

Delinquent Bills Levied as Tax

Delinquent municipal utility bills may be transferred as a tax to the property tax bill of the property owner.

Medical Emergencies

If the disconnection will aggravate a medical or protective services emergency, the utility may delay service shut-off for up to 21 days. The utility may require documentation from a professional involved with the medical emergency or crisis.

Assistance From the PSC

How can the PSC help?

Prior to contacting the PSC, contact your utility company to try to resolve the problem. If you cannot resolve the problem with your utility company, you may contact the PSC Consumer Affairs Div. at 608-266-2001, 1-800-225-7729 or on the web at:

<http://apps.psc.wi.gov/pages/complaint/htm>

A staff member will obtain information from you and the utility company, and try to resolve the issue.

Meter Readings

If the utility cannot read your meter, you will get an estimated bill. To avoid estimated readings, you can read your own meter. The PSC requires utilities to read your meter at least once every six months and when there is a change of customer. You must allow these readings or your service can be disconnected.

The Public Service Commission of Wisconsin is an independent state agency that oversees more than 1,100 Wisconsin public utilities that provide natural gas, electricity, heat, steam, water and telecommunication services.



Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

P.O. Box 7854
Madison, WI 53707-7854
Telephone: 608-266-5481
Toll Free: 888-816-3831

Consumer affairs: 608-266-2001
Or toll free: 800-225-7729
TTY: 608-267-1479 / 800-251-8345
Fax: 608-266-3957

Website: <http://psc.wi.gov>

Your Rights as a Residential Electric and Water Utility Customer



Bangor Municipal Utilities

106 15th Avenue North
P.O. Box 130
Bangor, WI 54614
608-486-2151

Website: www.villageofbangor.com

Disconnections

Utility services can be disconnected if you :

- Fail to pay your utility bill
- Fail to comply with a deferred payment agreement
- Tamper with your meter
- Fail to pay a deposit
- Have a safety hazard
- Live at an address where the prior customer failed to pay his or her utility bill and continues to reside at that address.
- Fail to provide utility access to your meter.

A utility must send you a notice before service is disconnected unless the disconnection is due to a safety hazard or self-reconnection. Reasons for the disconnection, when the disconnection can happen, and ways to contact the utility must be included in the notice. The dispute procedure must be printed on the disconnection notice. Both you and the utility company must make reasonable attempts to resolve the problem.

Winter Disconnection Rules

If the utility service provides the primary heat source to your home, (i.e. Water or steam radiators) a utility cannot disconnect service from November 1st through April 15th. Before winter, the utility must attempt to contact customers whose service was disconnected for non-payment. Utilities are also required to check the customer's well-being, attempt to negotiate payment plans, and inform the customer about any special assistance available to avoid disconnection.

Deposits

Utility companies may require a deposit for service to ensure payment. The maximum deposit for a new or existing residential account shall not exceed the highest gross bill for any consecutive billing period (not to exceed four months) selected by the utility. The following rules apply to payment and refund of deposits.

Existing Residential Services:

A deposit can be requested if service was disconnected during the last 12 months for nonpayment of an undisputed account or your initial application was falsified or incomplete. A winter non-payment deposit can be required if you had debt incurred during the winter that was 80 days or more past due and you had the ability to pay.

New Residential Service:

A deposit can be requested if you incurred an unpaid gas, electric, water, or sewer utility anywhere in Wisconsin during the last six years which remains undisputed. A deposit can also be required if there is good reason to believe that you do not intend to, or will be unable to pay your bills at the time payment is due.

For residential service, the deposit will be refunded, with interest, after 12 consecutive months of prompt payment. You do not have to post a deposit if you can document that your income is at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines.

Budget Payment Plans

To manage high winter or summer electric and water bills, ask your utility about budget payment plans. This allows you to average estimated annual use into even monthly payments. At the end of the budget year, your bill is adjusted to correct over-billing or under-billing.

Installment Plans

If you are unable to pay your bill in full, you have a right to negotiate an installment plan with your utility. Installment plans may be used for both current bills and overdue bills. You will be asked to pay a reasonable down payment (50% of your past due) and make specific installment payments to be paid in full within a four month period. The amount of your installment payments will be negotiated between you and your utility depending on your specific situation. If the agreed installment plan is not paid, the utility may disconnect your service. If you do not pay, the utility does not have to negotiate a new agreement before it shuts off your service. After reconnection, you do have the right to negotiate another installment plan with a new down payment (75% of your past due amount) and you will be asked to make specific installment payments in full.