

**INABILITY TO PAY FORM**  
**(continued)**

Total number of persons living in household: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

DOB \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

DOB \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

DOB \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

DOB \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

DOB \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

DOB \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_

By signing this form, I hereby authorize any gas, electric utility or public energy assistance agency that serves me to exchange information relevant to this process. I acknowledge that I have received, read and understand the Disconnect Notice of Residential Member Rights and Possible Assistance. I attest that the above information is true and correct.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Detach this form and return completed form and other income documentation to East Central Energy.

**East Central Energy, P.O. Box 39, Braham, MN 55006,  
or FAX 763-689-8021.**

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If anyone in your home is dependent on electrical, life-sustaining medical equipment, please complete the Life Support Registration form. The form is available on [eastcentralenergy.com](http://eastcentralenergy.com), or call 1-800-254-7944 and we will mail the form to you.

**COLD WEATHER RULE INCOME GUIDELINES**

For current Cold Weather Rule income guidelines, please contact your energy assistance provider listed below.

**ENERGY ASSISTANCE:**

Tri-County Action Programs, Inc.  
*(Benton, Morrison and Sherburne Counties)*  
320-251-1612 or 1-888-765-5597

Lakes & Pines Community Action Council  
*(Carlton, Mille Lacs, Aitkin, Kanabec, Isanti, Chisago, and Pine Counties)*  
320-679-1800 or 1-800-832-6082

Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe  
320-532-7880 or 1-800-709-6445 ext. 7880

**EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE:**

Aitkin County Social Services  
218-927-7200 or 1-800-328-3744

Benton County Social Services  
320-968-5087 or 1-800-530-6254

Carlton County Financial Assistance  
218-879-4583, Social Services 1-800-642-9082

Chisago County Human Services  
North Branch, 651-213-5200  
Center City, 651-213-5600

Isanti County Family Services, 763-689-1711

Kanabec County Family Services, 320-679-6350

Mille Lacs County Community  
and Veterans Services  
320-983-8208 or 1-888-270-8208

Morrison County Financial Assistance  
320-632-2951 or 1-800-269-1464

Pine County Financial Assistance  
1-800-450-7263

Sherburne County Social Services  
763-765-4000 or 1-800-433-5239

Washington County Social Services  
651-430-6459

# Minnesota Cold Weather Rule

Disconnect Notice of  
Residential Member Rights and  
Possible Assistance

**The Minnesota Cold Weather  
Rule does not prevent winter  
disconnects.**

**If you receive a disconnection  
notice, you must act promptly  
and contact ECE.**

**Read the Notice of Residential  
Member Rights and Possible  
Assistance before completing the  
Inability to Pay Form.**



East Central Energy

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

**1.800.254.7944**  
[eastcentralenergy.com](http://eastcentralenergy.com)

*ECE is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*



## DISCONNECT NOTICE OF RESIDENTIAL MEMBER RIGHTS AND POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE

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

The Cold Weather Rule provides that from October 15 through April 15 an electric cooperative cannot disconnect a residential consumer for nonpayment if the disconnection would affect the primary heat source and all of the following conditions are met:

1. You declare an inability to pay by completing the Inability to Pay form.
2. Provide proof of last three months of gross income for your total household.
3. Your total household, not individual income, is less than 50 percent of the state median income, or you are a current recipient of any public assistance with income requirements, including energy assistance.
4. Your account is current or reasonably on time with a payment plan, or you enter into a mutually acceptable payment plan at any time that considers the financial resources of the household.

Specifically, the Cold Weather Rule and our policy provide you with these rights and responsibilities:

THE RIGHT to declare your inability to pay your utility bill. If you do so and if your household income is less than 50 percent of the state median income, or if you are a current recipient of energy assistance, the service affecting your primary heat source cannot be disconnected for nonpayment of your bill, provided that your account is current or reasonably on time with a payment plan, or you enter into a mutually acceptable payment plan at any time.

THE RESPONSIBILITY to provide documentation to East Central Energy 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 plan with East Central Energy. This payment plan will cover your existing outstanding balance plus the estimated use during the payment plan period. If you are able to pay but still wish to enter into a payment plan, contact East Central Energy immediately to arrange a payment plan.

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 postmarked date of this 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 East Central Energy. Your service will not be disconnected until your appeal is resolved by East Central Energy.

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 said cooperative personnel before the day of disconnection. The East Central Energy appeal committee will review your appeal within fourteen (14) days after it is received. You must call the cooperative 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. For more information about the Cold Weather Rule, call us or see MN Statutes, Chapter 216B, Section .097, Public Utilities. To request a copy of the rules or ask specific questions, call the MN Department of Commerce at 1-800-657-3710.

You may qualify for state or federal fuel assistance. For complete qualifications and application information, contact one of the local agencies listed on the back of this brochure or the sheriff's office in your county.

### WISCONSIN RESIDENTS ONLY

Wisconsin laws do not provide cold weather shut-off protection. ECE abides by the same cold weather collection practices in WI and MN. If you cannot pay your bill, call ECE to set up a payment plan. The Inability to Pay form is for Minnesota residents only.

### ENERGY ASSISTANCE:

Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program  
Burnett County 715-349-7600  
Washburn County 715-468-4747  
Douglas County 715-395-1304

## INABILITY TO PAY FORM

To be completed by Minnesota residents only

Please read the Disconnect Notice of Residential Member Rights and Possible Assistance before completing this form.

If you cannot pay your bill in full and need to make a mutually acceptable payment arrangement, call ECE at 1-800-254-7944.

If you are unable to pay your bill in full and need cold weather protection from shut-off, complete this form and return it to ECE after October 1.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

SS# \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (Home) \_\_\_\_\_

(Cell) \_\_\_\_\_

Account number \_\_\_\_\_  
(from ECE billing statement)

Total amount owing \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total annual household income \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(past 12 months)

I am currently a recipient of energy assistance.  
(If you check this box, skip Source of Income section.)

Source of Income (check appropriate boxes):

- Employment
- Disability/Social Security/Pension
- Medical Assistance
- AFDC/GA/GA Medical Care
- SSI/Food Stamps/XSA/Children's Health Plan
- I do not pay for any of my own medical expenses.
- Energy Assistance

Form continued on reverse side.

