

If you are unable to pay your electric bill ...



minnesota power

AN ALLETE COMPANY

Special Notice September / October, 2012



The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule

Some customers find it hard to pay their utility bills in the winter. The State of Minnesota set up the Cold Weather Rule to protect residential, heat-affected customers who are unable to pay their utility bills from disconnection of service between October 15 and April 15.

Avoiding Disconnection

The Cold Weather Rule does not forbid winter shut off. If you receive a shut off notice this winter, you must act promptly and call Minnesota Power at 218-722-2625 or 1-800-228-4966 to apply for Cold Weather Rule protection and set up a payment plan.

Your service will be subject to disconnection without further notice if you do not make the agreed upon payments. If you cannot keep your original payment plan, call Minnesota Power immediately and make a new payment plan to avoid disconnection.

Reconnection

If your power is disconnected on October 15 when the Cold Weather Rule takes effect, you can have your power reconnected by calling Minnesota Power at 218-722-2625 or 1-800-228-4966 to set up a payment plan.

You must keep your payment plan to avoid future disconnection. Call Minnesota Power immediately if you cannot keep your payment plan and make a new payment plan to avoid disconnection.

Payment Plan

If your household income is:

- at or below 50 percent of the state median income, you are not required to pay more than ten percent of your monthly household income.
- more than 50 percent of the state median income, you may make a payment plan with Minnesota Power.

Cold Weather Rule payment plans last until April 15 unless you make other arrangements with Minnesota Power. Your service could be shut off if you have a past-due balance on April 15 and do not make and keep a new payment plan.

Right to Appeal

If you and Minnesota Power cannot agree on a payment plan, you have ten days to appeal to the Public Utilities Commission. The Commission will help you set up a payment plan, and your service will stay on during the appeal process.

You can use Budget Billing

If you choose, you can spread a year's electricity bills evenly across 12 months.

This helps you avoid the higher-than-average monthly bills that often come with cold weather.

It also makes it easier for you to budget your money because you know exactly what your monthly Minnesota Power bill will be.

This service is called Budget Billing. Here is how it works:

First, we estimate the total cost of the electric energy we anticipate you will use in the next year. Next, we divide that total into 12 equal monthly payments—then you know exactly what your bill will be each month.

Your account is reviewed from time to time and adjusted to correct for any underpayment or overpayment.

Other fuel or heating assistance resources

www.staywarm.mn.gov or

Energy Assistance Hotline at 1-800-657-3710 or

First Call for Help at United Way 2-1-1

Financial Assistance

If you need help paying your utility bills, you may qualify for state or federal fuel assistance. For complete information, contact a social service agency for your area listed below:

Aitkin County:

Lakes & Pines Community Action Council*
320.679.1800 800.832.6082
Aitkin Health & Human Services
218.927.7200

Benton County:

Tri-County Community Action Program
320.251.1612 888.765.5597
Benton County Human Services
320.968.5087

Carlton County:

Lakes & Pines Community Action Council*
320.679.1800 800.832.6082
Carlton County Human Services
218.879.4583 800.642.9082

Cass County:

Bi-County Community Action Program
800.332.7135
Cass County Health, Human and Veteran Services
218.547.4631 or 800.338.1340

Crow Wing County:

Lutheran Social Services
218.829.5000 800.829.5902
Crow Wing County Community Services
218.824.1250

Hubbard County:

Mahube-Otwa Community Action Partnership *
218.732.7204
Hubbard County Social Services
218.732.1451

Isanti County:

Lakes & Pines Community Action Council*
320.679.1800 800.832.6082
Isanti County Family Services
763.689.1711

Itasca County:

Kootasca Community Action Council*
218.327.2941 800.422.0312
Itasca County Health and Human Services
218.327.2941

Koochiching County:

Kootasca Community Action Council*
218.283.9491 800.559.9491
Koochiching County Community Services
218.283.7000

Lake County:

AEOA
218.749.2912 800.662.5711
Lake County Human Services
218.834.8400

Financial Assistance *continued*

Mille Lacs County:

Lakes & Pines Community Action Council*
320.679.1800 800.832.6082
Mille Lacs County Community Services
320.983.8208

Morrison County:

Tri-County Community Action Program*
320.251.1612 888.765.5597
Morrison County Social Services
320.632.2951

Pine County:

Lakes & Pines Community Action Council*
320.679.1800 800.832.6082
Pine County Health and Human Services
320.216.4100 800.450.7463

St. Louis County:

AEOA
Outside of Duluth 800.662.5711*
Duluth 218.624.7625
United Way Information & Referral
2-1-1
St. Louis County Public Health and Human Services
800.450.9777
Duluth Community Action
218.726.1665

Stearns County:

Tri-County Community Action Program
320.251.1612 888.765.5597
Stearns County Human Services
320.656.6000 800.450.3663

Todd County:

Todd County Social Services
320.732.4516 888.838.4066

Wadena County:

Mahube-Otwa Community Action Partnership*
218.632.3600
Wadena County Human Services
218.631.7605

Fond du Lac Reservation:

218.878.2658

Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe:

218.335.3783 866.864.8668

Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe:

Office of Energy and Emergency Services:
320.532.7880

Ottertail County:

218.739.3011

*Weatherization programs available at no cost to you

REQUEST FOR THIRD PARTY NOTIFICATION

Your Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (Home) _____ (Work) _____

Account Number _____
(From your bill)

Name of the person you want us to notify

(Third Party) _____
Please Print

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (Home) _____ (Work) _____

Third Party

Signature _____

Minnesota Power has my permission to provide
information to and accept information from the third party.

Your Signature _____

Date _____

Minnesota Power will make every effort to send a copy of the
Notice of Proposed Disconnection to the party specified. Minnesota
Power assumes no liability for failure of the third party to receive
or act upon the notice.

Complete this form and return it with your Minnesota Power bill,
or mail it to:

Minnesota Power
30 W. Superior St.
Duluth, MN 55802

Third Party Notice

If you want us to let someone else know—in addition to notifying you—that you are in danger of having your service disconnected for not paying your bill, we can provide this service. This *third party* can be any person or organization you choose: a friend, relative, church, or community agency.

Upon receiving the notice, the *third party* could contact Minnesota Power and confirm that you are unable to pay the bill. The *third party* could also arrange a payment schedule if you want them to. The *third party* would **not** be expected or required to pay the bill.

This *Third Party Notice* is especially helpful to those who are ill, elderly or live alone. If you would like to have this service, complete the attached tear-off form and return it to Minnesota Power. Be sure to have the *third party* sign the form.

If you have questions ...

... about the Minnesota Cold Weather Rule, please write or call Minnesota Power at 1-800-228-4966, or visit our web site: mnpower.com.

CARE

If you are income eligible for the Energy Assistance Program you are also eligible for Minnesota Power's **Customer Affordability of Residential Electricity** (CARE) discount on your monthly electric bill. Contact the Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA) at 1-800-662-5711 ext. 277 to get enrolled or complete and submit your application on-line at mnpower.com, click on CARE.