was still unpaid by 1 October 2007 has received an additional 10% penalty. This latest penalty appears on your rates invoice.