

Rates payment options

July 2010

When will I receive my regional rates bill from the Auckland Regional Council?

Regional rates bills are sent to property owners in different areas of the region at different times between 19 July and 30 August 2009. We will only send one bill a year to each property owner. Bills will be sent according to the following area schedule:

Area 1

- all North Shore properties
- all Rodney properties.

Bills sent **19 July**. Discount date **9 August**. Payment due **30 August**.

Area 2

- all Manukau properties
- All Waitakere properties.

Bills sent **2 August**. Discount date **23 August**. Payment due **13 September**.

Area 3

- all Papakura properties
- all properties in Franklin District (within the boundaries of the ARC)
- all properties in Auckland city, with the exception of those in Auckland Central, Freemans Bay, Grafton, Grey Lynn, Herne Bay, Newmarket, Newton, Parnell, Point Chevalier, Ponsonby and Westmere.

Bills sent **16 August**. Discount date **6 September**. Payment due **27 September**.

Area 4

- All remaining properties in Auckland city (Auckland Central, Freemans Bay, Grafton, Grey Lynn, Herne Bay, Newmarket, Newton, Parnell, Point Chevalier, Ponsonby and Westmere).

Bills sent **30 August**. Discount date **20 September**. Payment due **11 October**.

How long do I have to pay?

You have six weeks from the date on your rates assessment/invoice to pay your regional rates.

The due date will be marked clearly on the invoice you receive. If you are paying the full amount, you must pay by the due date. If you want to spread payments through the year (in monthly or fortnightly payments) by direct debit or automatic payment, the direct debit or automatic payment must be set up prior to the due date on the rates assessment/invoice.

Will there be a discount for early payment?

Yes - the ARC offers a 2.5 per cent discount if payment is made in full, three weeks or more before the due date on the rates assessment/invoice. The discount date for payment and the discount amount are clearly marked on the rates assessment/invoice. If you make payment after the discount date, you will have to pay the full amount of rates assessed.

How and where can I pay my bill?

Ratepayers can pay their regional rates bill in a variety of ways:

- by direct debit, either:
 - the total amount in one lump sum prior to the due date for payment, or
 - in equal (or as equal as possible) amounts each month or fortnight so that the total rates are paid by 30 June 2011, and provided that the direct debit is established prior to the due date for payment,
- by post using the freepost reusable envelope provided (please include the remittance slip found on your rates assessment invoice with your payment),
- by internet/telephone banking – please contact your bank to arrange this option (when using these payment options, you will need to enter your rate account number as a reference so we process your payment to the correct rate account),
- in person at all postshops throughout New Zealand by cash, cheque or EFTPOS (no credit cards),
- by Visa, Mastercard, American Express or Diners Club via our website www.arc.govt.nz, or completing your card details on the remittance slip below and returning using the freepost reusable envelope provided with the rates assessment/invoice,
- in person at our office at 21 Pitt St, Auckland between 8am and 5pm Monday to Friday by cash, cheque or EFTPOS. You can also pay by credit card at our office, but only via access to the credit card payment facility on our website at www.arc.govt.nz,
- by automatic payment in equal (or as equal as possible) amounts each month or fortnight so that the total rates are paid by 30 June 2011, and provided that the automatic payment is established prior to the due date for payment. This arrangement must be made through our revenue team; please call us to arrange this.

Will there be a penalty for late payment?

Yes – sections 57 and 58 of the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002 empower the council to impose penalties on unpaid rates. Any part of the amount due not paid by the due date may incur a 10 per cent penalty the next day.

What happens to me if I can't pay?

We recognise that your financial situation may make it difficult for you to pay your rates on time by our available payment options. If you are unable to pay due to financial hardship, you may be eligible for a postponement of rates. Alternatively, we may be able to make another arrangement with you to pay your rates over time. If you require an alternative payment arrangement, you can contact our Rates Contact Centre on the telephone number below. You should do this before the due date on your rates assessment/invoice to avoid a late payment penalty.

What happens to me if I don't pay?

If the bill and the penalties remain outstanding at the start of the next financial year (which is 1 July 2011), then an additional 10 per cent penalty will be applied to all outstanding debts. A further 10 per cent penalty on all outstanding debts may then be applied every six months after that.

The ARC is legislatively empowered to use legal means to collect outstanding debt. Rates are a debt against a property, so we can, if necessary, recover outstanding rates debt from the mortgagee of the property. We are also empowered to take other legal action to recover the debt.

We consider legal action of any kind to be a last resort. We will notify you of your outstanding debt and make every attempt to enable you to pay your regional rates before taking any of these steps. However, we are required to collect outstanding rates and will take action against those who persistently refuse to pay.

The new Auckland Council and your rates

Under legislation, the ARC is required to provide an annual plan for the period 1 July to 31 October 2010. However, the council must set a rate and describe any other revenue mechanism required for the full 2010/11 financial year. The balance of the rates for the eight month period will be transferred to the new Auckland Council on 1 November 2010. The intended activities and expenditure of the Auckland Council for the eight months will be set out in the Auckland Transition Agency's planning document, which will be published before 31 October 2010.

Contact us

If you would like to know more, you can email rates@arc.govt.nz, or you can contact the Rates Contact Centre on 09 366 2000. Call 0800 80 60 40 if you are outside the Auckland free-call area. Press 3 from the options menu.