

City Buzz is now available via email

Like City Buzz, the COJ's monthly customer newsletter updating you on customer news you need to know? Then get it quicker and faster – get it on email. Simply send an email to citybuzz@joburg.org.za to request your electronic copy, which will be sent as the email's main body information, not as an attachment, for easy reading.

Look after your Pikitup Bins

Pikitup has modernised and improved its waste collection system by replacing the previous refuse bag system with new 240 litre wheeled bins, for which customers are charged a monthly rental fee of R6.05 per bin. Should your bin be lost, stolen or damaged and need to be replaced, you will be charged a fee of R285.00 per bin. If you move home or business, your bin must remain at the existing property, as it is owned by Pikitup, not the customer.



Ensure we have your correct address

A large number of municipal statements are being returned each month due to incorrect addresses. If you have recently moved, or have changed or cancelled your post box account, please advise us immediately. To update your address details you can:

- Contact our Call Centre on 375 5555 and follow the prompts
- Go to our website at www.joburg.org.za and click the e-Services button on the right hand side bar
- Go to any People's Centre or Regional Centre to change your details

If you do not receive your statement, keep to your budget by paying what you believe is approximately the correct amount into your account anyway. By not paying you will fall into arrears, making it difficult to catch up. Please contact us soonest to provide us with your most up-to-date details.

Refunds cannot be handled by third parties

Refunds on municipal accounts can only be collected by the account holder or their transferring attorney: third parties will not be accepted, unless they have written proof of **full power of attorney**.

Targeting Refund Fraud

This is necessary due to the very high risk of potential fraud. While a number of organisations have been formed recently to provide a third party service to customers when applying for municipal account refunds, council policy is not to deal with them in an attempt to reduce the number of potential fraudulent cases. In addition, it is law that only the account holder themselves, or their transferring attorney, can apply for and collect the refund cheque.

Who needs a refund?

The majority of refunds are due once applications for Clearance figures have been processed. In order to apply for a Clearance Certificate - required when selling a property to prove that municipal accounts are up-to-date when registering the sale of a property - you are required to pay an average of five months' costs upfront, as per section 118 of the MFMA. If an overpayment is reflected once the account has been finalised, this is refunded to you.

High season for Clearance Certificates

Because the City receives as many as 10,000 Clearance Certificate applications per month between September and February – the busiest time of the year for property sales – there may be delays in the processing of property transactions at this time.

Buying or selling?

Property Pack Now Available

Buying and selling property is one of the biggest business deals most people will ever be involved in, and there are many elements to the process which require understanding to make this formal transaction run smoothly.

The Property Handbook has been developed to inform City of Johannesburg residents about the municipal services aspect of the property transaction. In particular, the six steps in the property transaction process:

- the offer to purchase
- the registration of the bond
- the appointment of the conveyancing attorney
- the clearance process
- registration of deeds, and
- the transfer of ownership



Can't pay your accounts in full? Make an arrangement...

More and more COJ residents are failing to pay their municipal accounts in full and are making arrangements to pay them off over time. Statistics show that arrangements have increased by almost 70% from this time last year, indicating that residents are not managing their budgets correctly. Municipal accounts are a regular monthly overhead which must be accommodated as a priority within customers' budgets.

If, however, you fall behind with your payments and cannot afford to clear your accounts, you must go to the Customer Service Centre at Thuso House, Braamfontein, or your nearest People's Centre, to enquire about making arrangements to pay your account off over time. At this point a regular amount will be agreed on between you and the COJ, to be automatically added to your monthly account, until it is paid off in full. Please remember to take your ID book and a copy of your account with you. If you fail to make such arrangements, your services will be cut off and you will be required to pay both a disconnection and a reconnection fee.

If you find that you are running up bills that you cannot afford, you must try to reduce your costs by reducing the quantity of services you consume, such as water and electricity. Try the following and notice the difference:

- Make sure you turn appliances off as soon as they are no longer required
- Only use the washing machine for a full load of clothes
- Only boil enough water as required rather than a full kettle each time
- Turn off lights as you leave the room
- Have a smaller bath or, better still, have a quick shower as this uses much less water than a bath
- Don't water the garden as often
- Don't fill up your swimming pool as often
- As most swimming pools contain between 55,000 – 80,000 litres of water, buy a property without a pool, or fill in your pool

Most importantly – don't ignore the problem. Contact us and we will help you make the necessary arrangements.

