Minnesota Cold Weather Rule Application

Inability to Pay Declaration Form

IF YOU CAN'T PAY YOUR HUC BILL AND NEED COLD WEATHER PROTECTION FROM YOUR UTILITIES BEING SHUTOFF. YOU MUST FILL OUT THIS FORM AND RETURN IT TO HUTCHINSON UTILITIES COMMISSION 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 mutual agreement.

Name _____ Service Address _____

Phone Number _____ Account Number (from your utility bill) _____

Total Amount Due _____ Total Annual Household Income_____

Enclosed with this application is the income information for all persons in the home:

Your payroll stubs for the past two months_____ Social Security/Social Security Disability _____

A current copy of your unemployment benefits _____ General Assistance—all times _____

Pension/Retirement benefits Statements _____ MFIP _____

Income Tax Return for the previous year _____ Other & explain: _____

Total Number of Persons in Household (including yourself)_____

Please check if any apply Elderly (over 65) Person in Residence_____ Medical Emergency_____ Disabled Person in Residence_____

I am applying for:

_____ Inability to Pay

_____Request for 10% Payment Plan (You can pay at least 10% of your monthly income or the full amount of your current bill, whichever is less in the cold weather months. This amount would not include any arrears.)

Customer Signature _____ Date_____

Third Party Notification

If you have been issued a notice of disconnection, you may want to alert a third party (friend, relative, church group, or community agency) that a disconnection notice has been Issued to you. The third party will not be responsible to pay your bill. The third party does have the right to contact HUC and provide information or work out a payment agreement.

If you want a third party to be notified of the potential disconnection, please complete the following and return it to HUC.

Customer Name_____ Service Address_____

Account Number (from utility bill)_____

Hutchinson Utilities Commission has my permission to provide information to and accept information from the party named below. HUC will make every effort to send a copy of the Notice of Disconnection to the party specified. The customer making the request understand that HUC assumes no liability for failure of the third party to receive or act upon said notice.

Customer Signature_____ Date_____

Name of Third Party to be Notified_____

Address_____ Phone_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Third Party Signature _____ Date_____

Minnesota Cold Weather Rule

Notice of Residential Customer Rights & Responsibilities



Hutchinson Utilities Commission

225 Michigan St. SE
Hutchinson, MN 55350
(320) 587-4746
www.hutchinsonutilities.com

Minnesota Cold Weather Rule

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission has issued a Cold Weather Rule (Chapter 7820 No. 1800) which provides that from October 1, through April 30, a utility cannot disconnect a residential utility customer for nonpayment if the disconnection would affect their primary heat source and if a customer has demonstrated an inability to pay on forms provided by the utility company, and who made reasonable timely payment to the utility under a payment plan that considers the financial resources of the household.

To qualify for the Cold Weather Rule the customers utility account must indicate reasonable timely payments made under a payment schedule as of the billing cycle immediately preceding the start of the current cold weather months. The household income of the customer needs to be less than 50 percent of the state median income (please refer to the chart).

This notice is to tell you about your rights and responsibility under the Cold Weather Rule. These rights and responsibilities are designed to help you with 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 schedule, **your service may be disconnected.**

The Cold Weather Rule provides you with these options:

The right to declare your Inability to Pay your utility bill in writing on forms provided by Hutchinson Utilities Commission (HUC). If you do so, service affecting your primary heat source cannot be disconnected for nonpayment of your bill, if you enter into a payment schedule with the utility.

The responsibility, if you choose to declare Inability to Pay, to complete an "Inability to Pay" form and return it to HUC. **Upon mailing this form, you must also contact HUC to arrange a payment plan**.

The right to a mutually acceptable payment schedule with HUC. This payment schedule will cover your existing amount due plus the estimated usage during the payment schedule period. If you are able to pay but still wish to enter into a payment schedule, contact HUC immediately to arrange a schedule.

The responsibility of making payments as agreed or promptly notifying HUC why you cannot keep the agreement. You may then request that the original payment schedule be changed. Any change is initially subject to HUC approval.

The right to appeal. The customer has the right to appeal a notice of involuntary disconnection. HUC will not disconnect the customer until the appeal is resolved.

Utility responsibility is to notify the City of Hutchinson's Water Department of any utility disconnects during the period of October 1 through April 30.

If you need help paying your utility bills, you may qualify for state or federal fuel assistance. To find out if you qualify and how to apply, contact the organizations listed here.

United Community Action Agency
McLeod County Outreach
218 Main St S Suite 108
Hutchinson MN 55350
320-587-5244 or 800-829-2132
800-992-1710 (Willmar)
Fax: 320-587-2677 (Hutchinson)
Fax: 320-235-7703 (Willmar)

Common Cup Ministry
105 Second Avenue SW #2
Hutchinson MN 55350
320-587-2213

McLeod County Social Service
1805 Ford Ave N Ste 100
Glencoe MN 55336
320-864-3144 or 800-247-1756
Fax: 320-864-5265

50% of State Median Annual Gross Income Levels for 2026-2027 Heating Season

Household Size	Maximum 3-Month Income
1	$ 9,615
2	$12,573
3	$15,351
4	$18,492
5	$21,450
6	$24,408
7	$24,963
8	$25,518

Energy Conservation Tips

Replace or clean your furnace filters monthly.

Don't block heating vents, radiators, or registers with furniture or clutter. Keep them clean.

Lower the setting of your hot water heater to 120 degrees F.

Open shades during winter days for passive solar heat and close them at night.

In the summer, use shades to block out direct sunlight during the day.

In the winter lower your thermostat in the evening while you sleep.

Wash your laundry in cold or warm water rather than hot.