

## List of connected utility COVID-19 responses

Fresh Energy is compiling and updating a list of utilities responses to COVID-19 found at <https://fresh-energy.org/minnesota-utility-responses-to-covid-19-updating/>. The information below was updated at 12:40 p.m. today:

### Minnesota Utility Responses to COVID-19 – UPDATING

By [Fresh Energy](#) | March 16, 2020

Updated March 18, 12:40 p.m.

COVID-19 is creating uncertainty throughout our state. Many residential utility customers and essential workers in the utility sector will face financial hardship during this unprecedented time. Fresh Energy urges all utilities and decision-makers statewide to ensure that Minnesotans are adequately protected.

**All utilities should suspend customer disconnections, arrange payment plans, and extend cold weather rule protections.** The following utilities have already committed to doing this:

- Arrowhead Electric Cooperative ([extended cold weather rule](#))
- BENCO Electric Cooperative (suspended disconnections)
- CenterPoint Energy ([suspended disconnections](#))
- **Comfort Systems** ([suspended disconnections, extended Cold Weather Rule protections](#))
- Connexus Energy (suspended disconnections)
- Dakota Electric Association ([suspended disconnections](#))
- **East Central Energy** ([suspended disconnections](#))
- Goodhue County Cooperative Electric Association (working with customers to arrange payment plans)
- Great Plains Natural Gas ([suspended disconnections](#))
- Hibbing Public Utilities ([suspended disconnections](#))
- **Lake Country Power** ([suspended disconnections and working with customers to arrange payment plans](#))
- MiEnergy (suspended disconnections)
- **Minnesota Power** ([suspended disconnections, extended Cold Weather Rule protections, working with customers to arrange payment plans](#))
- Minnesota Valley Electric Co-op ([suspended disconnections and working with customers to arrange payment plans](#))

- **Moorhead Public Service** ([suspended disconnections, working with customers to arrange payment plans](#))
- **Ottertail Power** (suspended disconnections)
- **Owatonna Public Utilities** ([suspended disconnections and working with customers to arrange payment plans](#))
- **Proctor Public Utilities** (suspended disconnections)
- **Princeton Public Utilities** ([suspended disconnections and working with customers to arrange payment plans](#))
- **Wright-Hennepin Electric Cooperative Association** ([suspended disconnections](#))
- **Xcel Energy** ([suspended disconnections and working with customers to arrange payment plans](#))

*Thank you to CUB Minnesota for also monitoring utilities that have taken action. View their Twitter thread [here](#).*

Fresh Energy is dedicated to tracking utility responses across the state and will link to them on this page. Please note that this page is a work in progress; if your utility has implemented a policy that's not listed here, please email [olson@fresh-energy.org](mailto:olson@fresh-energy.org) a link to their official announcement.

Beyond suspending disconnections and related practices, utilities should also:

- Ensure that customers have access to programs that may be able to help them pay their bills.
- Implement a grace period or similar measure to ensure that customers are not immediately and unduly billed for outstanding balances.
- Proactively offer customers facing economic hardships additional information regarding available electric and natural gas affordability/bill pay assistance programs.
- Reconnect customers who might be overdue or disconnected.

Reliable energy services are critical at all times, but especially during rapidly evolving situations such as this. As the Minnesota Department of Education develops further guidance regarding the Governor's [Executive Order](#), **essential workers in the energy sector, including electrical line and gas pipeline workers, grid operators, customer service/call center staff, and the many others not listed here who keep our energy sector running, should be included in the group of Minnesota workers who are eligible to receive child care services while schools are closed.** Customers and utility workers should also follow [CDC guidelines](#) whenever possible, and customers should reconsider any non-urgent utility visits.

Fresh Energy is committed to working with state policymakers to ensure that the energy needs of all Minnesotans are considered during this difficult time. In the months ahead, we look forward to continuing dialogue with stakeholders and policymakers as we work to equitably serve under-resourced communities, both in response to COVID-19, and as part of Minnesota's longer-term transition to carbon-free energy.