

# HUTCHINSON UTILITIES COMMISSION



## POLICIES

# **HUTCHINSON UTILITIES COMMISSION**

(Hereafter referred to as HUC)

A five-member Commission governs HUC. The Commission members are appointed by the Mayor and the City Council to each serve a five-year term. The Commission meets at 3:00 p.m. the last Wednesday of each month. The following policies are reviewed and approved by the Commission and it reserves the right to make changes, and/or to adopt new and amended policies, as it deems necessary from time to time. The Commission also reserves the right to vary from its policies in special circumstances.

HUC is a municipal utility that is owned by its citizens, through the City Council and its political subdivision, the Hutchinson Utilities Commission.

## **Public/Customer Hours**

Monday through Friday  
7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

## **Address & Phone**

225 Michigan Street SE  
Hutchinson, MN 55350-1905  
(320) 587-4746

## **Emergency Service**

(320) 587-4745

## **Web Address**

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

# Table of Contents

<b>BILLING POLICIES</b> .....	1
Establishing a New Electric/Natural Gas Account.....	1
Deposit Requirement – Residential .....	2
Deposit Requirement – Commercial/Industrial.....	5
Terminating Electric/Natural Gas Service by Customer .....	7
Definition of Your Bill.....	8
Errors in Billing.....	9
Payment of Your Bill .....	10
Automatic Bill Payment Plan.....	11
Budget Payment Plan .....	12
Explanation of Billing Procedure .....	13
Disconnection of Residential Services by HUC .....	14
Disconnection of Commercial Services by HUC .....	16
After Hours Reconnection Policy .....	18
Landlord Acknowledgement.....	19
Inserts with Utility Bills .....	20
Identity Theft – “Red Flag Program” .....	21
Minnesota Cold Weather Rule .....	22
Minnesota Government Data Practices Act and Public Records Request.....	24
<b>SERVICE POLICIES - ELECTRIC</b> .....	25
Rate Schedule .....	25
Security Light Rental – Rate to Furnish and Maintain Fixture .....	27
Electric Service Requirements and Charges .....	28
Temporary Service .....	30
Temporary Service in Case of Underground Failure.....	31
Electric Meter Placement.....	32
Sealing of Meters.....	33
Meter Testing.....	34
Right-of-Way Clearing.....	35
Tree Removal or Trimming .....	36
Locating Customer’s Underground Utilities.....	37

**SERVICE POLICIES – NATURAL GAS** ..... 38

- Rate Schedule ..... 38
- Natural Gas Service Requirements and Charges ..... 39
- Temporary Service ..... 41
- Natural Gas Meter Requirements and Placement ..... 42
- Meter Testing ..... 44
- Natural Gas Service Work ..... 45
- Locating Customer’s Underground Utilities ..... 46

## **BILLING POLICIES**

### **Establishing a New Electric/Natural Gas Account**

New services and meters are read or installed only during normal business hours. A new service installation requires a 24-hour notice.

## **Deposit Requirement – Residential**

*New Residential Customers:* An application for service shall be filled out prior to receiving service. The application for service shall be accompanied with identification, preferably photo identification. In addition, a deposit is required for all new residential customers, prior to the utilities being placed in their name.

A deposit will only be waived if the customer provides information regarding their payment history from their current or previous provider, and the payment history indicates the customer paid all of their bills on time with no late payment fees attached, and no dishonored checks. The customer is responsible for supplying a satisfactory credit reference to HUC. The payment history will look at the previous 12 months.

An internal credit check is performed for all customers moving into HUC service territory. If the results of the credit check indicate the customer owes HUC due to previously provided services, then the outstanding balance shall be paid plus a deposit, prior to the customer receiving service.

*Existing Residential Customers Moving Within Service Territory:* A deposit will be waived if the customer has a 12 month payment history with HUC indicating the customer has not been disconnected or issued any dishonored checks.

A deposit for existing residential customers moving within HUC service territory will be required prior to customer having utilities placed in their name for the following reasons:

1. If the customer has been disconnected or issued any dishonored checks in the previous 12 months.
2. Subsequent credit information indicates the initial application for service was falsified.
3. The customer has the ability to pay for the utility service, but during the cold weather rule months, had an arrears amount incurred during that period that was 60 days or more past due.

If a deposit is required of a customer and;

1. If customer has no deposit with HUC, the customer will pay the deposit amount for the customer's new address.
2. If customer already has a deposit with HUC and this deposit amount is greater than the new deposit required for customer's new address, HUC will transfer the deposit from the customer's previous address to the customer's new address. The balance of the deposit at the customer's previous address will be applied to the customer's final bill for the customer's previous address.
3. If customer already has a deposit with HUC and this deposit amount is

less than the new deposit required for customer's new address, HUC will transfer the deposit from the customer's previous address to the customer's new address. The customer will pay the balance of the deposit amount for the customer's new address, prior to the utilities being placed in their name.

If a deposit is required of a customer, and the customer would like a written explanation as to why they need to make a deposit, then one will be provided.

Amount of Deposit: If a deposit is required, it shall be equal to two times the average monthly bill, based on HUC rates.

In the event of a new house, mobile home, or apartment building with no billing history, then similar construction will be used to establish the average monthly bill, based on HUC rates.

Refusal or Disconnection of Service: Residential service may be refused or disconnected for failure to pay a deposit request.

Interest: Interest earned on deposits is applied to the account as a credit on a calendar year basis.

When customer moves out of our services, the account is finalized out with interest applied to the account as credit, and the deposit amount is applied to the final bill. If this results in a credit balance, a check is issued to the customer for that credit amount.

The rate of interest is determined by the Minnesota Department of Commerce and HUC obtains that information annually.

Refund: The utility shall refund the deposit of a residential customer after 12 consecutive months of on-time payments (no late payment fees).

If a customer is late in making payment, then the deposit will be retained, until such time as the customer makes 12 consecutive monthly on-time payments (no late payment fees).

If the customer provides a payment history from their previous provider, and the payment history indicates no late payment fees and no dishonored checks, then HUC will refund the deposit. HUC must receive this information from the customer within 30 days of customer moving into our services.

