

## THE MINNESOTA COLD WEATHER RULE

Because some customers may find it hard to pay their utility bills in the winter, the State of Minnesota passed the Cold Weather Rule (CWR) law. CWR protects residential, heat-affected customers from disconnection of service between October 1 and April 30.

## AVOIDING DISCONNECTION

If you receive a Shut-Off Notice this winter, call Dakota Electric Association® at 651-463-6212 immediately to apply for Cold Weather Rule protection and set up a payment plan.

Your service may be disconnected without further notice if you do not make and keep an agreed upon payment plan. 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 1 when the Cold Weather Rule takes effect, 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 disconnection. Call Dakota Electric immediately if you cannot keep your payment plan and to 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 10 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, reasonable for your household's financial circumstances.

Most Cold Weather Rule payment plans end on April 30 unless you make other arrangements with Dakota Electric. Your service could be shut off if you have a past-due balance on April 30 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 a right to request an appeal form and submit the appeal to the Public Utilities Commission within ten business days. The Commission will help you set up a payment plan, and your service will stay on during the appeal process. If you do not agree to a payment plan and do not appeal, your electric service may be disconnected without further notice.

## NEED HELP PAYING?

**360 Communities** . . . . . 952-985-5300  
501 State Highway 13, Suite 112, Burnsville, MN 55337

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

**Goodhue County Health & Human Services** . . . . . 651-385-3200  
426 West Ave., Red Wing, MN 55066

**Three Rivers Community Action, Inc.** . . . . . 507-316-0610  
1414 North Star Dr., Zumbrota, MN 55992

**Rice County Social Services** . . . . . 507-332-6115  
320 3rd St. NW., Faribault, MN 55021

**Scott County Human Services** . . . . . 952-445-7751  
200 4th Ave. W., Shakopee, MN 55379

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

## CONSERVATION AND WEATHERIZATION PROVIDERS

The following agencies provide weatherization/conservation services. Your energy assistance agencies may also offer these services. See the above section, titled, **Need Help Paying** 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. . . . . 507-732-7391

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

## ENERGY SAVING TIPS

- Manage your thermostat. Try 76 to 78 degrees during the cooling season and 66 to 68 degrees during the heating season.
- Use fans whenever possible instead of air conditioning, especially ceiling fans for rooms with high ceilings.
- Turn fans off when you leave the room. Fans cool people, not rooms.
- Clean or change your furnace filters monthly. Filters are inexpensive and also clean the air you breathe.
- Lower your water heater thermostat to 120 degrees if possible. If you have a dishwasher, 140 degrees may be needed.
- Turn off all unused lights and appliances.
- Vacuum refrigerator and freezer coils annually to improve the unit's 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

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

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.

## EXPANDED ENERGY ASSISTANCE MAY BE AVAILABLE

Minnesota's Energy Assistance Program (EAP) recently expanded its eligibility requirements and significantly increased the amount of funding available to help members pay costs associated with heat and electricity. Funding is available on a first-come, first-served basis, so it is crucial to contact an energy assistance agency as soon as possible.

For other resources, please see the section titled, **Need Help Paying** inside this brochure for assistance agencies and contact information.

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## *Dakota Electric Association*<sup>®</sup> Notification of Rights and Responsibilities



Your Touchstone Energy<sup>®</sup> Cooperative 



4300 220th Street West  
Farmington, MN 55024  
651-463-6212

[www.dakotaelectric.com](http://www.dakotaelectric.com)

*Dakota Electric Association<sup>®</sup> and Dakota Electric<sup>®</sup> are registered service marks of the cooperative.*