



# Minnesota Cold Weather Rule rights and responsibilities

Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule protects residential customers from disconnection if they can't pay their bills in full or have a past due balance. This protection lasts October 1 through April 30. You may qualify for this protection if you meet both of the following conditions:

1. The disconnection would affect your main heating source.
2. You and our company agree to a payment plan.

**If you receive energy assistance, you're eligible for Cold Weather Rule Protection.**

The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule doesn't forbid all winter disconnections. If you receive a Notice of Proposed Disconnection this winter, you must act promptly.

**Call us at 800-257-4044 or 218-739-8877 to sign up for Cold Weather Rule Protection.**

## Avoiding disconnection

If you receive a Notice of Proposed Disconnection this winter, or you're unable to pay your bill in full, you must call us at 800-257-4044 or 218-739-8877 immediately to set up a payment plan under Cold Weather Rule Protection.

If you don't make the agreed upon payments, your service will be subject to disconnection without further notice and you'll no longer qualify for protection under the Cold Weather Rule. If you can't keep your original payment plan, call us immediately and make a new payment plan to avoid disconnection.

**Becker County**  
Becker County Human Services  
218-847-5628 or 866-454-5628

Mahube-Otwa Community  
Action Partnership, Inc.  
218-847-1385 or 888-458-1385

White Earth Energy Assistance  
218-473-2711 or 866-885-7656  
White Earth Reservation Tribal Council  
218-983-3285 or 800-950-3248

**Beltrami County**  
Beltrami County Human Services  
218-333-8300  
Bi-County Community Action Programs, Inc.  
218-751-4631 or 800-332-7161

Leech Lake Energy Assistance  
218-335-3783 or 866-864-8668

**Big Stone County**  
Prairie Five Community Action  
320-839-2111

Big Stone County Family Service Center  
320-839-2555

**Cass County**  
Cass County Social Services Office  
218-547-1340

Bi-County Community Action Programs, Inc.  
218-751-4631 or 800-332-7161

**Chippewa County**  
Chippewa County Family Services  
320-269-6401 or 877-450-6401

Prairie Five Community Action Council, Inc.  
320-269-6578 or 800-292-5437

**Clay County**  
West Central Community Action  
218-685-4486 or 800-492-4805

**Clearwater County**  
Clearwater County Dept. of Human Services  
218-694-6164 or 800-245-6064

Inter-County Community Council  
218-796-5144 or 888-778-4008  
White Earth Energy Assistance  
218-473-2711 or 866-885-7656

White Earth Reservation Tribal Council  
218-983-3285 or 800-950-3248

**Douglas County**  
West Central Community Action  
218-685-4486 or 800-492-4805

Douglas County Social Services Department  
320-762-2302 or 844-204-0012

**Grant County**  
West Central Community Action  
218-685-4486 or 800-492-4805

Grant County Social Services  
218-685-8200

**Hubbard County**  
Mahube-Otwa Community Action Partnership, Inc.  
218-732-7204 or 888-458-1385

**Kandiyohei County**  
Kandiyohei County Family Service  
Department, 320-231-7800 or 877-464-7800  
United Community Action  
800-992-1710 or 320-235-0850

**Kittson County**  
Northwest Community Action, Inc.  
218-528-3258 or 800-568-5329

Kittson County Social Services  
218-843-2689 or 800-672-8026

**Lac qui Parle County**  
Prairie Five Community Action  
320-598-3027  
Lac qui Parle County Family Service Center  
320-598-7594

**Leech Lake Indian Reservation**  
Leech Lake Energy Assistance  
218-335-3783 or 866-864-8668

**Lincoln County**  
Southwest Health and Human Services  
507-694-1452 or 800-657-3781

United Community Action  
507-537-1416, or 800-658-2448

**Lyon County**  
Southwest Health and Human Services  
507-537-6747 or 800-657-3760

United Community Action  
507-537-1416, or 800-658-2448

**Mahnomen County**  
Mahube-Otwa Community  
Action Partnership, Inc.  
218-935-5022 or 888-458-1385

Mahnomen County Human Services  
218-935-2568

White Earth Energy Assistance  
218-473-2711 or 866-885-7656  
White Earth Reservation Tribal Council  
218-983-3285 or 800-950-3248

**Marshall County**  
Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, Inc.  
218-281-9080 or 866-264-3729

Marshall County Residents  
(EXCEPT Middle River and Holt)  
218-745-5124 or 218-745-5125

Northwest Community Action, Inc.  
218-528-3258 or 800-568-5329

**Norman County**  
Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, Inc.  
218-281-9080 or 866-264-3729

Norman County Social Services  
218-784-5400

**Otter Tail County**  
Mahube-Otwa Community  
Action Partnership, Inc.  
218-739-3011 or 888-458-1385

Otter Tail County Human Services  
218-998-8230

**Pennington County**  
Inter-County Community Council  
218-796-5144 or 888-778-4008

Pennington County Social Services  
218-681-2880

**Polk County**  
Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, Inc.  
218-281-9080 or 866-264-3729

*Continued*

Inter-County Community Council  
218-796-5144 or 888-778-4008

Polk County Social Service Center  
218-281-3127

**Pope County**  
West Central Community Action  
218-685-4486 or 800-492-4805

Pope County Family Services  
320-634-7755

**Red Lake County**  
Inter-County Community Council  
218-796-5144 or 888-778-4008

Red Lake County Social Service Center  
218-253-4131

**Redwood County**  
Western Community Action  
507-537-1416 or 800-658-2448

Redwood County Human Services  
507-637-4050

**Roseau County**  
Roseau County Social Service Center  
218-463-2411 or 866-255-2932

Northwest Community Action, Inc.  
218-528-3258 or 800-568-5329

**Stevens County**  
Stevens County Social Services Department  
320-208-6600  
West Central Community Action  
218-685-4486 or 800-492-4805