Method of Refund: Any deposit or portion thereof refunded to a residential customer shall be refunded by check. Any interest earned will be applied to customer's account as a credit.

Refund at Termination of Service: On termination of residential service, and if the customer has a deposit with HUC, HUC shall credit the deposit, with accrued interest, to the customer's final bill and return the balance within 30 days of issuing the final bill.



## **Deposit Requirement – Commercial/Industrial**

Commercial/Industrial Customers: An application for service shall be filled out prior to receiving service. The application shall be accompanied with identification, preferably photo identification, and their Federal Tax ID number. In addition, a deposit is required for all Commercial/Industrial customers, prior to the utilities being placed in their name.

An internal credit check is performed for all customers moving into HUC service territory. If the results of the credit check indicate the customer owes HUC due to previously provided services, then the outstanding balance shall be paid plus a deposit, prior to the customer receiving service.

Existing Commercial/Industrial Customers Moving Within Service Territory: A deposit will be waived if the Commercial/Industrial customer has a 24-month payment history with HUC indicating the Commercial/Industrial customer has not been disconnected or issued any dishonored checks.

A deposit for existing Commercial/Industrial customers moving within HUC service territory will be required prior, to customer having utilities placed in their name, for the following reasons:

1. If the customer has been disconnected or issued any dishonored checks in the previous 24 months.
2. Subsequent credit information indicates the initial application for service was falsified.

If a deposit is required of a customer, and;

1. If customer has no deposit with HUC, the customer will pay the deposit amount for the customer's new address.
2. If customer already has a deposit with HUC and this deposit amount is greater than the new deposit required for customer's new address, HUC will transfer the deposit from the customer's previous address to the customer's new address. The balance of the deposit at the customer's previous address will be applied to the customer's final bill for the customer's previous address.
3. If customer already has a deposit with HUC and this deposit amount is less than the new deposit required for customer's new address, HUC will transfer the deposit from the customer's previous address to the customer's new address. The customer will pay the balance of the deposit amount for the customer's new address, prior to the utilities being placed in their name.

If a deposit is required of a customer, and the customer would like a written explanation as to why they need to make a deposit, then one will be provided.

Amount of Deposit: The deposit shall be equal to the two highest bills for the past 12 months rounded to the nearest dollar. In the event that the building will be used for a different purpose from the previous tenant/owner, then similar use will be taken into consideration to determine the amount of deposit.

The deposit may also be made by posting a performance bond or an Irrevocable Letter of Credit from an FDIC insured financial institution. These options will not earn any interest and will be terminated after 24 consecutive months of timely payments.

In the event of a new building with no billing history, then similar construction will be used to establish the average monthly usage.

Refusal or Disconnection of Service: Commercial/Industrial service may be refused or disconnected for failure to pay a deposit request.

Interest: Interest earned on deposits is applied to the account as a credit on a calendar year basis.

When Commercial/Industrial customer moves out of our services, the account is finalized out with interest applied to the account as credit, and the deposit amount is applied to the final bill. If this results in a credit balance, a check is issued to the customer for that credit amount.

The rate of interest is determined by the Minnesota Department of Commerce and HUC obtains that information annually.

Refund: HUC shall refund the deposit of a Commercial/Industrial customer after 24 consecutive months of on-time payments (no late payment fees).

If a customer is late in making payment, then the deposit will be retained, until such time as the customer makes 24 consecutive monthly on-time payments (no late payment fees).

Method of Refund: Any deposit or portion thereof refunded to a Commercial/Industrial customer shall be refunded by check.

Refund at Termination of Service: On termination of Commercial/Industrial service, and if the customer has a deposit with HUC, HUC shall credit the deposit, with accrued interest, to the customer's final bill and return the balance within 30 days of issuing the final bill.

## **Terminating Electric/Natural Gas Service by Customer**

When the utility service is shut off due to a customer's request, the electric meter will be removed and the gas meter will be turned off and locked. The electric meter socket and gas meter valve will have a blue seal placed on them.

At the time a customer requests the service be turned on, HUC personnel will install the electric meter and unlock the natural gas meter valve.

It is the customer's responsibility to turn on the natural gas meter valve and to light the pilot lights on all natural gas appliances, where appropriate. In the event the customer is unable to perform these tasks, it is the customer's responsibility to contact a plumbing or heating contractor to complete this work.

Upon the request of a customer, utility services may be temporarily terminated and billing suspended for a specified period of time due to illness, vacation, and/or seasonal use. Temporary terminations are charged to the customer at the rate of \$40 to disconnect and \$40 to reconnect.

### **A. Termination for Renters**

Electric and natural gas meters will be read and the final bill calculated when a renter informs HUC they no longer wish to retain HUC services.

### **B. Termination for Residential/Commercial Owners**

Electric and natural gas will be shut off when the property owner requests HUC to disconnect services. For continuous service, the new owner must call HUC at a minimum of 24 hours in advance of the requested disconnect date, and make the necessary arrangements to have the electric/natural gas services transferred into their name. This eliminates terminating services at that address.

### **C. Termination for Electrical Work**

If a homeowner needs an electric meter disconnected to do any electrical work, HUC will disconnect/reconnect the meter at no charge to the customer. Once the work is completed, HUC will need a copy of the State Board of Electricity Certificate of Inspection, before HUC will reconnect the electric meter.

## Definition of Your Bill

Your bill provides:

- Account number/Customer number
- Due date
- Payment due
- Pre-authorized payment to be drawn from your bank on due date
- Budget amount due if on the budget plan
- Name/mailing address
- Service address
- Electric and fuel cost adjustments, if any
- Reading dates
- Days used
- Previous and current readings
- Usage
- Previous balance
- Payments made and date paid
- Electric and/or gas meter charges
- Amount charged to each meter
- Sales tax
- Any miscellaneous/trip charges
- Account balance
- Perforated top stub to remit with payment for timely and proper posting
- If applicable, a message on the bottom of the statement indicating past due amount

Meters are read approximately every 30 days. Estimated readings may also be taken if access to the meter is not possible or the meter has stopped working.

