

## 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 Dakota Electric at 651-463-6212 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 Dakota Electric 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 affect, you can have your power reconnected by calling Dakota Electric at 651-463-6212 to set up a payment plan. You must keep your payment plan to avoid future disconnection. Call Dakota Electric immediately if you cannot keep your payment plan and make a new payment plan to avoid disconnection.

## Payment Agreements

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 Dakota Electric Association.

Most Cold Weather Rule payment plans last until April 15 unless you make other arrangements with Dakota Electric. 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 Dakota Electric 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.

## Need Help Paying?

360 Communities (formerly Community Action Council) . . . 952-985-5300  
501 East Highway 13, Suite 102, Burnsville, MN 55337

Dakota County Economic Assistance . . . . . 651-554-5611  
1 Mendota Road W., Suite 100, West St. Paul, MN 55118-4765

Goodhue Co. Dept. of Public Welfare . . . . . 651-385-3200  
426 West Ave., Red Wing, MN 55066

Three Rivers Community Action, Inc. . . . . 507-732-7391  
1414 North Star Dr., Zumbrota, MN 55992

Rice County Social Services . . . . . 507-332-6115  
P.O. Box 718, Faribault, MN 55021

Scott County Human Services. . . . . 952-496-8686  
752 Canterbury Rd. S., Shakopee, MN 55379-1220

Scott-Carver-Dakota CAP Agency . . . . . 651-322-3500  
2496 145th St. W., Rosemount, MN 55068

S. Minn. Regional Legal Services . . . . . 651-222-4731  
1000 Alliance Bank Center, 55 E 5th St., St. Paul, MN 55101

## Conservation and Weatherization Providers

The following agencies provide weatherization/conservation services. Your energy assistance agencies may also offer these services. See the “Need Help Paying?” section for contact information.

### Dakota County

Dakota County CDA . . . . . 651-675-4400  
Scott-Carver-Dakota CAP Agency . . . . . 651-322-3500

### Goodhue County and Rice County

Three Rivers Community Action, Inc. . . . . 507-732-7391

### Scott County

Scott-Carver-Dakota CAP Agency . . . . . 952-496-2125

## Energy Saving Tips

- Manage your thermostat. Try 76° - 78° during the cooling season and 66° - 68° during the heating season.
- Use fans whenever possible instead of air conditioning, especially ceiling fans for rooms with high ceilings.
- Clean or change your furnace filters monthly. Filters are inexpensive and also clean the air you breathe.
- Lower your water heater thermostat to 120° F if possible. If you have a dishwasher, 140° F may be needed.
- Turn off all unused lights and appliances.
- Vacuum refrigerator and freezer coils every six months to improve the units' efficiency.
- Open shades on cold days to let warm sunlight in, and close shades on hot days to prevent the sunlight from heating up the house.
- Wash clothes in cool water and hang clothes outside to dry when possible.
- Take shorter showers.
- Caulk and weather strip cracks around doors and window frames to prevent drafts.
- Remove or cover window air conditioners during the heating season.
- Insulate your home adequately.
- Close the door and heat registers in unused rooms.
- Do not block radiators or warm air registers with furniture, drapes or other objects.

### Third Party Notice

Third Party Notice applies to all customers and is designed to notify the customer and a third party, such as a friend, relative, church or community agency, that a shut-off notice has been sent. The third party can receive and give information about the customer and arrange payment plans with Dakota Electric for the customer. The third party is not responsible for payment.

### Request for Third Party Notification

Member Name

Address

City State ZIP

Phone

Account Number from Electric Bill

I give my permission to my electric utility to provide information and accept information from the party named below.

Member Signature Date

Name of Third Party to Be Notified

Address

City State ZIP

Phone

Third Party Signature Date  
(This request cannot be accepted without the third party's signature.)

Dakota Electric will make every effort to send a copy of the Shut Off Notice to the party specified. The customer making the request understands that the electric utility is not liable should the third party fail to receive or act upon the notice.

**For your convenience, complete this form and return it with your next electric bill payment.**



Dakota Electric Association  
4300 220th Street West  
Farmington, MN 55024  
651-463-6212  
[www.dakotaelectric.com](http://www.dakotaelectric.com)

## Notification of Rights and Responsibilities *under the* Minnesota Cold Weather Rule



**Call Dakota Electric Association at  
651-463-6212 to sign up for  
Cold Weather Rule protection.**