

By April 30, your account needs to be current or you will be required to enter into a new payment arrangement or your service could be disconnected.

If you do not meet **ALL** the conditions of the Cold Weather Rule as outlined on the inside of this brochure, you do not qualify for cold weather shutoff protection. However, you still can continue to receive electric service if you contact People's Energy Cooperative to arrange a mutually acceptable payment arrangement. Call (800) 214-2694 or email memberservices@peoplesenergy.coop **BEFORE** the disconnect date.

If you meet **ALL** the conditions of the Cold Weather Rule, cannot pay your electric bill, and need cold weather protection from utility shutoff, complete and mail the "Cold Weather Shutoff Protection" application **IMMEDIATELY** with the **PROPER DOCUMENTATION TO SUPPORT INCOME ELIGIBILITY**.

Mailing address: People's Energy Cooperative
1775 Lake Shady Avenue South
Oronoco, MN 55960

Energy Efficiency Tips

- Clean or change your furnace filters monthly.
- Weatherize all windows and doors to keep out cool drafts.
- Open shades during the daylight hours to let warm sunlight in. Close shades at night.
- Lower the setting of your water heater to 120° F.
- Lower setting on your thermostat during colder months. (Recommended 66-68° F)
- Turn off, and when possible, unplug, all unused lights, appliances, and electronics.
- Beware of the cost along with the safety risks when using portable space heaters.
- Vacuum refrigerator and freezer coils every six months to improve efficiency.
- Remove or cover window air conditioners during the heating season.
- Wash clothes in cold water whenever possible.

Cold Weather Shutoff Protection Application

Fill out completely - (please print)

Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Home Phone _____ Cell _____
Email _____
Account Number (from your bill) _____
Total Amount Owning \$ _____
Total Annual Household Income * \$ _____
Number of persons in Household (including yourself) _____

Source of Income ("X" appropriate boxes)

- ☐ Employment
- ☐ Unemployment/Worker's Compensation
- ☐ Child Support
- ☐ Social Security/SSI/Disability/Pension
- ☐ Medical Assistance/GA Medical Care/MN Care
- ☐ MFIP/GA/Food Stamps/MSA
- ☐ I do not pay for my medical expenses.
- ☐ Other

Please check if any of the following exists in your home:

- ☐ Medical Emergency
- ☐ Disabled Person in Residence
- ☐ I have already been approved for fuel assistance or energy assistance from a local energy assistance agency based on my income.

By signing this form, I hereby authorize any gas or electric utility that serves me to exchange billing information. I also authorize any energy assistance providers or human service agencies to exchange any income information to help determine income eligibility.

I acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the enclosed Notice of Residential Customer Rights and Possible Assistance. I attest that the above information is true and correct.

Signature _____ Date _____

**A copy of income verification must accompany this form.*

Notification of Rights & Responsibilities

Minnesota Cold Weather Rule

In effect October 1 through April 30

The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule does not forbid winter cutoffs. If you receive a disconnection notice this winter, you must act promptly.



People's Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

1775 Lake Shady Avenue South
Oronoco, MN 55960

Business Hours: Monday - Friday
7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
(800) 214-2694

Website: www.peoplesenergy.coop
Email: memberservices@peoplesenergy.coop

Notice of Residential Customer Rights and Possible Assistance (Please read carefully)

This notice informs you of your responsibilities and rights under the Cold Weather Rule. These are designed to help you with your high winter electric 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 electric service may be disconnected.

An electric cooperative may not disconnect the utility service of a residential cooperative member during the period between October 1 and April 30 if the disconnection affects the primary heat source of the residential unit and **ALL** the following conditions are met:

- (1) The household income of the cooperative member is at or below 50 percent of the state median income. Income may be verified on forms provided by the Cooperative or by the local energy assistance provider. A cooperative member meets the income requirement if they receive energy assistance or another type of public assistance that uses an income eligibility threshold set at or below 50 percent of the state median income;
- (2) A cooperative member enters into and makes timely payments under a payment agreement that considers the financial resource of the household; and
- (3) A cooperative member receives, from the Cooperative, referrals to energy assistance programs, weatherization, conservation, or other programs likely to reduce the customer's energy bills.

Third Party Notice

The Third Party Notice program applies to all cooperative members. It is intended to help those who live alone, senior citizens, disabled, and/or in landlord/renter situations.

This program notifies a third party, along with the cooperative member, that a disconnect notice has been sent. A third party could be a friend, relative, church or community agency. The third party receives copies of all disconnect notices we mail to the cooperative member, but is not required to pay the bill(s). By volunteering, the third party is able to receive and give information about personal circumstances and make a payment arrangement with People's Energy Cooperative for the cooperative member. This helps avoid the hardship that would result from the service disconnection.

If you want to name a third party, please fill out a "Third Party Notice" form, available from People's Energy Cooperative. If you know of someone who could use third party help, please direct them to our office.

The Cold Weather Law Provides You With These Options

THE RIGHT to declare your need for cold weather protection. If your household income is at or below 50 percent of the state median income, the service affecting your primary heat source cannot be disconnected for nonpayment of your bill. However, we have the right to accept or reject your request based on information supplied or other supporting documentation.

THE RESPONSIBILITY, if you choose, to declare a need for cold weather protection complete a "Cold Weather Shutoff Protection" application and return it to People's Energy Cooperative prior to the disconnect date. You must contact People's Energy Cooperative immediately to arrange a payment plan.

THE RIGHT to a mutually agreeable payment arrangement with People's Energy Cooperative. The arrangement will cover your existing arrears plus the estimated usage during the payment arrangement period. Failure to comply with or changing the existing payment arrangement may result in the service being disconnected.

THE RIGHT not to be involuntarily disconnected after business hours, on a Friday or a weekend, the day before or on a holiday, or until at least thirty (30) days after the postmark on the notice to disconnect or until fifteen (15) days after the notice and information has been personally delivered.

THE RIGHT to appeal the disconnection of service to People's Energy Cooperative. If you choose to appeal, you must deliver or mail a personal letter stating your situation and issues in dispute. Your letter must be received before the date of disconnection. You will be notified when People's Energy Cooperative reviews your appeal and you may be present at the review. No disconnection of service will take place during the appeal process.

Energy Assistance

What is Energy Assistance?

Funds to help pay winter heating/energy bills.

Who is Energy Assistance for?

Wage earners, self-employed, seniors, retirees and others on a fixed income. All income eligible households.

Who can apply for Energy Assistance?

Home owners, renters who pay heating costs, and renters with heat included in rent.

What are the income eligibility requirements?

2025 - 2026 Income Eligibility Guidelines		
Number in Household	One-Month Max. Guidelines	Annual Income
1	\$3,119	\$37,439
2	\$4,079	\$48,959
3	\$5,039	\$60,479
4	\$5,999	\$71,999
5	\$6,959	\$83,518
6	\$7,919	\$95,038

For additional information or an application, contact the agency in your area.

Energy Assistance Providers Serving People's Energy Cooperative

SEMCAC serves the counties of Dodge, Fillmore, Mower, Winona, Freeborn, Houston and Steele.

- Toll Free (800) 944-3281

Three Rivers Community Action, Inc. serves Olmsted and Wabasha County.

- Toll Free (800) 277-8418

Additional Assistance Available

Rochester Salvation Army HeatShare

- (507) 288-3663
- (800) 842-7279

First Call For Help

- 211