## **Errors in Billing**

Overcharged customers will be credited on the next statement or refunded on their final billing.

Overcharges will not be refunded for any errors exceeding one (1) year from the date of notice by the customer.

Undercharged customers may be billed for any errors not exceeding one (1) year from the date of notice, and may be billed on a separate invoice, with an explanation of charges.

## **Payment of Your Bill**

Payments are due by the date shown on the statement.

### **Payment Locations**

- HUC's business office at 225 Michigan Street Southeast
- Drop box at either HUC's business office or Hutchinson City Center

### **Payment Methods**

- Cash, check or money order
- automated phone system at 855-820-2288 with VISA/MasterCard/Discover
- automatic bank payment plan
- online at [www.hutchinsonutilities.com](http://www.hutchinsonutilities.com)

When paying in any manner other than cash, no change will be given. No second party or post-dated checks will be accepted. Checks will not be held.

A dishonored payment is treated as a non-payment. If notification of the dishonored payment is received by HUC, the customer will be charged a \$30 processing fee.

For billing questions, e-mail HUC customer service at [HUCbilling@ci.hutchinson.mn.us](mailto:HUCbilling@ci.hutchinson.mn.us).

## **Automatic Bill Payment Plan**

Customers may authorize automatic bill payment through ACH withdrawals from a checking/savings account, or with the use of a credit/debit card. These payments are withdrawn on the date the bill is due. To authorize the withdrawals or automatic payment, the customer must complete an Authorization for Automatic Payment form available at the HUC's business office or on the HUC website.

The customer will receive their monthly utility billing statement showing the payment amount to be withdrawn. The customer may contact the HUC Customer Service Department before the amount is withdrawn to dispute the billing or with any questions. The customer will have approximately 10 days to review their bill before the money is withdrawn.

If a customer's payment is dishonored for two consecutive months, the customer will be removed from the automatic payment plan and so notified. A service charge of \$30 will be assessed to the customer's account for each dishonored payment occurrence.

## **Budget Payment Plan**

A budget payment plan is available to residential customers who have been at their present location for a minimum of 12 continuous months. Procedures are in place for setting up and reviewing the budget payment plan calculation. Changes to the budget payment amount are made at the discretion of the Customer Service Department based on the customer's average bill from the previous 12 months. Customers will be notified, in writing, of any changes. A customer may concurrently participate in the budget payment plan and automatic bank payment plan.



## **Explanation of Billing Procedure**

A bill for services is sent to the address provided by the customer approximately 3 to 5 days after the meters have been read. The customer has approximately 10 days to pay the bill in full by the stated due date. In accordance with state law, the City of Hutchinson and its related entities shall have 35 days to pay bills in full.

Bills paid after the due date will incur the following charges:

- A 1% per month late payment charge on any unpaid balance.
- A \$15 processing fee.

A late notice warning of pending disconnection is mailed to the customer and provides the customer with approximately 10 to 20 days to pay the bill or contact the Customer Service Department to make other arrangements. Examples of other arrangements may include establishing a budget payment plan or payments by other agencies on the customer's behalf. Failure to make payment by the stated due date and time will be considered a violation of the notice of pending disconnection. If full payment or other arrangements have not been made by the deadline, HUC personnel are sent to the meter location to disconnect utility services (see disconnection of services section).

- A notice will also be included on the next month's billing warning of pending disconnection. Customers should refer to previously sent disconnection letter for details of date and time of disconnection.

**IT IS THE CUSTOMER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO PAY BILLS ON TIME AND IN FULL.**

A dishonored payment will be assessed a \$30 processing fee.

A dishonored payment made to avoid disconnection, to get reconnected, or for a deposit for service will be assessed a \$30 processing fee; plus:

- a. A \$40 trip charge to deliver a door hanger, a notice advising the customer they have 24 hours to make the full notice payment. Acceptable forms of payment include cash, money order or credit card.
- b. A \$40 trip charge to disconnect service if payment is not received in the form of cash, money order or credit card.
- c. A \$40 trip charge to reconnect service with payment made in the form of cash, money order or credit card.

**IT IS THE CUSTOMER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO KEEP HUC FULLY ADVISED OF ANY CHANGE OF ADDRESS.**

## Disconnection of Residential Services by HUC

1. Residential utility service shall be disconnected for any of the following reasons:
  - Failure to pay by the deadline on a delinquent account or failure to comply with the terms of the budget payment plan.
  - Failure to contact HUC to gain protection from disconnection under the Cold Weather Rule.
  - Failure to maintain the payment agreement established under the Cold Weather Rule.
  - Failure to comply with deposit requirement.
  - Failure to pay for merchandise or charges for non-utility service billed by HUC.
  - Payment of bill with a dishonored check.
  - Failure to provide authorized utility personnel access to utility equipment.
  - HUC shall disconnect residential utility service, without notice, where service has been reconnected without HUC's authorization.
  - HUC shall disconnect residential utility service, without notice, where it has reasonable evidence that utility service is being obtained by potentially unsafe devices or potentially unsafe methods that stop or interfere with the proper metering of the utility service.
  - HUC may disconnect residential utility service, without notice, where a dangerous condition exists for as long as the condition exists.
  - At the request of the property owner, as long as it's currently in owner's name.
  - At the request of the realtor/bank, as long as it's currently in their name.
  - If an account owner or property owner does not notify us, within three (3) business days following disconnection of service for non-payment, a final bill will be processed and the account will be closed.
2. HUC must have a Landlord Agreement on file acknowledging that landlord/owner will be responsible for all utility charges after the read-out date requested by a tenant. Failure of the landlord/owner to execute this form will lead to a shut off of services on the read-out date requested from tenant.
3. For all items mentioned in number 1 and 2 above, a disconnect/reconnect fee shall be applied. The disconnect/reconnect fee is as follows:
  - A \$40 trip charge to disconnect.
  - A \$40 trip charge to reconnect, payment shall be made with cash, money order or credit card during regular business hours.
  - After hours reconnection will follow the After Hours Reconnection Policy.
4. In the event that the customer pays after the deadline given on the disconnect letter, and the payment is processed before physical disconnection, a \$40 Removal from **Disconnect List Fee will be applied to their account.**
5. If a realtor/bank requests to have service reconnected for one day in order to

perform an inspection, a \$40 trip charge to reconnect and a \$40 disconnect charge will be applied.

