INABILITY TO PAY DECLARATION FORM

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 a mutually agreed upon payment arrangement with the City of Winthrop.

Fill out completely – please print

Name _____

Service Address _____ **Apt #** _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Phone: Home _____ **Work** _____

Account number _____

Total amount you owe _____

Total annual (yearly) household income$ _____

Source of income (circle appropriate sources):

EmploymentAFDC/GA Disability/Social Security/Pension SSI/Food Stamps/MSA/

Children's Health Plan GA Medical Care/Medical Assistance/I do not pay for any of my own medical expenses

Other_____

Number of person in household (include yourself) _____

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

Medical emergency Disabled person

Payment Arrangements (Inability to pay)

I propose to pay my outstanding and future bills (until April 30th) according to the following schedule of payments:

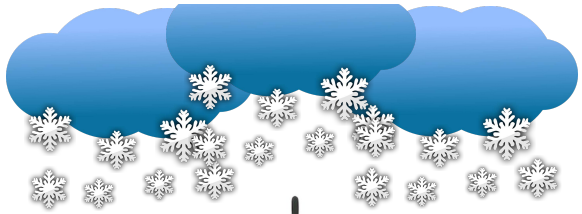
$ _____ by (date) _____
$ _____ by (date) _____
$ _____ by (date) _____
$ _____ by (date) _____
$ _____ by (date) _____

Call your utility within 7 days after you return this form, to discuss your payment schedule.
The payment must be at least 30% of the total bill.

By signing this form, I hereby acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the enclosed Notice of Residential Customer's Right and Possible Assistance. I declare that the above information is true and correct. I also understand that this payment schedule is only good through April 30, and if I am not paid in full by that date the City of Winthrop will start disconnection proceedings. I also understand that failure to keep to the outlined plan may result in having my utilities disconnected.

Customer Signature _____

Date _____



CITY OF WINTHROP

Minnesota Cold Weather Rules and Policies

Know what your rights and responsibilities are to properly handle your bills during the winter season.

MN Cold Weather Rule: Your Rights and Responsibilities

Some customers find it hard to pay their utility bills in the winter. The Minnesota State Legislature has passed a law that is commonly referred to as the "Cold Weather Rule" to protect residential customers from disconnection if they cannot pay their bills in full. This protection lasts from October 1 through April 30. Customers may qualify for this protection if they meet ALL of the following conditions:

1. The customer has completed the Inability to Pay Declaration Form in this pamphlet.
2. The household income is less than 50% of the state median income level (customers receiving 'any form of public assistance' are deemed to have qualified for inability to pay status).
3. The customer enters into and makes reasonably timely payments on a mutually acceptable payment plan.

This notice is to inform customers of their rights and responsibilities 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 plan, your electric service may be disconnected.

Your rights and responsibilities are:

- **The right** to declare an inability to pay your electric bill.
- **The responsibility** if choosing inability to pay, to complete fully the INABILITY TO PAY DECLARATION form and return it to the Winthrop City Offices.
- **The right** to negotiate a mutually acceptable payment plan with the City Offices which addresses existing past due balances and current and future usage during the cold weather period.
- **The responsibility** to make timely payments under the payment plan. Failure to comply with or change the existing payment arrangement may result in the service being disconnected.
- **The right** to appeal to the Commission a determination of income by the utility and the right to appeal if the customer and utility cannot arrive at a mutually acceptable payment plan. Service will not be disconnected during the appeal process.

The Cold Weather Rule **DOES NOT** totally forbid winter shut off. You must contact the utility at least 3 business days in advance of the disconnect date to avoid disconnection or a limiting device. IF YOU RECEIVE A SHUT OFF NOTICE THIS WINTER, YOU MUST ACT PROMPTLY!

Energy Assistance Program

If you need help paying your utility bills, you may qualify for state or federal energy assistance. For complete qualifications and application information, contact the following agencies.

Minnesota Valley Action Council
110 6th St.
Gaylord, MN 55334
507-237-2981

Sibley County Public Health & Human Services
111 8th St.
Gaylord, MN 55334
507-237-4000

The Salvation Army
700 S. Riverfront Dr.
Mankato, MN 56001
507-345-7840

If you are unable to come to a mutual agreement with us but fall under all of the conditions for protection, then you can contact the MN Public Utilities Commission's Consumer Affairs Office at **651-296-0406** or **800-657-3782,** or email **consumer.puc@state.mn.us**. They will help work with you to keep yout heat on.

Energy Saving Tips

- Manage your thermostat 66°-68° during the heating season.
- Install a programmable thermostat. Set the temperature back 10° for eight hours every night during the winter months, and lower your heating bills by 10%.
- Replace or clean your furnace filters monthly.
- Check the duct work for dirt streaks, especially seams. These indicate air leaks and they should be sealed.
  Caulk and weather strip any cracks around doors and windows.
- Insulate any ducts or pipes that travel through unheated spaces.
- Remove or cover window air conditioners during the winter.
- Lower the setting of your hot water heater to 120°F
- Open shades during winter days for passive solar heat and close them at night.
- Disconnect power to your home electronics (computer, peripheral equipment, TV, VCR, DVD, game systems etc.) by using a power strip as a central turn off point.