

Energy Efficiency Tips

- Caulk and weather strip cracks around doors and window frames. Block openings at the bottom of doors to prevent draft.
- Lower the setting on your thermostat at night and dress warmly.
- Lower the setting on your water heater to 120 degrees.
- Run dishwasher only when it is full.
- Open the shades during the winter days to let the sunlight in. Close the shades at night to help insulate your windows and keep your house warmer.
- Limit the use of portable heaters.
- Wash lightly soiled clothes in cold water. Use warm water instead of hot for heavily soiled clothes.
- Repair leaky faucets, especially the hot water faucet.
- Turn off all lights and appliances when not in use.
- Close all windows tightly and use locks to give them a tight seal. This helps prevent cold air from leaking in. Cover windows with plastic.
- Repair any broken windows immediately and close all storm windows.
- Remove or cover your window air conditioning units during the heating season.
- Clean or replace dirty furnace filters.
- Check your furnace every year for safe and efficient operation.
- Vacuum refrigerator and freezer coils every six months to improve efficiency.
- Close off any unused rooms.

Cold Weather Disconnect Protection Form

Fill out completely (please print clearly)

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Daytime Phone _____

Account # as shown on your bill _____

Total amount owing \$ _____

Total annual household income for the past 12 months \$ _____

Sources of income (check appropriate box)

- Employment
- Unemployment/Workman's Compensation
- Child Support/Alimony
- Social Security/SSI and/or Disability
- MFIP/GA/Food Stamps/MSA
- Retirement/Pension
- Other _____

Total number of persons living in household including yourself _____

Please check if any of the following exist in your home

- Medical emergency
- Disabled person

I have already been approved for fuel assistance or emergency assistance from the following local Energy Assistance Provider based on my income:
Name of Agency _____

By signing this form, I hereby authorize the electric utility that serves us to exchange billing information. I also authorize any energy assistance providers or human service agencies to exchange any income information to help determine income eligibility. I acknowledge that I have received, read and understand the enclosed **Notice of Residential Customer Rights and Possible Assistance**. I attest that the above information is true and correct.

Signature _____

Date _____

Minnesota Cold Weather Rule

Important Information Regarding
Winter Bills

Printed October, 2019

Important Note: The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule does not completely forbid winter disconnections by Cooperative Light & Power. If you do receive a disconnection notice this winter, you **MUST** act promptly.

The information contained in this brochure will give you important information on the Minnesota Cold Weather Rule, what your rights and responsibilities are, and tips to help you reduce energy consumption in your home.

*Please read the Notice of Residential Customer Rights and Possible Assistance document on the inside of this brochure **BEFORE** you complete the Cold Weather Disconnect Protection Form.*



Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Cooperative Light & Power

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800.580.5881

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Notice of Residential Customer Rights and Possible Assistance

Below is IMPORTANT Fuel Assistance, Cold Weather Rule and Disconnect Policy Information for Cooperative Light & Power members.

This notice informs you of your rights and responsibilities under the Minnesota Cold Weather Rule. They are designed to help you with high winter electric bills. You must act PROMPTLY. If you choose not to assert your rights or choose not to enter a mutually acceptable payment plan, your service may be disconnected.

An electric cooperative must not disconnect and must reconnect the utility service of a residential customer during the period between October 15 and April 15 if the disconnection affects the primary heat source for the residential unit when all the following conditions are met:

(1) The household income of the customer is at or below 50 percent of the state median household income. Income verification can be obtained on the Income Verification Form (reverse side of this form) or obtained from the local energy assistance provider. A customer is deemed to meet the income requirements of this clause if the customer receives any form of public assistance, including energy assistance, that uses an income eligibility threshold set at or below 50 percent of the state median household income; and

(2) A customer enters into and makes reasonably timely payments under a payment agreement that considers the financial resources of the household; and

(3) A customer receives referrals to energy assistance, weatherization, conservation, or other programs likely to reduce the customer's energy bills.

The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule affords you these rights and responsibilities:

THE RESPONSIBILITY to provide documentation to Cooperative Light & Power that your household income is less than 50 percent of the state median income or if you are a recipient of energy assistance.

THE RIGHT to a mutually acceptable payment schedule with Cooperative Light & Power. This payment schedule will cover your existing outstanding balance plus the estimated use during the payment schedule period. If you are able to pay but still wish to enter into a payment schedule, contact Cooperative Light & Power immediately to arrange a schedule.

THE RIGHT not to be involuntarily disconnected on a Friday or on a day before a holiday.

THE RIGHT not to be disconnected until at least 20 calendar days after the date of mailed notice and information or until 15 calendar days after this notice and information has been personally delivered.

THE RIGHT, before you are to be involuntarily disconnected, to appeal your disconnect notice to Cooperative Light & Power. Your service will not be disconnected until your appeal is resolved by Cooperative Light & Power.

THE RESPONSIBILITY, if you choose to appeal, to deliver or mail a personal letter of appeal stating your situation and issues in dispute. Your letter of appeal must be in the hands of Cooperative Light & Power personnel before the day of disconnection. Cooperative Light & Power will review your appeal within fourteen (14) days after it is received. You must call Cooperative Light & Power for the date and time of the appeal review if you wish to be present.

Minnesota's Consumer Cold Weather Protection rules were developed and are maintained by the State of Minnesota. To request a copy of the rules or ask specific questions call the MN Department of Commerce at 651-296-4026.

If you need help paying your electric utility bill, you may qualify for state or federal fuel assistance. The following is a list of Energy Assistance Providers in your area:

Emergency Assistance Providers

AEOA: 800.662.5711 or in Duluth at 218.624.7625

Lake County: 218.834.8400

Salvation Army, Duluth: 218.722.7934

St. Louis County Social Services Duluth: 218.726.2000

Lake County Social Services: 218.834.8400

Low Income Energy Assistance Program

The Energy Assistance Program (EAP) helps pay home heating costs. FACTS:

- Households who are at or below 50% of the State median income are eligible.
- Size of grant is based on household size, income, fuel type and energy usage.
- Households with the lowest income and highest fuel costs receive the highest grants.
- Federally funded through the U. S. Department of Human Services.
- Funds are available for renters or homeowners.

SERVICES INCLUDE:

- Direct payment to the energy supplier.
- Education on how to use home heating energy efficiently and safely.
- An advocate with energy suppliers and human service providers on behalf of Cooperative Light & Power members.
- Crisis help for Cooperative Light & Power disconnections.
- Emergency heating system repair or replacement.

Call one of the Energy Assistance Providers listed to the left to locate the local agency nearest you.

Annual Income Guidelines:

Household Size	3 Months Gross Income
1	\$6,761
2	\$8,842
3	\$10,923
4	\$13,003
5	\$15,084
6	\$17,164