6. In the event of unauthorized use of, or tampering with the equipment of HUC, a tampering charge of \$100 will be assessed to the customer's account. The appropriate law enforcement agency will be notified. HUC reserves the right to charge the customer for the cost of repairs to the equipment of HUC.
7. A dishonored payment will be assessed a \$30 processing fee.
8. A dishonored payment to avoid disconnection, or to get reconnected, will be assessed a \$30 processing fee; plus:
  - A \$40 trip charge to deliver a door hanger, giving customer 24 hours to make payment good with cash, money order or credit card.
9. HUC is not required to furnish residential service under conditions requiring operation in parallel with Backup generating equipment connected to the customer's system if such operation is hazardous or may interfere with its own operations or service to other customers or operation as a condition or rendering service under such circumstances.

FAILURE TO RESPOND TO THE DISCONNECT NOTICE SET FORTH ON THE BILL OR FAILURE TO PAY FOR SERVICES RENDERED BY HUC MAY RESULT IN THE DISCONNECTION OF SERVICES TO THE PROPERTY WITHOUT ANY ADDITIONAL NOTICE TO THE CUSTOMER. IT IS THE CUSTOMER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO PAY FOR SERVICES RENDERED AND TO ADVISE HUC OF ANY CHANGE IN ADDRESS. NEITHER HUC NOR THE CITY OF HUTCHINSON, NOR ANY OF THE AGENTS, EMPLOYEES OR REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CITY OF HUTCHINSON OR HUC, WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY DAMAGES OR CLAIMS INCURRED AS A RESULT OF THE DISCONNECTION OF SERVICES.

Residential utility service may not be disconnected or refused for any of the following reasons:

- Delinquency in payment for services by a previous occupant of the premises to be served.
- Failure to pay for a different rate classification of utility service.
- Failure to pay the account of another customer as guarantor thereof.
- Failure to pay charges arising from any underbilling occurring more than 1 year prior to the current billing and due to any misapplication of rates or faulty metering.
- If a customer is on the Budget Payment Plan and has a credit balance on account.

## **Disconnection of Commercial Services by HUC**

1. Commercial utility service shall be disconnected for any of the following reasons:
  - Failure to pay by the deadline on a delinquent account.
  - Failure to comply with deposit requirement.
  - Failure to pay for merchandise or charges for non-utility service billed by HUC.
  - Payment of bill with a dishonored check.
  - Failure to provide authorized HUC personnel access to utility equipment.
  - HUC shall disconnect commercial utility service, without notice, where service has been reconnected without HUC's authorization.
  - HUC shall disconnect commercial utility service, without notice, where it has reasonable evidence that utility service is being obtained by potentially unsafe devices or potentially unsafe methods that stop or interfere with the proper metering of the utility service.
  - HUC may disconnect commercial utility service, without notice, where a dangerous condition exists for as long as the condition exists.
  - At the request of the property owner, as long as it's currently in owner's name.
  - At the request of the realtor/bank, as long as it's currently in their name.
2. HUC must have a Landlord Agreement on file acknowledging that landlord/owner will be responsible for all utility charges after the read-out date requested by a tenant. Failure of the landlord/owner to execute this form will lead to a shut off of services on the read-out date requested from tenant.
3. For all items mentioned in number 1 and 2 above, a disconnect/reconnect fee shall be applied. The disconnect/reconnect fee is as follows:
  - A \$40 trip charge to disconnect.
  - A \$40 trip charge to reconnect, payment shall be made with cash, money order or credit card during regular business hours.
  - After hours reconnection will follow the After Hours Reconnection Policy.
4. In the event that the customer pays after the deadline given on the disconnect letter, and the payment is processed before physical disconnection, a \$40 Removal from Disconnect List Fee will be applied to their account.
5. If a realtor/bank requests to have service reconnected for one day in order to perform an inspection, a \$40 trip charge to reconnect and a \$40 disconnect charge will be applied.
6. In the event of unauthorized use of, or tampering with the equipment of HUC, a tampering charge of \$100 will be assessed to the customer's account. The appropriate law enforcement agency will be notified. HUC reserves the right to charge the customer for the cost of repairs to the equipment of HUC.

7. A dishonored payment will be assessed a \$30 processing fee.
8. A dishonored payment made to avoid disconnection, or to get reconnected, will be assessed a \$30 processing fee; plus:
  - A \$40 trip charge to deliver a door hanger, giving customer 24 hours to make payment good with cash, money order or credit card.
9. HUC is not required to furnish commercial service under conditions requiring operation in parallel with Backup generating equipment connected to the customer's system if such operation is hazardous or may interfere with its own operations or service to other customers or operation as a condition or rendering service under such circumstances.

FAILURE TO RESPOND TO THE DISCONNECT NOTICE SET FORTH ON THE BILL OR FAILURE TO PAY FOR SERVICES RENDERED BY HUC MAY RESULT IN THE DISCONNECTION OF SERVICES TO THE PROPERTY WITHOUT ANY ADDITIONAL NOTICE TO THE CUSTOMER. IT IS THE CUSTOMER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO PAY FOR SERVICES RENDERED AND TO ADVISE HUC OF ANY CHANGE IN ADDRESS. NEITHER HUC NOR THE CITY OF HUTCHINSON, NOR ANY OF THE AGENTS, EMPLOYEES OR REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CITY OF HUTCHINSON OR HUC, WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY DAMAGES OR CLAIMS INCURRED AS A RESULT OF THE DISCONNECTION OF SERVICES.

