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HELPING EASE WINTER STRUGGLE'S GOAL OF PSC COLD WEATHER RULE

Lincoln, October 30, 2024- Winter months can be trying, that's why the Nebraska Public Service Commission (PSC) is reminding customers served by the [state's jurisdictional natural gas utilities](#) of its cold weather rule.

From November 1-through-March 31, [Black Hills Energy](#), and [NorthWestern Energy](#) cannot shut-off service to customers without allowing an additional 30 days to pay beyond the normal bill due date. During this period customers of Black Hills Energy or NorthWestern Energy who are finding it difficult to pay natural gas bills should contact the company to arrange payment.

"Despite our mild start to the fall-winter season, we know it won't last," said Commission Chair Dan Watermeier. "Having the cold weather rule in place allows jurisdictional natural gas providers to work with their customers to help ensure service is uninterrupted at a time when natural gas usage is typically higher."

The PSC implemented the cold weather rule more than 20 years ago, when it was given regulatory authority over the Nebraska's jurisdictional natural gas utilities. It is important to note that Nebraska communities with municipally owned natural gas utilities are not subject to regulation by the PSC and are not required to comply with the cold weather rule.

Local public assistance agencies can also be contacted for help with natural gas bills including the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services [Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program \(LIHEAP\)](#) and the Salvation Army.

Consumers are also encouraged to take steps to help minimize the impact of higher natural gas prices during the winter months. Gas utilities recommend lowering the thermostat to 68 degrees or lower and to reduce thermostat settings when a home or building is unoccupied. Obtain a home energy audit plan to conserve energy and if available participate in your gas company's yearly budget plan to spread cost throughout the years. ###

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