

## Avoiding Disconnection

If you receive a notice of scheduled disconnection, you must call Brainerd Public Utilities at 218-825-3223 immediately to apply for Cold Weather Rule Protection and fill out and return the Inability to Pay Form to BPU. You will not be protected from disconnection if BPU does not receive this completed form.

**Your service will be subject to disconnection without further notice if you do not make the agreed upon payments. If you cannot keep your original payment plan, advise Brainerd Public Utilities immediately. It may be possible to make a new payment plan and avoid disconnection.**

The law provides for income verification, which may be requested by BPU. The customer is automatically eligible for protection against disconnection if you are a recipient of any form of public assistance, including energy assistance.

Copies of the Cold Weather Rule are available at BPU.

## Cold Weather Rule Payment Plans

If you can't pay your entire bill and need to make arrangements, call BPU at (218) 825-3223 to enter into a payment plan which is acceptable to both you and BPU. The arrangement must cover the amount that is past due plus your current charges must be paid each month. The arrangement must be put on the Inability to Pay Form and returned to BPU.

If you and Brainerd Public Utilities cannot agree on a payment plan, you have ten days to appeal to the State Public Utilities Commission. Your service will stay on during the appeal process.

**The Cold Weather Rule only protects you from having your electric shut off and energy assistance can be applied only to electric charges on your bill. Water and sewer charges are the customer's responsibility to pay each month. Your water can be shut off for non-payment.**

## Third Party Notification

Brainerd Public Utilities offers all customers the opportunity to have a third party notified when their electric service is about to be discontinued. This program can be especially helpful for the ill, senior citizens, or those who live alone. 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, or community agency. The third party receives copies of all disconnection notices mailed to the customer but is NOT required to pay the bills. The third party is authorized to exchange information about the customer and make a payment plan with Brainerd Public Utilities 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 it to Brainerd Public Utilities

## Financial Assistance

- Lutheran Social Services.....829-5000
- Crow Wing County Social Services.....824-1250
- Salvation Army.....829-1120
- Bridges of Hope.....825-7682
- St. Vincent DePaul .....218-656-0345

## Medical Alert

If you have a medical emergency, disabled person in the residence or require medically necessary equipment, a Physician's Certificate of Illness Form needs to be filled out by your physician



and given to BPU. You are still responsible to pay your utility bill each month.

## Minnesota Cold Weather Rule Notice of Residential Customer Rights & Responsibilities

This brochure explains the Cold Weather Rule and the steps you must take if you cannot pay your bill or your electric service is scheduled to be disconnected.

The Cold Weather Rule does not forbid all winter disconnections. If you receive a Notice of Proposed Disconnection this winter, you must act immediately.

### The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule

Each year, some Brainerd Public Utilities (BPU) customers are unable to pay their electric bill during cold weather. If you can't pay your electric bill, please contact us.

The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule was established to protect residential customers from electrical service disconnection between October 1 through April 30. Cold Weather Rule protection is available if all three of the following conditions exist:

1. **The disconnection would affect your main heating source;**
2. **Your household meets Cold Weather Rule payment plan guidelines;**
3. **You and Brainerd Public Utilities agree to a payment plan.**

If you receive any form of public assistance, including energy assistance between October 1 through April 30, you are eligible for Cold Weather Rule Protection; **however, you must call BPU with your specific information.**



Brainerd Public Utilities  
8027 Highland Scenic Rd  
P.O. Box 373  
Brainerd, MN 56401  
Phone (218) 829-8726

## Third Party Notification Request

If you want a third party to be notified of a potential disconnection, please complete this form and return it to Brainerd Public Utilities.

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

Customer Name

Account Number

Service Address

Home Phone

Work Phone

Brainerd Public Utilities has my permission to provide information to and accept information from the party named below:

Customer Signature Date

Name of Third Party

Third Party Address

City State Zip

Third Party Home Phone

Third Party Work Phone

Third Party Signature Date

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

Mail completed form to:

**Brainerd Public Utilities ► P.O. Box 373 ► Brainerd, MN 56401**

# Minnesota Cold Weather Rule Application

## Inability to Pay Declaration Form

**IF YOU CAN'T PAY YOUR BPU BILL AND NEED COLD WEATHER PROTECTION FROM YOUR ELECTRIC BEING SHUTOFF; YOU MUST FILL OUT THIS FORM AND RETURN IT TO BRAINERD PUBLIC UTILITIES IMMEDIATELY.** Minnesota Public Utilities Commission Cold Weather Rule provides that from October 1 through April 30, a utility cannot disconnect a residential utility customer for nonpayment if you enter into, and keep current with, a mutually agreed upon payment plan.

**The Cold Weather Rule only protects you from having your electric shut off and energy assistance can be applied only to electric charges on your bill. Water and sewer charges are the customer's responsibility to pay each month. Your water can be shut off for non-payment.**

**THE ARRANGEMENT MUST COVER THE AMOUNT THAT IS PAST DUE PLUS YOUR CURRENT CHARGES MUST BE PAID EACH MONTH.**

Customer Name Service Address

Phone Number Total Amount You Owe Account Number (from your utility bill)

PROPOSED PAYMENT PLAN	
<u>Payment Amount</u>	<u>Due Date</u>

**If your electric does not effect your heat source you are not protected by Cold Weather Rule. If you do not keep the above arrangement approved by BPU, you are no longer protected by the Cold Weather Rule and may be disconnected. This payment plan protects you **ONLY** until April 30.**

By signing this form, I hereby acknowledge that I have received, read and understand the Notice of Residential Customer's Rights and Possible Assistance. I declare that the above information is true and correct. I give my permission to any energy provider or public assistance agency that serves me to exchange income and billing information with other energy providers or public assistance agency that serves me to exchange income and billing information for the purpose of program qualification.

Customer Signature Date

Brainerd Public Utilities Representative Signature Date