Commercial utility service may not be disconnected or refused for any of the following reasons:

- Delinquency in payment for services by a previous occupant of the premises to be served.
- Failure to pay for a different rate classification of utility service.
- Failure to pay the account of another customer as guarantor thereof.
- Failure to pay charges arising from any underbilling occurring more than 1 year prior to the current billing and due to any misapplication of rates or faulty metering.

## **After Hours Reconnection Policy**

No after hours reconnections will be done from 9:00 p.m. to 7:30 a.m. Monday through Friday nor from 9:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. on weekends and holidays.

After hours reconnection fees:

A \$150 Reconnection Fee will be charged for any reconnection that is done:

- From 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Monday through Friday
- From 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Saturdays

A \$200 Reconnection Fee will be charged for any reconnection that is done:

- From 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Sundays or Holidays

Payments must be made prior to reconnecting utilities. Credit card payments will be accepted from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

Holidays include the following: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve Day, and Christmas Day.

## **Landlord Acknowledgement**

A signed Landlord Acknowledgement provides the following:

- Confirmation and documentation of the landlord/owner.
- Request of HUC to provide utility service to tenants.
- The understanding that the tenant will be responsible for all utility costs between the date service is required by the tenant and the date the tenant requests read-out of services.
- The landlord/owner agrees to be responsible for and to pay all utility charges from the read-out date given by the tenant until services are established with a new tenant.
- The understanding that failure to pay these charges could result in disconnection of electric service. HUC is not responsible for any damages alleged to be caused by service disconnection. Disconnection/reconnection fees apply.
- The landlord/owner has the option to contact HUC to confirm that the utility service has been placed in the tenant's name.
- The landlord /owner can request the disconnection of services as long as the account is in the landlord's/owner's name. Disconnection/reconnection fees apply.

## **Inserts with Utility Bills**

Generally, only material which applies directly to HUC business may be inserted into monthly utility bill mailings. HUC may approve the inclusion of other items, as appropriate.



## **Identity Theft – “Red Flag Program”**

It shall be the policy of HUC to establish an identity theft prevention program, also known as the “Red Flag Program”.

HUC has an identity theft program in place called the “RED FLAG PROGRAM”, pursuant to the Federal Trade Commission’s Red Flags Rule, which implements Section 114 of the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act of 2003. Internal procedures have been established whereby employees of HUC have been trained on how to recognize and what procedures to follow if the employee suspects an identity theft is taking place.

Implementation of the Red Flag Program is the responsibility of the Account Supervisor.

Administration and maintenance of the Red Flag Program is the responsibility of the Financial Manager.

## **Minnesota Cold Weather Rule**

2009 Minnesota Statutes

216B.097 Cold Weather Rule; Cooperative or Municipal Utility

### **Subdivision 1. Application; notice to residential customer.**

(a) A municipal utility or a cooperative electric association must not disconnect and must reconnect the utility service of a residential customer during the period between October 15 and April 15 if the disconnection affects the primary heat source for the residential unit and all of the following conditions are met:

(1) The household income of the customer is at or below 50 percent of the state median household income. A municipal utility or cooperative electric association utility may (i) verify income on forms it provides or (ii) obtain verification of income from the local energy assistance provider. A customer is deemed to meet the income requirements of this clause if the customer receives any form of public assistance, including energy assistance, that uses an income eligibility threshold set at or below 50 percent of the state median household income.

(2) A customer enters into and makes reasonably timely payments under a payment agreement that considers the financial resources of the household.

(3) A customer receives referrals to energy assistance, weatherization, conservation, or other programs likely to reduce the customer's energy bills.

(b) A municipal utility or a cooperative electric association must, between August 15 and October 15 each year, notify all residential customers of the provisions of this section.

### **Subdivision 2. Notice to residential customer facing disconnection.**

Before disconnecting service to a residential customer during the period between October 15 and April 15, a municipal utility or cooperative electric association must provide the following information to a customer:

(1) a notice of proposed disconnection;

(2) a statement explaining the customer's rights and responsibilities;

(3) a list of local energy assistance providers;

(4) forms on which to declare inability to pay; and

(5) a statement explaining available time payment plans and other opportunities to secure continued utility service.

### **Subdivision 3. Restrictions if disconnection necessary.**

(a) If a residential customer must be involuntarily disconnected between October 15 and April 15 for failure to comply with subdivision 1, the disconnection

must not occur:

(1) on a Friday, unless the customer declines to enter into a payment agreement offered that day in person or via personal contact by telephone by a municipal utility or cooperative electric association;

(2) on a weekend, holiday, or the day before a holiday;

(3) when utility offices are closed; or

(4) after the close of business on a day when disconnection is permitted, unless a field representative of a municipal utility or cooperative electric association who is authorized to enter into a payment agreement, accept payment, and continue service, offers a payment agreement to the customer.

Further, the disconnection must not occur until at least 20 days after the notice required in subdivision 2 has been mailed to the customer or 15 days after the notice has been personally delivered to the customer.

(b) If a customer does not respond to a disconnection notice, the customer must not be disconnected until the utility investigates whether the residential unit is actually occupied. If the unit is found to be occupied, the utility must immediately inform the occupant of the provisions of this section. If the unit is unoccupied, the utility must give seven days' written notice of the proposed disconnection to the local energy assistance provider before making a disconnection.

(c) If, prior to disconnection, a customer appeals a notice of involuntary disconnection, as provided by the utility's established appeal procedure, the utility must not disconnect until the appeal is resolved.

**Subdivision 4. Application to service limiters.**

For the purposes of this section, "disconnection" includes a service or load limiter or any device that limits or interrupts electric service in any way.

## **Minnesota Government Data Practices Act and Public Records Request**

HUC is in compliance with Minnesota Government Data Practices Act and Public Records Request.

Billing information is available upon signing 'Consent To Release Private Data' form. Forms are available at the office of HUC.

Business information is available upon signing 'Information Disclosure Request' form. Forms are available at the office of HUC.

## SERVICE POLICIES - ELECTRIC

### Rate Schedule

**Electric Residential Service Code 10** – Available for domestic purposes only, in a single or multiple residence. All newly connected multiple dwelling units shall have one meter per unit, and a house meter.

