

**Janesville Utilities**  
**101 N. Mott Street**  
**Janesville, MN 56048**  
**(507) 234-5112**

## **MINNESOTA'S COLD WEATHER RULE**

### ★ **When is the cold weather rule in effect?**

From October 15<sup>th</sup> through April 15<sup>th</sup> each year.

### ★ **Can my heat be shut off in winter?**

**YES**, unless you take steps under the Cold Weather Rule (CWR) to protect yourself. You must contact Janesville Utilities to apply for protection from having your electricity shut off. This is true for all residential customers, including senior citizens and families with young children.

### ★ **Are all Utilities covered?**

All natural gas and electric utilities must follow some level of the CWR. If you need electricity to keep your heat on, you may apply for the CWR with Janesville Utilities.

### ★ **What steps must utilities take before disconnecting my service?**

Before Janesville Utilities may turn off your service during the winter months (October 15 through April 15), Janesville Utilities must provide you the following information:

- ✓ A disconnection notice telling you the date your service is subject to disconnection
- ✓ Details on payment plans and how to avoid disconnection – included in this brochure
- ✓ How to appeal if you and Janesville Utilities can't agree on a payment plan – included in this brochure
- ✓ A list of energy assistance providers – included in this brochure
- ✓ No-cost & low-cost methods of conserving energy – included with the notice of disconnection
- ✓ A Third Party Notice Form – included in this brochure

### ★ **How can I keep my heat on?**

You must make and keep a payment plan with Janesville Utilities, or be subject to disconnection. The

payments don't have to be the same each month, and you can make payments more than once a month. All payment plans must be in writing and signed by the account holder.

### ★ **How can I get reconnected if my heat is already shut off?**

Refer to your notice of disconnection for payment requirements, or contact the Utility Billing office at (507)234-5112 as soon as possible.

### ★ **How do I apply for the Cold Weather Rule?**

Complete the payment plan form on the reverse side of this brochure and return it to Janesville Utilities or stop by the Utility Billing office at City Hall.

### ★ **What happens after I apply?**

Your written payment plan will be reviewed by Janesville Utilities, taking into consideration your current balance and future bills. Written notification of whether your payment plan is approved or not accepted will be sent to you by mail. You must make your payments as outlined in your payment plan to continue having protection from disconnection.

### ★ **How long will my payment plan last?**

The length of your payment plan will be based on what you and Janesville Utilities have agreed upon. If your payment plan expires, you can contact Janesville Utilities to work out a new payment plan.

### ★ **What happens if I can't make my payments as promised?**

If you can't make your payment, call Janesville Utilities immediately to make and sign a new CWR payment plan. Failing to make your payments allows and permits Janesville Utilities to disconnect your service. You will also lose the ability to set up payment plans in the future.

## **NOTICE OF RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE COLD WEATHER RULE**

The Minnesota Public Utilities established the Cold Weather Rule (MN Statute 216B.097) to help customers who cannot pay their utility bill in full. **It does not completely stop winter disconnections, but provides extra protection from October**

**15 through April 15.** A utility cannot disconnect a residential utility customer for non-payment if the disconnection would affect your primary heat source **AND** you enter into and keep a mutually agreed upon payment plan with Janesville Utilities. The purpose of this notice is to inform you of your rights and responsibilities are designed to help you with winter utility bills. You must act **PROMPTLY!**

**Failure to assert your rights and exercise your responsibilities as outlined below allows and permits Janesville Utilities to disconnect your utility service.**

The Cold Weather Rule provides you with these options:

### **THE RIGHT:**

- ✓ to declare your "Inability to Pay" your utility bill. If you do so, your service affecting your primary heat source cannot be disconnected for nonpayment of your bill, **IF you enter into and keep a payment plan with the utility.** You have the right to appeal any proposed disconnection to Janesville Utilities. Your service will not be disconnected until this appeal is resolved.
- ✓ to a mutually acceptable payment plan with Janesville Utilities. This payment plan will cover your past due balance plus the estimated usage during the payment plan period. If you are able to pay but still wish to enter into a payment plan, contact Janesville Utilities to arrange and sign a payment plan. This payment plan may be arranged by your designated third party.
- ✓ to request that Janesville Utilities notify a third party if your service becomes subject to disconnection.

