



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 17, 2020

Contact: Matt Sweeney, 608-266-9600

matthew.sweeney@wisconsin.gov

PSC Votes to Extend the COVID-19 Utility Disconnection Moratorium to November 1

Commissioners strongly urging customers to pay what they can

MADISON - On Thursday, the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC) voted 2-1 to continue to stay a portion of its June 26 order, extending the moratorium on utility residential customer disconnections and refusal of service for nonpayment until November 1. Prior to the extension, regulated utilities were not allowed to disconnect service for non-payment until October 1. The move comes as COVID-19 positive cases continue to spike in the state.

Commissioners strongly urge customers to contact their utility to set up payment plans or to seek energy assistance now, instead of waiting until the end of the moratorium.

"If you have been unable to pay your utility bills, contact your utility to arrange a payment plan or seek public assistance now, and while funding is available," said Rebecca Cameron Valcq, chairperson of the PSC. "Even paying a little bit at a time or applying for energy assistance today, can help head off an insurmountable debt at the end of the moratorium."

The PSC has been working with energy assistance program staff and utilities to ensure energy assistance and crisis funding is available, including an additional \$8 million in Low Income Energy Assistance Program crisis funds available through the federal CARES Act, to qualifying households to help manage heating season energy costs and, in the case of crisis funds, decrease customers' arrears.

If customers are having difficulty paying their energy bills, they may be eligible for assistance from the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP). To apply on line go to energybenefit.wi.gov or to find out where to apply in person or by phone, go to <http://homeenergyplus.wi.gov/> or call 1-866-HEATWIS.

If customers cannot reach an agreement with their utility, they are urged to contact the PSC by calling 1-800-225-7729, or by [filing a complaint on the PSC website](#).

The PSC's actions come as Wisconsin is approaching its annual moratorium on cold weather disconnections, for utility service used for home heating. The moratorium is set

to begin on November 1, 2020 and runs to April 15, 2021. Water, electric, and gas utilities seeking to request the ability to disconnect during the winter moratorium will have to file a disconnection plan with the PSC and receive approval before they can proceed with disconnections.

The PSC is continuing to monitor utilities' disconnection plans, payment plan terms, and customer notices to ensure they conform to existing orders, administrative codes, and state law.

[Information on the PSC's June decision.](#)

[Information on the PSC's July decision.](#)

[Information on the PSC's August decision.](#)

###