Energy charge: 8.72 cents per KWH  
Meter charge: \$6.50 per meter

**Electric Small General Service Code 30** – Applicable to any customer for single or three phase electric service with less than 50 KW demand supplied through one meter at the secondary voltage at that location. At any time the customer demand reaches 50 kilowatts for three consecutive months, the customer will be removed from the Electric Small General Service rate and billed under Electric Large General Service rate.

Energy charge:  
First 2000 KWH per month --- 9.11 cents per KWH  
Over 2000 KWH per month --- 8.55 cents per KWH  
Meter charge: \$10.00

**Electric Large General Service Code 40 Code 41** – Applicable to any customer for combined power and lighting with a minimum demand of 50 kilowatts for single or three phase electric service supplied through one meter at the secondary voltage at that location. If demand drops below 50 kilowatts for 12 consecutive months, the customer will be removed from Electric Large General Service rate and billed under Electric Small General Service.

Demand charge: \$6.00 per KW  
Energy charge: 7.37 cents per KWH  
Minimum monthly charge: 75% of the maximum demand charge – the maximum demand is the customer's peak usage over the previous 12 months.

**SERVICE AT PRIMARY VOLTAGE:** Customer owns/maintains facilities, and service provided at primary voltage – a 5% discount will be given on the energy charge. This adjustment includes a discount for primary metering.

HUC owns/maintains facilities, and service provided at primary voltage – a 2% discount will be given on the energy charge.

**POWER FACTOR PENALTY:** A power factor penalty will apply if the customers measured power factor drops below .94.

**Large Industrial Service Code 50 and 51** – Applicable to any customer for combined power and lighting with a minimum demand over 4000 KW during any one month in a 12 month period. Service will be delivered at the primary voltage available at the customer's property line. The customer will own and maintain all electrical facilities on the customer's side of the metering transformer.

Demand charge: \$7.00 per KW  
Energy charge: \$0.0610 per KWH

**Power Cost Adjustment** - Power cost adjustment is based on the combined costs of purchased power from outside suppliers, fuel (natural gas and fuel oil), and unrecovered or excess revenues from previous month.

Computations of power adjustments shall be made monthly. The resultant adjustment, if any, shall be applicable for the month.

## Security Light Rental – Rate to Furnish and Maintain Fixture

### HIGH PRESSURE SODIUM:

Lamp Size	Monthly Charge	Lamp Size	Monthly Charge
150 watt metered	\$3.00	150 watt unmetered	\$ 7.00
250 watt metered	\$3.50	250 watt unmetered	\$10.00

Lights will be dusk to dawn type with photo control and will be installed on existing pole in the area. If a new pole is needed, customer will pay for the pole and installation.

All new installations will be High Pressure Sodium.

All rates subject to power cost adjustment.

## **Electric Service Requirements and Charges**

HUC will require a 24-hour notice, a copy of the State Board of Electricity Certificate of Inspection, and an established account prior to installing a meter and making the final connection.

HUC shall not install any facilities until all affected properties are within 6 inches of final grade.

### Installation of Any Electric Services – November 1 Through March 31

The final determination on installation of electric services shall be made by HUC.

#### New Single-Family Dwelling – Service Size: 200 Amperes or less

Single-family dwelling customers will be 240/120 volt single-phase service.

HUC shall furnish and install the underground conductors to serve the single-family home with a one-year warranty after installation date. The underground service is the property of the homeowner at date of installation.

(4/0-2/0-4/0 URD): Minimum \$300.00 Installation Charge up to 100 ft.; additional \$2.00/ft. in excess of 100 ft.

The customer or their contractor shall provide and install a 200A, ringless meter socket with lever bypass (See meter requirement/placement section).

#### New Single-Family Dwelling – Service Size: Greater than 200 Amperes

Single-family dwelling customers will be 240/120 volt single-phase service.

Current transformer metering is required. HUC shall furnish the current transformers, meter socket and meter (See meter requirement/placement section). The customer or their contractor shall provide the current transformer housing and facilities, install the current transformers, mount the meter socket and provide an empty 1-¼ inch conduit to the meter socket. HUC shall install the meter wiring and meter. No current transformer metering will be allowed in the power transformer secondary compartment.

Bar type current transformers will be used. Provisions for voltage connections for the meter must also be provided.

The customer will be responsible for installing the service to the utility transformer or pedestal location. HUC will be responsible to make all secondary connections in the transformer. Transformer secondary connections will be limited to a maximum of four conductors per phase with a maximum size of 750 MCM per conductor. If additional conductors are required per phase, the owner or contractor must provide an approved



secondary transition cabinet. HUC's Electric Division may be contacted for further details.

#### New Multi-Family Dwelling, Commercial, or Industrial

The customer will be responsible for installing the service to the utility transformer or pedestal location. For any services that require current transformer metering, the customer will be responsible to install the conductor from the metering cabinet to the transformer. For any three-phase services, the customer shall furnish the transformer pad and ground grid. The transformer location shall be determined by HUC.

HUC will provide the following voltages:

120/208 volts three phase, not to exceed 3,000 amperes without prior approval.

277/480 volts three phase, not to exceed 3,000 amperes without prior approval.

7,970/13,800 volts three phase, with prior arrangements with HUC.

HUC will be responsible to make all secondary connections in the transformer. Transformer secondary connections will be limited to a maximum of four conductors per phase with a maximum size of 750 MCM per conductor. If additional conductors are required per phase, the owner or contractor must provide an approved secondary transition cabinet. HUC's Electric Division may be contacted for further details.

On services greater than 200 amperes at 240/120volts, current transformer metering is required. HUC shall furnish the current transformers, meter socket and meter. The customer or their contractor shall provide the current transformer housing and facilities, install the current transformers, mount the meter socket and provide an empty 1-¼ inch conduit to the meter socket. HUC shall install the meter wiring and meter. No current transformer metering will be allowed in the power transformer secondary compartment. Any service greater than 240 volts, shall require current transformer metering.

Bar type current transformers will be used. Provisions for voltage connections for the meter must also be provided. Approved multi-family dwelling meter stacks will be provided by the customer or their contractor.

