

### THIRD PARTY NOTICE

The Third Party Notice applies to all customers. Experience has shown this program most benefits those who live alone, people with disabilities, senior citizens and customers who do not read English.

The purpose of this is to notify a third party and the customer that a Shut Off Notice has been sent. A third party could be a friend, relative, church or community agency. This helps avoid the hardship that would result from service being shut off. The third party is not responsible for payment.

#### REQUEST FOR NOTICE OF PROPOSED SHUT OFF TO THIRD PARTY

Customer Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please Print)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Great Plains Natural Gas Co. has my permission to provide information to and accept information from the party named below.

Customer's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Name of Third Party to be Notified:

(Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Third Party's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*(This request will not be accepted without third party's signature.)*

Great Plains Natural Gas Co. will make every effort to send a copy of the "Notice of Proposed Shut Off" to the party listed above. The customer making the request understands that Great Plains Natural Gas Co. assumes no liability for failure of third party to receive or act upon said Notice.

Complete all information, detach form and send to Great Plains at PO Box 5603, Bismarck, ND 58506-5603.

### ENERGY ASSISTANCE

#### Weatherization & Conservation Providers

- **West Central MN Communities Action, Inc.**  
c/o Energy Assistance  
411 Industrial Park Blvd., Elbow Lake, MN 56531  
1-800-492-4805 or 218-685-4486  
www.wcmca.org
  - **Mahube-Otwa Community Action Partnership, Inc.**  
128 W. Cavour Ave., Fergus Falls, MN 56537  
1-888-458-1385 or 218-739-3011  
www.mahube.org
  - **Prairie Five Community Action Council**  
c/o Energy Assistance  
719 N. 7th - Suite 302  
PO Box 159, Montevideo, MN 56265  
1-800-292-5437 or 320-269-6578  
www.prairiefive.com
  - **United Community Action Partnership, Inc.**  
c/o Energy Assistance  
1400 Saratoga St., Marshall, MN 56258  
1-800-658-2448 or 507-537-1416  
www.unitedcapmn.org
  - **Tri-Valley Opportunity Council**  
c/o Energy Assistance  
102 N. Broadway  
PO Box 607, Crookston, MN 56716  
1-800-584-7020 or 218-281-5832  
www.tvoc.org
- If you have questions or need more information on the Cold Weather Rule, please contact the:  
**Minnesota Public Utilities Commission  
Consumer Affairs Office  
121 7th Place East, Suite 350  
St. Paul, MN 55101-2147  
651-296-0406 • 1-800-657-3782 (toll-free)  
www.mn.gov/puc**

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*In the Community to Serve®*

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

FOR RESIDENTIAL HEAT CUSTOMERS REGARDING THE

# MINNESOTA COLD WEATHER RULE

- Explanation of the Cold Weather Rule
- Third Party Notice
- Assistance Directory

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## **MINNESOTA COLD WEATHER RULE**

Some customers find it hard to pay their utility bills in the winter. The State of Minnesota set up the Cold Weather Rule to protect residential customers from being shut off if they cannot pay their bills in full. This protection lasts from October 15 through April 15.

The Cold Weather Rule does not totally forbid winter shut off. If you receive a shut off notice this winter, you must act promptly.

If you have any questions, contact Great Plains at **1-877-267-4764**.

## **NOTICE OF PROPOSED SHUT OFF**

*If you receive a Shut Off Notice, you will also receive:*

1. Information on your rights & responsibilities, and
2. Information on ways to reduce energy use, and
3. A list of agencies that can help pay utility bills, and
4. A list of weatherization providers.

## **RECONNECTION**

If your gas is disconnected on October 15 when the Cold Weather Rule takes effect, you may have your gas reconnected by calling Great Plains Natural Gas Co. to set up a payment plan. You must keep your payment plan to keep your service on. Call Great Plains immediately if you cannot keep your payment plan and make a new payment plan to avoid disconnection.

## **PAYMENT PLANS**

If your household income is:

- at or below 50 percent of the state median income, you are not required to pay more than ten percent of your monthly household income.
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- more than 50 percent of the state median income, you may make a payment plan with Great Plains Natural Gas Co.

Most Cold Weather Rule payment plans last until April 15 unless you make other arrangements with Great Plains Natural Gas Co. Your service could be shut off if you have a past-due balance on April 15 and do not make and keep a new payment plan.

## **RIGHT TO APPEAL**

If you and Great Plains Natural Gas Co. cannot agree on a payment plan, you have ten working days to appeal to the Public Utilities Commission. The Commission will help you set up a payment plan, and your service will stay on during the appeal process.

## **GAS AFFORDABILITY PROGRAM (GAP)**

GAP is available to residential customers who receive Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Eligible customers must agree to be placed on a fixed payment plan. Contact Great Plains for complete details.

## **MEDICALLY NECESSARY EQUIPMENT**

A utility shall reconnect or continue service to a customer's residence where a medical emergency exists provided that the utility receives from a medical doctor written certification, or initial certification by telephone and written certification within five business days, that failure to reconnect or continue service will impair or threaten the health or safety of a resident of the customer's household. The customer must enter into a payment plan.

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## **ENERGY SAVING TIPS**

- Caulk and weather strip cracks around doors and window frames. Block openings at bottom of door to prevent drafts.
- Lower the setting on your thermostat at night and dress warmly.
- Lower the setting on your hot water heater to 120° F (low) and use a water heater wrap. If you have a dishwasher, then use 140° F (normal/medium) and run only when the dishwasher is full.
- Open shades during winter days to let the warm sunlight in and close shades at night.
- Wash clothes with warm water and rinse them in cold water.
- Leaking faucets should be repaired promptly, especially hot water.
- Turn off all unused lights and appliances.
- Close all windows tightly and use locks to prevent cold air leaking in. Cover all windows with plastic.
- Broken windows should be repaired immediately and close all storm windows.
- Window air conditioning units should be covered or removed during heating season.
- Furnace filters should be kept clean.
- Furnace should be checked for safe and efficient operation at least once a year.
- Close off unused rooms.
- Flow restrictors should be added on faucets to reduce water usage.

**Your Community Action Councils or Energy Assistance Agencies may offer these services. They are listed in the enclosed mailing.**

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