And,

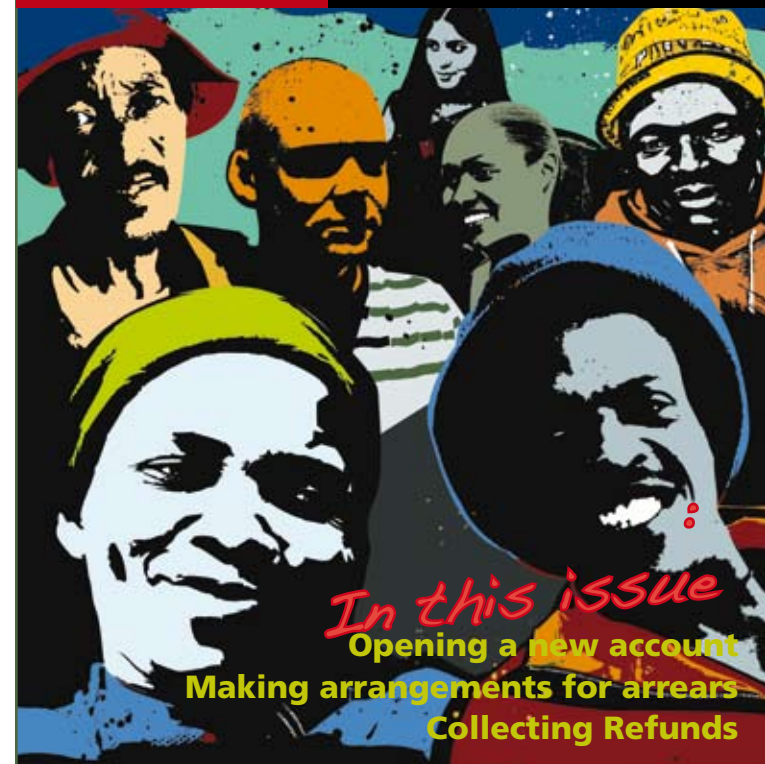
- when buying, how to apply for municipal services, and
- when selling, the major changes in the clearance and refund processes.

In addition, it provides sample copies of various forms:

- the Clearance Application form
- the Cancellation of Consumer Agreement form (for the property owner / current tenant)
- the Refund Application form
- the Application for the Supply of Water and Electricity form

There is also the new regional map and a list of the Revenue Service Centres.

The Property Handbook will be widely available at no charge from banks, estate agents, managing agents, property developers, conveyancing attorneys, industry associations, Regional People's Offices, the Customer Services Centre at Thuso House, and the Metro Centre. Alternatively, send an email request to propertypack@joburg.org.za



Contact us

• Fault reporting, complaints and general enquiries:

Joburg Connect (011) 375-5555

• Read your own meter and phone the reading through to:

(011) 375-5555 or

submit by email to

joburgconnect@joburg.org.za

• Emergency Connect - for life threatening emergencies:

(011) 375-5911

• Joburg Water - for billing queries:

(011) 688-1600

• To report water/sanitation/sewer service problems:

(011) 688-1500

• City Power - for billing queries and electrical problems:

(011) 375-5555

• Fraud and Corruption Hotline:

0800 002 587

• Register to get your statement by email by logging onto the City's website:

www.joburg.org.za

• Fax proof of payment for reconnections to the Credit Control Department:

(011) 358 3164

On the cover

A wall painting from a series of custom-designed murals that decorate the public spaces of our offices at **Thuso House, 61 Jorissen Str (cnr Simmonds Str), Braamfontein.**



Opening a new account with the City

If you are opening a new account with the City, you can make the process run more smoothly and quickly if you understand how it works.

YOU Complete an application form

Firstly, go to your nearest Regional Office to complete the Application for the Supply of Water and Electricity form. You will also need to bring along the following:

- A valid ID book
- If you are a tenant, the owner or his proxy must co-sign the application for services, the owner/proxy's ID book, and a certified copy of the lease agreement, stating date of occupation
- Where applicable, your spouse's details, spouse's employer's details and certified copy of their ID book
- Your next of kin details
- Your banking details
- Your Offer to Purchase, if the transfer has not yet taken place at the Deeds Office
- If possible, meter numbers for multiple dwellings
- In the event that you as a new owner want to open an account for a new property (newly sub-divided or in a new township) and you are not sure if the township has been proclaimed and if the stand has been registered, you should bring a copy of the Surveyor General's

(SG) diagram (usually obtained from the developer)

WE Do the following, depending on your property:

a) Transfer of property via deeds office if not detected

If there is no indication on the system that the property has recently been sold and you, as the new owner, wish to open an account, then you must bring in a copy of the previous owner's Clearance Certificate and proof of payment of the clearance amount (this can be obtained from the transferring attorney). If all is in order, your new account can be opened.

b) Service accounts with outstanding balances

If the services account is in arrears and you as the new tenant wish to open an account, the owner must pay the account in full or enter into an acceptable debt arrangement before a deposit will be accepted from you.

If there is a consolidated account in your name, all arrears must be paid.

c) If the stand is not registered on the system – sub divisions & new townships:

Once the SG's diagram is received from you, the Valuations department will identify the stand and forward the stand information (size of the stand and value) to the Assessment Rates department, who will then create the stand on the billing system and register the correct Rates tariffs for the stand. At this point, the stand has no meters or metered

services linked to it. Once you have obtained a quote from Joburg Water and City Power to buy meters for the stand, take it to the Council to complete the opening of account process and pay the deposit. You will have to visit your nearest City Power and Joburg Water to apply for a new service installation and connection.

d) If the previous owner had a level 3 cut-off and the meters on the property were removed, and you wish to open an account:

You will be required to pay a deposit of approximately two months' deemed consumption. You will then obtain a letter of clearance and will have to visit your nearest City Power and Joburg Water to apply for a new service installation and connection.