Primary metering at 7,970/13,800 volts will be by special arrangement and approval of HUC.

## **Temporary Service**

For temporary service, please contact HUC's Customer Service Department.

HUC shall bill the customer or their contractor for all related expenses.

## **Temporary Service in Case of Underground Failure**

When an underground service fails, HUC will furnish a temporary service to the customer at no charge. The customer will have ten working days to repair or replace the service. In the event the work can't be completed within ten working days the customer may contact HUC to perform the required maintenance at HUC's current time and material rates. If after ten working days, the required maintenance has not been completed or the customer has not contacted HUC to make arrangements to have the service repaired, HUC will remove the temporary service.

In the event of frost, the customer will need to contact HUC to make arrangements to have the repair done at a later date.

## **Electric Meter Placement**

HUC reserves the right to specify the electric meter location on all installations.

Electric service lines and meter housing are the property of the home/business owner.

Meters may be relocated to a location agreed upon by HUC. The customer will be responsible for all costs involved in relocating these facilities.

All meters must be located on an external wall. New construction electric meters must be located within 10 feet of the natural gas meter if HUC is providing both services.

Electric meters shall be accessible at all times for disconnection, examination, reading, replacement or necessary maintenance. Electric meters not accessible are subject to disconnection and will need to be moved to a location approved by HUC, at the home/business owner's expense.

HUC requires a minimum of a 3-foot clear zone in front of the electric meter.

Reasonable care must be taken to protect all metering facilities when remodeling, roofing, painting, etc. In the event of damage to the electric facilities, the customer shall be responsible for the cost of repairing or replacing the electric facilities.

Conditions may exist which may require other restrictions or distances (e.g. multiple meters or commercial/industrial).

**Any exceptions require the approval of HUC prior to the start of construction. If violations or deviations are determined, the customer will be responsible for the cost of the correction.**

### Single Family Dwellings

All residential electric metering facilities shall be located on the side of the home within 6 feet of the front building wall and 60 inches from finished grade. Front building wall is defined as the wall nearest the street of the resident's living space.

### Multi-Family Dwellings/Multiple Business Establishments

All HUC electric meters must be located on the exterior wall of the building. Individual metering is required for each single-family private residence contained in a multi-family dwelling and each separately owned and/or operated business. In addition, if required, a "house meter" shall also be installed in these establishments.

### Commercial or Industrial

All commercial and industrial electric meters must be located outside. If remodeling is done on the premises, which would cause the meter to be located inside, the owner, at owner's expense, must relocate the meter to the outside to a location agreed upon by HUC.

## Sealing of Meters

Electric meters and current transformer housings, which have been sealed by HUC, shall not be broken or tampered with without the consent of HUC except in emergency cases. HUC shall be notified immediately after a seal has been broken. If HUC is not notified and HUC personnel discover a broken seal, a \$10 broken seal charge may be assessed to the customer.

Seals will be assigned to each meter/account by color according to the following:

Gray Seal	Regular Account
Red Seal	Meter Disconnected for Non-Payment
Blue Seal	Meter Disconnected by Customer Request
Yellow Seal	Life Support Equipment

## **Meter Testing**

HUC will test all meters periodically for accuracy and mechanical condition. All electric meters must be accurate to within 2%, plus or minus, at full and light load. Upon request of the customer, HUC will test the accuracy of an electric meter. If the meter is found to be registering more than 2% fast, there will be no testing charge to the customer. If the meter is found to be accurate within the 2% limit, a \$40 trip charge will be billed to the customer. HUC has the right to place special meters on the premises of a customer for the purpose of testing all or part of the customer's load at no expense to the customer.

## **Right-of-Way Clearing**

HUC shall maintain right-of-way clearance on all overhead and underground facilities.

## **Tree Removal or Trimming**

Tree removal or trimming for other than right-of-way clearance is the responsibility of the property owner. Please notify HUC with any questions concerning tree removal or trimming.

Any damage to the HUC electrical distribution system caused by tree removal or trimming, by the property owner or their representatives will be billed to the property owner.



## **Locating Customer's Underground Utilities**

HUC will locate all underground electric distribution and transmission facilities up to the meter at no charge to the customer or landowner.

## SERVICE POLICIES – NATURAL GAS

### Rate Schedule

**Residential Code 60** – Available to any customer who uses less than 70 MCF of gas per day.

Energy charge: \$9.08 per MCF, or \$.00908 per CF  
Meter charge: \$6.50 per meter

**Commercial Gas Code 65** – Available to any customer who uses less than 200 MCF of gas per day.

Energy charge: \$9.08 per MCF, \$.00908 per CF  
Meter charge: \$31.50 per meter

**Large Industrial Gas Code 89 Code 91** – Available to all customers who use in excess of 200 MCF of gas per day. The demand level shall be based on the maximum daily volume (MCF per day) of natural gas delivered to the customer per month.

Monthly Demand Charge per  
MCF of Billing Demand  
\$10.00 per MCF

Energy Charge of  
Gas per MCF Delivered  
\$8.54 per MCF, or \$.00854 per CF

Minimum Monthly Charge: The demand charge for month.

**Fuel Cost Adjustment** – Fuel cost adjustment is based on the combined cost of purchased gas and unrecovered or excess revenues from previous month.

Computations of fuel adjustment shall be made monthly. The resulting adjustment, if any, shall be applicable for the month.

All rates are subject to fuel cost adjustment.

## Natural Gas Service Requirements and Charges

HUC shall not install any facilities until all affected properties are within 6 inches of final grade.

HUC shall furnish and install the underground natural gas service line. The service line to the meter shall remain the property of HUC.

Type/Size	Fee
Single-family residential – ¾” IPS	\$300 – 150 ft. or less \$2.00/ft. in excess of 150 ft.
Multi-family/Commercial/Industrial – ¾” IPS	\$750 – 100 ft. or less \$5.00/ft. in excess of 100 ft.
Multi-family/Commercial/Industrial – 2” IPS	\$1500 – 100 ft. or less \$5.00/ft. in excess of 100 ft.
Industrial – 4” IPS and larger	Time and Material Expense

Service line length is defined as "distance from customer's property line to metering facilities", or in the instance the distribution main is located in rear easement, "distribution main to metering facilities".

