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## Poor water deposit collection forces civic body to extend deadline

The Coimbatore Corporation recently extended to November 30 the deadline for paying revised water connection deposit charges. Sometime ago, the Corporation said it was extending the deadline to October 31.

The earlier deadline was September 30 and prior to that September 15.

Sources in the Corporation said that the civic body was forced to extend the deadline owing to poor response from the residents.

The Corporation had sometime ago asked residents in all the 100 wards to pay up the difference between their current deposit and Rs. 5,000 to make uniform the deposit at Rs. 5,000. But it had said it was applicable only to those residents who had availed of water connection prior to 2013.

It said those residents in the 60 wards that constituted the old city area had to pay around Rs. 4,000, those residents in wards

that earlier fell under Vilankurichi Panchayat to pay an equal sum, those residents in wards that fell under the then Kalapatti Town Panchayat to pay Rs. 2,000, those residing in wards that fell under the then Veerakeralam Town Panchayat to also pay Rs. 2,000, those residing in wards that fell under the earlier Thudiyalur, Vellakinaru, Saravanampatty and Chinnavedampatty Town Panchayats to also pay Rs. 2,000, and others to pay the difference.

For commercial and industrial connection, the Corporation had similar demands, but with amount varying from Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 7,000.

The Corporation had expected to generate over Rs. 50 crore from the exercise. But as on date, the collection was nearly Rs. 14 crore.

Corporation sources said now that the civic body had revised the deadline more than once, it would resort to other methods to urge the residents to pay the revised deposit charges. The methods would include reminders by way of public announcements and if necessary, coercive action like disconnecting water supply. They reasoned that the civic body was able to improve its water supply to added areas, almost

on a par with the old city areas and that involved higher operation and maintenance charges. The residents therefore would have to pay for the water the Corporation supplied.

Among the five zones, the South Zone had the lowest collection of a little over Rs. 1 crore. The maximum collection was from the Central Zone at Rs. 3.82 crore followed by East Zone at Rs. 3.47 crore.