



## **Cold Weather Rule Protection – Keep the Heat On**

Minnesota’s Cold Weather Rule (CWR) is a state law that protects residents from having their heat shut off during cold weather months.

The Cold Weather Rule is in effect from October 15 to April 15 each year.

Cold Weather Rule applies to natural gas and electric utilities. Cold Weather Rule does not apply to delivered fuels; oil and propane or wood. The Cold Weather Rule can apply to electric if electric service is necessary to power your furnace.

### **How do I find out if I am eligible?**

#### **Contact your utility to ask if you qualify and to sign up.**

- CWR protection is only available to residential customers
- All natural gas and electric utilities must offer CWR protection
- To have CWR protection you must set up a payment plan and keep it if you don’t keep the payment plan you may be disconnected
- You can set up a CWR payment plan any time during the CWR season
- The utility must set up a payment plan that is reasonable for your household circumstances
- You are eligible for CWR protection even if you rent – the utility account must be in your name
- If your utility will not work with you, contact the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission’s Consumer Affairs Office.

#### **Your utility must do the following before they disconnect service:**

- Provide a notice of disconnection showing the disconnection date. If mailed, must be mailed **20 days** before disconnection and if delivered in person, must be delivered **15 days** before disconnection
- Municipal and cooperative utilities have to provide an inability to pay form and notice of your right to appeal their decision on a payment plan. Regulated utilities have to provide information on how to appeal their decision on a payment plan.
- Provide you with information on Energy Assistance Programs and weatherization providers
- Provide a Third Party notice form if you want someone else to also be notified of a pending disconnection

If you need assistance with the appeal process or in working out a payment plan for CWR protections, the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission can help. For assistance, email [consumer.puc@state.mn.us](mailto:consumer.puc@state.mn.us) or 651-296-0406 or 1-800-657-3782.