Pay a deposit

All new accounts will be charged a deposit amount which is generated by the City's billing system and which is approximately equal to two months' average deemed consumption. The deemed consumption for new accounts will be averaged and automatically regulated after six months. Thereafter, the City will adjust the deposit and reflect it on your account as either a credit or debit. While no person or company will be denied the right to open an account to receive the basic services of water and electricity, or be billed for rates, the City can request additional guarantees (over and above the deposit) to cover the assumed risk on certain accounts.

Prepaid Electricity Vending Stations

Prepaid electricity tokens are the ideal way to stay in control of your electricity budget. The current tariff is R0.4041 VAT exclusive, or R0.4607 VAT inclusive, and R15 is the minimum purchase value. Prepaid tokens are available at the following vending stations:

Region	Area	Vending Stations	Mon-Friday	Saturdays	
E	Alexandra	8th Avenue (Fire station)	08h00-17h00	08h00-13h00	
		Grintek Avm	7 days a week 24 hours		
		12th Avenue (Samkopano)	08h00-18h00	08h00-13h00	
		Eastbank Clinic	08h00-17h00	08h00-13h00	
		TM Restaurant	08h00-18h00	08h00-13h00	
		London Engen Garage	7 days a week 24 hours		
A	Midrand	Regional Office - 15th Road	08h00-15h30	Closed	
		Rabie Ridge Municipal office	08h00-15h30	Closed	
		Rabie Ridge Municipal office	08h00-20h00		
		Mayibuye	08h00-15h30	08h00-15h30	
		Modderfontein Fire Station	08h00-15h30	Closed	
		Founders View Motors- Avm	7 days a week 24 hours		
C	Roodepoort	Vrededorp(Janhofmeyer)	08h00-16h00	Closed	
		Hursthill	Claremont(100 Clement str)	08h00-16h00	Closed
		Randburg	Mathole'sville	08h00-17h00	08h00-13h00
		Tshepisoing Whitehouse-2 Avm's	07h00-23h00 Mon-Sun		
		Riverelea Recreation Centre	7 days a week 24 hours		
		Davidsonville	07h00-20h00	07h00-20h00	
F	Reuven	Roodepoort Civic Centre	08h00-15h30	08h00-13h00	
		Thuso House - AVM	07h00-17h00	08h00-12h00	
		City Power Head Office	7 days a week 24 hours		
		Ennerdale Spar	07h00-22h00	07h00-22h00	
		Eldorado Spar	07h00-22h00	07h00-22h00	
		Eldorado Park Fire Station	07h30-15h30	08h00-13h00	
G	Lenasia	Eldorado Park Rates Hall	08h00-15h30	08h00-13h00	
		Ennerdale Ext 1	08h00-15h00	08h00-13h00	
		Ennerdale Ext 9	08h00-15h00	08h00-13h00	
		Zakaria Park	08h00-17h00	08h00-13h00	
		Nancefield Old Age Home	08h00-15h30	closed	
		Caltex Garage K43	7 days a week 24 hours		
G	Lenasia	Lenasia South Motors Hyperm	08h00-18h00 Mon - Sun		
		Lawley Fire Station	7 days a week 24 hours		
		Boundary Spar	07h00-22h00	07h00-22h00	

Know your assessment rates and rebates

Did you know that your assessment rates are currently based on the assessed land value of your property, and not on any of the buildings that have been developed on it?

There are a number of rebates available on assessment rates:

- Developed residential property receives a rebate on the monthly assessment rates (If you are currently building on your property, however, you are not eligible for a rebate)
- Depending on the number of dwelling units permitted for the property, the rebate may be either 58% (up to two dwelling units) or 40% (three or more dwelling units)
- Residential dwelling units owned in terms of Sectional Title receive the full residential rebate of 58%
- No rebate is allowed on business or commercial property, or on vacant land
- Land value is determined in terms of the Local Authorities Rating Ordinance, 11 of 1977
- Assessment rates are payable in arrears over twelve monthly instalments
- The prevailing Valuation Roll was implemented from 1 July 2001
- The prevailing rate in the Rand is 11,89 cents
- No assessment rates are levied on residential property where the assessed land value is R20 000 and lower.
- Government, as a property owner, is also required to pay assessment rates.

Have you met the FICA deadline?

Did you know that the Financial Intelligence Centre Act's (FICA) deadline for compliance was 30th September? If you didn't identify yourself and confirm your details in person at your nearest bank within a week of this time you may find that there are restrictions on the use of your bank account. This may result in your debit orders being 'held over' until you comply, causing arrears on your municipal services account. If you have not met with the FICA requirements, please go to your nearest bank branch immediately to confirm your details.



Do it all with one call...

When you dial Joburg Connect on 375 5555 you will reach an automated answering system which will take you through the following options:

