

## Third Party Notification Request

To notify a third party, please complete this form and return it to New Prague Utilities.

New Prague Utilities will make every effort to send a copy of the Disconnect Notice to the party specified. The customer making the request understands that New Prague Utilities assumes no liability should the third party fail to receive or act upon the notification.

Customer Name

Account Number

Service Address

Phone Number

**New Prague Utilities has my permission to provide information to and accept information from the party named below:**

Customer Signature

Date

Third Party Name

Third Party Address

City

State

Zip

Third Party Phone Number

Third Party Signature

Date

**The request cannot be accepted without the Third Party's Signature.**

## Need Help Paying?

If you need energy assistance, New Prague Utilities recommends you contact one of the following energy assistance providers.

### CAP Agency – Scott County

2496 145<sup>th</sup> St W, Rosemount, MN 55068  
651-322-3500

[www.capagency.org](http://www.capagency.org)

### MN Valley Action Council – Le Sueur County

125 E Minnesota St, Le Center, MN 56057  
507-357-4246 or 1-800-767-7139

[www.mnvac.org](http://www.mnvac.org)

### Salvation Army – Heat Share

For financial assistance – 1-800-842-7279  
or 507-291-2905

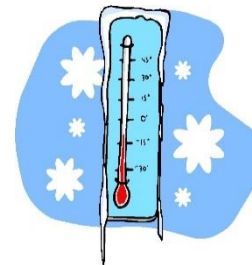
For contributions call – 651-746-3542

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

## Conserve Energy – Save Money

Visit: [www.commerce.state.mn.us](http://www.commerce.state.mn.us)

- Manage your thermostat. Try these settings.  
Heating: 66° - 68° Cooling: 76° - 78°
- Wash laundry in cold or warm water.
- Open shades during the winter days for passive solar heat and close them at night.
- In the summer, use shades to block out direct Sunlight during the day.
- Replace or clean your furnace filter monthly.
- Check the duct work for dirt streaks, especially near seams. These indicate air leaks, and they should be sealed with duct mastic.
- Do not block heating vents, radiators, or registers with furniture or clutter. Keep them clean.
- Seal any air leaks. Caulk and weather strip any cracks around doors and window frames. Block openings at bottom of doorways.
- Vacuum refrigerator/freezer coils to improve the efficiency of the unit(s).
- Lower the thermostat setting on your water heater to 120° F.



## Minnesota Cold Weather Rule

### **Residential Customer Rights & Responsibilities**

The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule was established to protect residential customers from utility service disconnection between October 1 and April 30. This brochure explains your Rights and Responsibilities under the Cold Weather Rule, as well as the steps you must take if you cannot pay your bill or if your utility service has been disconnected.

The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule does **NOT** forbid all winter disconnections. If you receive a Notice of Proposed Disconnection, **you must act immediately**. If you choose not to assert your rights, or if you choose not to enter a mutually agreed-upon payment plan, your service may be disconnected.

Cold Weather Rule protection is **ONLY** available if all three of the following conditions exist:

1. The disconnection would affect your primary heating source.
2. Your household meets Cold Weather Rule payment plan guidelines.
3. You and NPU enter a mutually agreed-upon payment plan.

If you receive public assistance, including energy assistance, between October 1 and April 30, you are eligible for Cold Weather Rule protection, but you are responsible for contacting New Prague Utilities to arrange a mutually agreed-upon payment plan.



### **New Prague Utilities**

118 Central Ave N  
New Prague, MN 56071  
952-758-4401

## Rights and Responsibilities

The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule provides the following Rights and Responsibilities to New Prague Utilities residential customers.

### Inability to Pay

You have **the right** to declare the Inability to Pay your utility bill in writing on forms provided by NPU. If you assert this right AND you enter a mutually agreed-upon payment plan with NPU, your utility service will not be disconnected for nonpayment if the service affects your primary heating source. If you receive public assistance, including energy assistance, between October 1 and April 30, you are not required to complete the Inability to Pay Declaration Form, but you must provide proof that you are receiving assistance, and **you are responsible** for contacting NPU to arrange a mutually agreed-upon payment plan for the remainder of your bill.

### Payment Plan

You have **the right** to enter a mutually agreed-upon payment plan with NPU. If you and NPU cannot agree on a payment plan, you must notify NPU of your intent to appeal to the MN Public Utilities Commission. Your service will not be disconnected during the appeal process.

**You have a responsibility** of making payments as agreed-upon to avoid disconnection. If you are unable to make payments as agreed, **you are responsible** to promptly notify NPU why you are unable to keep the agreement. If your financial circumstances change, it may be possible to make a change to the payment plan to avoid disconnection. Any changes in the payment plan are subject to NPU approval.

Cold Weather Rule protection ends April 30; therefore, your service could be disconnected if you have a past due balance on April 30.

**Applications for Cold Weather Rule protection are available at the New Prague Utilities Office or call 952-758-4401 to request an application be mailed to you.**

### Medical Alert

If you have a medical emergency, disabled person in the residence or require medically necessary equipment, please notify New Prague Utilities at 952-758-4401, and send in a certified medical directive.



## Cold Weather Rule Payment Plan Guidelines

If you have received a Notice of Proposed Disconnection you may qualify for a payment plan.

### **Payment plan guidelines**

- With a household income at or below 50% of the state median income or is a recipient of any form of public assistance, including energy assistance, which uses the income eligibility standards noted above, you will agree to pay 10% of your gross monthly income toward the utility bill.
- More than 50% of the state median income, you may make a mutually acceptable payment arrangement with New Prague Utilities.

The law provides for income verification, which may be conducted by the local CAP Agency, MN Valley Action Council, or NPU, unless the customer is automatically eligible for protection against disconnection as a recipient of any form of public assistance, including energy assistance, which used income eligibility standards as stated above.

## Military Personnel Disconnection Law

Minnesota law offers protection from disconnection of utility services to a residential customer if a member of the household has been issued military orders into active duty, for deployment, or for a permanent change in duty, for deployment, or for a permanent change in duty station during active duty, provided that the customer enters a mutually agreeable payment arrangement.

### **Payment plan guidelines**

- With a household income at or below 50% of the state median income (submitted after the date military orders are received) or is a recipient of any form of public assistance, including energy assistance, which uses the income eligibility standards noted above.
- If the household income is more than 50% of the state median income (submitted after the date military orders are received), you may make a mutually acceptable payment schedule that considers the financial resources of the household.

The law provides for income verification, which may be conducted by a local energy assistance provider or NPU. You must remain reasonably current with payment plan arrangements to avoid disconnection.

If you desire to seek the protections provided by this law, you must contact New Prague Utilities at 952-758-4401 to discuss verification requirements.

## Avoiding Disconnection

If you receive a notice of scheduled disconnection, or final notice, you must call New Prague Utilities at 952-758-4401 immediately to apply for Cold Weather Rule protection by completing an Inability to Pay Declaration Form and entering a mutually agreed-upon payment plan.

If you do not make the agreed-upon payments, your service will be subject to disconnection without further notice. If your financial circumstances change, it may be possible to make a one-time change to the payment plan to avoid disconnection. Any changes in the payment plan are subject to NPU approval.

**If you receive any form of public assistance, including energy assistance, which uses the income eligibility standards, you are eligible for Cold Weather Rule Protection.**

## Reconnection

If your utilities are disconnected, you will be charged a reconnection fee of \$35.00 plus tax (8:00AM – 4:30PM) Monday – Friday or after-hours reconnect fee of \$150.00 plus tax (4:31PM – 7:59AM) Monday – Friday & on Weekends & Holidays. During the months of Oct 1<sup>st</sup> to April 30<sup>th</sup> you can have your utilities reconnected by entering a mutually agreed upon payment plan with NPU and/or by paying the past due balance.

## Third Party Notification

NPU offers all customers the opportunity to have a third party notified when their utility service is about to be disconnected. This program can be especially helpful for the ill, senior citizens, those who live alone, and customers who do not 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, etc. The third party receives copies of all disconnection notices mailed to the customer but is NOT responsible for paying the bills. The third party is authorized to exchange information about the customer and make a payment plan with NPU 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 the Third-Party Notice form, and return to NPU.