### **THE RESPONSIBILITY:**

- ✓ to complete the "Inability to Pay" payment plan form on the other side of this brochure and return it to Janesville Utilities. If you mail this form, you are not protected under a payment plan until you receive written confirmation from Janesville Utilities that your payment plan has been accepted.
- ✓ to make your payments as agreed or promptly notify Janesville Utilities why you cannot keep the arrangement. You may then request that the original payment plan be changed. Any change is subject to Janesville Utilities' approval.
- ✓ to receive Budget Counseling from the local energy assistance provider or other financial counseling organization. Local assistance agencies are listed in this brochure.

Disputes regarding the previously listed options can be appealed to Janesville Utilities. Copies of the Cold Weather Rule and appeal forms are available from Janesville Utilities.

**APPLICATION FOR WINTER DISCONNECT PROTECTION**

**INABILITY TO PAY DECLARATION FORM**

TO APPLY FOR COLD WEATHER PROTECTION FROM UTILITY SHUTOFF, FILL OUT THIS FORM **COMPLETELY** AND RETURN IT TO JANESVILLE UTILITIES IMMEDIATELY.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

SERVICE ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ APT# \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Cell# \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_

ACCOUNT NUMBER FROM YOUR BILL \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL AMOUNT YOU OWE \_\_\_\_\_

**PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS (Inability to Pay) - MUST BE COMPLETED**

I propose to pay my outstanding and future bills according to the following schedule of payments:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ (date)                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ (date)                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ (date)                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

By signing this form, I hereby acknowledge that I have received, read and understand the Notice of Residential Customer Rights and Responsibilities. I declare that the above information is true and correct. I give Janesville Utilities permission to release to any energy assistance program and any party administering such a program, my utility account data, including consumption data for a twelve month period and arrearage history, for the purpose of energy assistance program qualification. I understand that failure to make my agreed upon payments by the due date allows and permits the disconnection of my utilities and removal of my account from the Cold Weather Protection Plan.

Customer Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

***You will receive written notification if/when your application and intended payment plan is accepted by Janesville Utilities.***

**Where can you receive financial assistance?**

If you need help paying your gas or electric utility bills, you may qualify for state or federal fuel assistance. Budget counseling is also available. Listed below are several agencies that may be able to help.

- |                                 |                |                                     |
|---------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Minnesota Valley Action Council | (507) 835-8240 | 108 10 <sup>th</sup> Ave SE, Waseca |
| Neighborhood Service Center     | (507) 833-4119 | 203 3 <sup>rd</sup> Ave NW, Waseca  |
| Waseca County Human Services    | (507) 835-0560 | 299 Johnson Ave SW, Waseca          |
| HeatShare – Salvation Army      | (866) 455-6472 |                                     |
| Consumer Credit Counseling      | (888) 577-2227 |                                     |
| United Way                      | (800) 543-7709 |                                     |

**THIRD PARTY NOTIFICATION FORM**

If you have problems reading or understanding notices from Janesville Utilities, you may want to alert a third party (friend, relative, church group, community agency) that a disconnection notice or other information has been sent to you. The third party will not be responsible to pay your bill. The third party does have the right to contact Janesville Utilities and provide information or work out a payment arrangement.

If you want a third party to be notified of the potential disconnection, please complete this form and return it to Janesville Utilities.

Customer name \_\_\_\_\_

Account number \_\_\_\_\_

Service address \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_

Work phone \_\_\_\_\_

Third party \_\_\_\_\_

Third party address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Third party home phone \_\_\_\_\_

Third party work phone \_\_\_\_\_

Third party Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Janesville Utilities has my permission to provide information to and accept information from the third party named above.

Customer Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

This request will **not** be accepted without the third party's signature. The customer making the request understands that Janesville Utilities assumes no liability for failure of the third party to receive or act upon the notification.