**Swift County**  
Prairie Five Community Action  
320-842-8565

Swift County Welfare & Family Service Agency,  
320-843-3160

**Todd County**  
Todd County Social Services  
320-732-4516

**Traverse County**  
Traverse County Family Service Department  
320-422-7777  
West Central Community Action  
218-685-4486 or 800-492-4805

**Wadena County**  
Mahube-Otwa Community  
Action Partnership, Inc.  
218-632-3600 or 888-458-1385

**White Earth Indian Reservation**  
White Earth Reservation Tribal Council  
218-983-3285 or 800-950-3248

White Earth Energy Assistance  
218-473-2711 or 866-885-7656

**Wilkin County**  
West Central Community Action  
218-685-4486 or 800-492-4805

Wilkin County Family Service Agency  
218-643-7161

**Yellow Medicine County**  
Family Service Center, 320-564-2211

Prairie Five Community Action  
507-223-5471

## Reconnection

If your power has been disconnected and the Cold Weather Rule is in effect, you can have your power reconnected by calling us at 800-257-4044 or 218-739-8877 during regular business hours and setting up a payment plan. If you can't keep your existing payment plan, call us immediately and make a new payment plan to avoid disconnection.

## Proposed disconnection

If you receive a Notice of Proposed Disconnection, you also will receive:

1. Information about your rights and responsibilities.
2. Information about ways to reduce energy use.
3. A list of agencies that help pay utility bills.
4. A list of weatherization providers.

## Cold Weather Rule payment plan

You have the right to a payment plan during cold-weather months. This payment plan must be agreeable to you and our company.

If your household income is:

- At or below 50 percent of the state median income, you aren't 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 us.

Most Cold Weather Rule payment plans last until April 30 unless you make other arrangements with us. Your service could be disconnected if you have a past-due balance on April 30 and don't make and keep a new payment plan.

If you and our company can't agree on a payment plan, an appeal can be filed with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MPUC). This appeal must be filed with the MPUC within ten working days from the date we mail the appeal form to you. The MPUC will help you set up a payment plan, and your service will stay on during the appeal process. Contact the MPUC at [consumer.puc@state.mn.us](mailto:consumer.puc@state.mn.us) or 800-657-3782.

If you and our company agree on a payment plan and you continue to make your payments, we won't disconnect your service.

In addition, you may qualify for our Even Monthly Payment plan that averages your billing over 12 months.

## Third-party notice

We offer all customers the opportunity to have a third party notified if their electric service is about to be disconnected. This program can be especially helpful for the ill, senior citizens, those who live alone, and customers who don't read English. The purpose of this program is to notify a third party, as well as the customer, that a Notice of Proposed Disconnection has been sent.

A third party could be a friend, relative, church member, or community agency. The third party receives copies of all disconnection notices we mail to the customer but is NOT required to pay the bills. The third party is authorized to exchange information about the customer and make a payment plan with us on the customer's behalf. This helps avoid the hardship that would result from disconnecting the customer's service.

If you want to name a third party, please fill out our Third-Party Notice form and return it to us.

## Request for third-party notice

(Please print)

Customer's name

Address

Phone

City

State

ZIP

Account number from statement

I agree that Otter Tail Power Company may exchange information about my account with the person named below.

Customer signature

Date

Name of third party to be notified

Address

Phone

City

State

ZIP

Third-party signature

Date

(This request must include the third party's signature.)

We'll send a copy of any Notice of Proposed Disconnection on the above account to the named third party at the address listed. We assume no liability for failure of the third party to receive or act upon the notice. Complete this form, detach it, and mail it to P.O. Box 496, Fergus Falls, MN, 56538-0496.

## Ways to save

These simple practices could save you five percent to ten percent on your annual utility bill. In most cases, all they cost is a little time.

### Low-cost improvements

- Use LED bulbs wherever possible.
- Caulk and weather strip attic and basement spaces, fireplaces, wall outlets, pipes, and ducts to reduce leakage of conditioned air.
- Cover windows with plastic.
- Install an insulated wrap on an electric water heater when it's in an unheated area.
- Reduce water use in showers and at faucets by installing flow restrictors.

### No-cost improvements

- Reduce your water heater temperature setting to 120°F or 140°F for a dishwasher.

- Set your thermostat as low as comfortable in the winter and as high as comfortable in the summer. Each degree above 68°F in the winter can add three percent to heating costs. Each degree above 72°F in the summer can lower cooling costs by three percent.
- Turn off lights when not in use.
- Turn off TVs, DVD players, gaming sets, and other appliances and electronics when not in use.
- Clean the lint filter after each dryer load. Set the dryer controls to prevent over drying clothes.
- Close windows tightly and use locks to help prevent cold air from leaking in during the winter and cool air from leaking out in the summer.

Visit [otpc.com](http://otpc.com) for more ways to save.