



Low Income Energy Assistance Program

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www.rmdc.net/Energy

Low Income Energy Assistance Program: Winter Moratorium

It is a common misconception that utility companies are not allowed to disconnect natural gas or electricity during the winter months. Another misconception is that having children in the home of any age protects against disconnect. These beliefs are not true. Under certain circumstances, regulated utilities are allowed to proceed with non-pay disconnects during the winter moratorium period, which runs from November 1 - April 1.

NorthWestern Energy, Montana-Dakota Utilities, Energy West, and other regulated utilities must obtain approval from the Public Service Commission before proceeding with non-pay disconnects on delinquent accounts during the winter moratorium period. The Commission will not approve a request for disconnect if the account holder has income at or below the federal poverty guideline, if the account holder is a recipient of a public assistance program, if a member of the customer's household is 62 years old or older, or if a member of the household is handicapped. It is the customer's responsibility to let the utility company know, prior to disconnect, if any of the above conditions exist in the home and they will likely be asked to provide documentation to the utility.

Companies not regulated by the Commission, such as cooperatives and propane distributors, are not required to obtain Commission approval prior to disconnecting utility service and have their own procedures to follow for winter terminations.

Customers are advised to contact their utility company to discuss their account. If the customer is not satisfied or has unanswered questions after talking to a regulated utility company they may contact the Public Service Commission at 1-800-646-6150.

Montana Public Service Commission Consumer Assistance Program

PO Box 202601 | Helena, MT 59620

Ph: 1.800.646.6150 | Email: pschelp@mt.gov | www.psc.mt.gov

This information provided by:

Montana Public Service Commission Consumer Assistance Program

**This project is funded in whole or in part under a Contract with the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Service. The statements herein do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Department. *100 copies of this packet was produced using Federal Outreach funds for an approximate total cost of \$200.*