

Utility's Duties Before Disconnection

Prior to disconnecting a residential customer's service between October 1 and April 30, a utility must provide the customer with the following:

- A notice of the disconnection
- Information on the customer's rights and responsibilities
- A list of local energy assistance providers
- A form on which the customer can declare inability to pay
- Information on available payment plans and other opportunities to secure continued utility service

Need Help Paying Your Bill?

Energy Assistance
1-800-657-3710

Salvation Army HeatShare
1-800-842-7279

Information provided by:



3131 Fernbrook Lane North
Suite 200
Plymouth, MN 55447
(763) 551-1230
1-800-422-0119
www.mmua.org

Concerned About Paying Your Heating Bills this Winter?



Frequently Asked Questions About the Cold Weather Rule

1) **Can my home's heat be shut off in the winter?**

Yes. Natural gas service can be stopped for non-payment. Electric service can also be disconnected, and most furnaces need electricity to run as well as gas.

2) **What if I can't pay the gas or electric bill affecting my heat?**

If you qualify under the state's Cold Weather Rule, and you contact your utility, enter into a payment agreement and continue to make the payments, your home heat is protected from shut off between October 1 and April 30.

3) **Do I qualify under the Cold Weather Rule?**

Customers at or below 60%* of the median state household income are eligible. Your eligibility can be verified through forms from your utility or from any document showing that you receive public assistance (energy assistance or other type) that has a

corresponding income eligibility requirement. (*2021-22. Normally 50%)

4) **Are renters eligible?**

Renters with gas or electric service accounts in their name are eligible if they meet the income requirement.

5) **How do I apply for a Cold Weather Rule payment agreement?**

Contact your utility and request a Cold Weather Rule payment arrangement.

6) **What if I can't make a scheduled payment?**

Contact your utility immediately. If you do not make your payments, the utility service controlling your home heating may be shut off.

7) **If I follow the rules and still get disconnected, who can I call?**

Your utility should have a process in place to appeal a decision to disconnect. Call and ask how to initiate a decision appeal.

The Cold Weather Rule is in Effect October 1 - April 30

8) **How long will my payment plan last?**

Payment plans under the Cold Weather Rule last until April 30 unless you make other arrangements with your utility.

9) **What happens to my utility service after April 30?**

If you set up and keep a new payment plan with your utility, you will have service. If you do not keep your payment plan, and you have a past-due balance on April 30, your service could be shut off.

Understand Your
Rights and
Responsibilities
to Keep Your
Heat on this
Winter!