No structure or building may be located over natural gas lines or metering facilities. In the event that a structure or building is determined to be located over natural gas facilities, the natural gas facility must be relocated to a mutually agreed upon location. The customer shall be responsible for all costs associated with the relocation.

No service line valve or any portion of the natural gas metering facilities may be buried. The customer shall be responsible for all costs incurred in raising all facilities.

Hutchinson Utilities Commission shall begin installing excess flow valves, as of April 14, 2017, on all newly installed and replacement service lines serving the following types of services before the line is activated:

- A single service line to one single-family residence;
- A branched service line to a single-family residence installed concurrently with the primary single-family residence service line (i.e., a single EFV may be installed to protect both service lines);
- A branched service line to a single-family residence installed off a previously installed single-family residence service line that does not contain an EFV;

- Multifamily residences with known customer loads not exceeding 1,000 SCFH per service, at time of service installation based on installed meter capacity, and
- A single, small commercial customer served by a single service line with a known customer load not exceeding 1,000 SCFH, at the time of meter installation, based on installed meter capacity.

Hutchinson Utilities shall install either a manual service line shut-off valve or, if possible, based on sound engineering analysis and availability, an excess flow valve for any new or replaced service line with installed meter capacity exceeding 1,000 SCFH.

All new natural gas consumer -owned fuel lines, downstream of the metering facilities, must be pressure tested, prior to the gas meter being set. The test must be verified by an approved inspector.

Installation of Natural Gas Service Lines – November 1 through March 31

Final determination on installation of natural gas service lines shall be made by HUC.

## **Temporary Service**

HUC does not offer temporary natural gas service.

## **Natural Gas Meter Requirements and Placement**

HUC shall furnish and install the natural gas meter at no charge to the customer.

HUC reserves the right to specify the natural gas meter location on all installations.

All meters must be located on an external wall of the building, at a horizontal distance of no less than 3 feet from fresh air intakes, windows or door openings. New construction natural gas meters must be located within 10 feet of the electric meter in the event HUC is providing both services.

Access to all natural gas meters shall not be obstructed.

Natural gas meters shall be located in ventilated spaces readily accessible for examination, reading, replacement or necessary maintenance. Decks, porches, etc. shall not be constructed over a natural gas meter.

Natural gas meters shall not be located where they will be subject to damage, such as adjacent to a driveway or other locations subject to vehicular traffic, in public passages, where they will be subject to excessive corrosion or vibration or in areas subject to ice and snow damage.

Natural gas meters shall not be installed directly beneath external stairways.

Natural gas meters shall not be located where they will be subjected to extreme temperatures or sudden extreme temperature changes (e.g., air ducts, dryer vents).

Manufacturer's installation specifications shall be adhered to when installing fresh air intake and exhaust terminations near natural gas metering facilities.

Natural gas regulators shall be located - no less than 3 feet from any source of ignition or any source of heat that may damage the facilities.

HUC requires a minimum of a 3-foot clear zone in front of the natural gas meter.

Reasonable care must be taken to protect all metering facilities when remodeling, roofing, painting, etc. In the event of damage to the natural gas facilities, the customer shall be responsible for the cost of repairing or replacing the natural gas facilities.

Conditions may exist which may require additional restrictions or distances (e.g. multiple meters, etc.). Please contact HUC if you should have any questions regarding your natural gas metering facilities.

Modifications made to the customer's metering facilities, necessitated by customer changes, shall be performed by HUC, at the customer's expense.

All natural gas service lines retired due to building demolition, overbuilding, etc. shall be retired at the customer's expense. Quotes to be provided when requested by customer.

**All exceptions require the approval of HUC prior to the start of construction. If violations or deviations are determined, the customer shall be responsible for the cost of the correction.**

#### Single Family Dwellings

HUC shall provide natural gas to residential customers at the standard delivery pressure of 7 inches of water column, measured at the inlet to the natural gas meter.

All residential natural gas metering facilities shall be located on the side of the home within 6 feet of the front building wall. Front building wall is defined as the wall nearest the street of the resident's living space.

#### Multi-Family Dwellings/Multiple Business Establishments

Delivery pressures greater than 7 inches of water column, for multi-family and multiple business establishments, shall only be allowed by the prior approval of HUC. The customer must provide adequate over-pressure protection for all fuel lines subject to increased delivery pressure.

The single metering of multiple-family dwellings, apartment buildings or multiple business establishments within a single building is permitted to the extent that each building is centrally heated. Individual metering is required for all individually heated, single-family private residences and each separately heated, owned and/or operated business.

Please contact HUC for specifications regarding meter facilities.

#### Commercial/Industrial Facilities

Delivery pressures greater than 7 inches of water column, for commercial and industrial applications, shall only be allowed by the prior approval of HUC. The customer must provide adequate over-pressure protection for all fuel lines subject to increased delivery pressure.

Please contact HUC for specifications regarding meter facilities.

## **Meter Testing**

HUC shall periodically test all natural gas meters for accuracy and sound mechanical condition. Meters that have an average accuracy of 100%, plus or minus 2%, shall be considered accurate. Average accuracy is defined as the average of the open and check flow accuracies.

Accounts in which the natural gas meter tests in excess of 102% are subject to a refund. This refund shall be based on the "as found average meter accuracy" and the customer's consumption for the previous six month period.

Upon request of the customer, HUC shall test the average accuracy of the natural gas meter. A \$40 trip charge may be assessed to all accounts in which the "as found average meter accuracy" is determined to be 100%, plus or minus 2%.



## **Natural Gas Service Work**

HUC personnel shall perform leak investigation and carbon monoxide testing at no charge to the customer. HUC does not perform service work on customer owned facilities.

### **Locating Customer's Underground Utilities**

HUC shall locate all natural gas underground distribution and transmission facilities up to the meter at no charge to the customer or landowner.