

ANNUAL NOTICE TO ALL RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS

Bills can pile up just like snow. But the Minnesota Cold Weather Rule is designed to protect people who may have trouble paying their utility bills in winter. The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule applies from October 15 to April 15. The rule, established by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, means that the utility cannot disconnect your residential electric service during the winter if the customer meets all of the following requirements:

1. utility disconnection would affect the customer's primary heat source;
2. the customer has declared inability to pay on forms provided by the Utilities;
(Note: Customers receiving "any form of public assistance," including energy assistance, are deemed to have qualified for inability to pay status);
3. the household income of the customer is less than 50 percent of the state median income level, as documented by the customer to the utility; and
4. the customer's account is current for the billing period immediately prior to October 15 or the customer has entered into a payment schedule and is reasonably current with payments under the schedule.

If you have trouble paying your utility bill, local agencies may be able to provide payment assistance. The State Department of Human Services recommends you call the county in which you live. For Stearns County residents, the telephone number is 1-888-765-5597 or 320-251-1612; the address is Tri-Cap, 700 W. Germain St., St. Cloud, MN 56301.

If you know you are going to have trouble paying your utility bills, please contact the Utilities Office (320-256-4278) to establish a payment schedule. We will try to help.

Dated this 8th day of September, 2014

Melrose Public Utilities