

Commissioners Urge Utilities To Extend Moratorium On Disconnections Through Winter 2021

September 9 2020 2:55 PM



CHICAGO – Concerned with steady coronavirus infection rates and the approaching cold weather, the Illinois Commerce Commission on Friday sent a letter to large state-regulated utilities requesting an extension of the moratorium on residential customer disconnections for non-payment until March 31, 2021.

The letter, signed by all five Commissioners, notes that the Illinois Department of Public Health has reported over 240,000 confirmed COVID-19 cases; and 30 Illinois counties stand at a warning level due to increasing COVID-19 cases. In addition, more restrictive mitigation measures have been imposed on Illinois Regions 4 and 7 to slow the spread of the virus.

While acknowledging that many utilities may now disconnect customers for non-payment, the Commission's letter requested that utilities voluntarily extend the moratorium on residential customer disconnections to align with the winter heating rules. Each year, the state imposes a winter moratorium for gas and electric services beginning December 1st and ending on March 31st.

Last week, the ICC announced the following companies agreed to extend the moratorium on disconnections for residential customers until September 30, 2020: Nicor Gas, Northshore/Peoples Gas, Illinois American Water, Aqua Illinois, and Utility Services of Illinois. Ameren Illinois and ComEd agreed to extend through September 10, 2020. Consumer Gas and Liberty Utilities previously agreed to not disconnect customers until 6 months after the stipulated moratorium period expired, which occurred on June 26, 2020, taking them into the winter months.

The Commission encourages residents who are struggling to pay their utility bills to call their utility company and request assistance. Deferred payment arrangements are available to help low-income customers and those financially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

To view the letter and learn more about the ICC's response to COVID 19 visit, <https://www.icc.illinois.gov/home/covid-19>.