

## WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR UTILITY BILL

### No-Cost Improvements

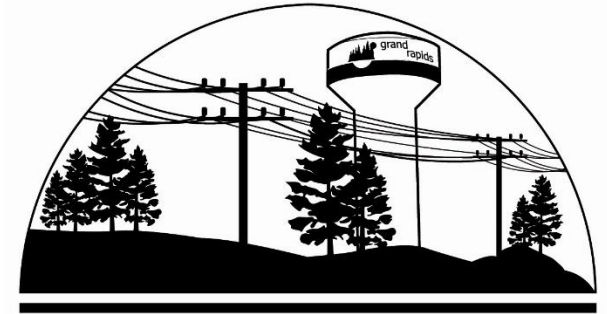
- Reduce your water heater temperature setting to 120 degrees. Set your dishwasher at 140 degrees if possible.
- Set your thermostat as low as is comfortable in the winter and as high as is comfortable in the summer.
- Each degree above 68 degrees F in the winter can add 3 percent to heating costs.
- Each degree above 72 degrees F in the summer can lower cooling costs by 3 percent.
- Turn off lights.
- Turn off TVs, peripheral equipment such as DVDs and gaming sets when not in use.
- Turn off all unused appliances.
- Clean the lint filter after each dryer load. Set the dryer controls to prevent overdrying clothes.
- Close windows tightly and use locks to help prevent cold air from leaking in.

### Low-Cost / No-Cost Energy Tips

These simple practices can save you from 5 percent to 10 percent on your yearly utility bill. In most cases, all they will cost you is a little time.

- Use LED light bulbs wherever possible.
- Caulk and weather strip attic and basement spaces, fireplaces, wall outlets, pipes and ducts to reduce leakage of conditioned air.
- Cover windows with plastic.
- Install an insulated wrap on an electric water heater when it's located in an unheated area.
- Reduce water use in showers and at faucets by installing flow restrictors.
- Have your heating and cooling systems serviced once a year to ensure peak operational efficiency.
- Clean or replace heating and cooling filters once a month or as needed.

More ways to save energy and water can be found on our website at [www.grpuc.org](http://www.grpuc.org) or by calling the GRPUC office.



**GRAND RAPIDS  
PUBLIC UTILITIES**  
*Service is Our Nature*

**MINNESOTA  
COLD WEATHER RULE**  
**Annual Notice to  
Residential Customers**

GRAND RAPIDS  
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
City of Grand Rapids, Minnesota  
500 SE 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

Business Office: (218) 326-7024

Fax: 218-326-7499

[www.grpuc.org](http://www.grpuc.org)

The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule is designed to protect people who may have trouble paying their utility bills in winter. The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule applies from October 1 to April 30. The rule, State Statute 216B.097 was established by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission.

Subdivision 1. Application; notice to residential customer.

(a) A municipal utility or a cooperative electric association must not disconnect and must reconnect the services of a residential customer during the period between October 1 and April 30 if the disconnection affects the primary heat source for the residential unit and all of the following conditions are met:

- (1) The household income of the customer is at or below 50 percent of the state median household income. A municipal utility or cooperative electric association utility may (i) verify income on forms it provides or (ii) obtain verification of income from the local energy assistance provider. A customer is deemed to meet the income requirements of this clause if the customer receives any form of public assistance, including energy assistance, that uses an income eligibility threshold set at or below 50 percent of the state median household income.
- (2) A customer enters into and makes reasonable timely payments under a payment agreement that considers the financial resources of the household.
- (3) A customer receives referrals to energy assistance, weatherization, conservation, or other programs likely to reduce the customer's energy bills.

Subdivision 2. Notice to residential customer facing disconnection.

Before disconnecting service to a residential customer (during the period between October 1 and April 30), the Grand Rapids Public Utilities Commission provides the following information to customers:

- (1) A notice of proposed disconnection;
- (2) A statement explaining the customer's rights & responsibilities;
- (3) A list of local energy assistance providers;
- (4) Forms on which to declare inability to pay;
- (5) A statement explaining payment plans to secure service

## INABILITY TO PAY

Residential customers with household incomes of less than 50% of the state median income level who receive a disconnection notice may apply for inability to pay by filling out the Inability to Pay Declaration Form included with the disconnection notice and returning it to the GRPUC within 10 days of receiving the notice. When you mail this form, you are also be responsible for contacting the GRPUC for an appointment to review your payment plan. If you set up a payment plan and comply with the terms of your payment plan, your service will not be disconnected.

## SETTING UP A PAYMENT PLAN

If you can't pay your full utility bills and need to make special arrangements to spread your payments, call the GRPUC at (218) 326-7024 to enter into a payment plan which is acceptable to both you and the GRPUC. The schedule must cover everything you already owe plus payment for the amount of electricity you're expected to use over the time your payment schedule covers. If the plan you request is not acceptable to the GRPUC, your service may be disconnected. First, however, the customer has the right to appeal to the General Manager of the GRPUC for a decision of what a fair payment schedule should be.

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### Minnesota Extreme Heat Law

A utility may not effect an involuntary disconnection of services in affected counties when an excessive heat watch, advisory or a warning issued by the National Weather Service is in effect.

*(Source: Minnesota Statutes 216B.0975)*

### Medical Alert

If you have a medical emergency, disabled person in the residence or require medically necessary equipment, please contact GRPUC at (218) 326-7024.

If you need help paying your utility bill, please see the local energy assistance providers listed below:

Kootasca Energy Assistance  
E-Heat Program  
218-999-0800  
Toll Free: 1-877-687-1163

Itasca County Social Services  
218-327-2941 or  
1-800-422-0312

Leech Lake Energy Assistance  
218-335-3783

Salvation Army Heat Share  
1-800-842-7279

First Call for Help  
218-326-8565

## PAYMENT OPTIONS

At the drive-through drop box located outside the GRPUC office.

In person at the GRPUC office by cash, check or money order.

Automatic bank withdrawal – create an account at [www.grpuc.org](http://www.grpuc.org)

By mail – allow 5 days for mail delivery and payment processing – send remittance to:

**Grand Rapids Public Utilities Commission**  
**500 SE 4<sup>th</sup> Street**  
**Grand Rapids, MN 55744**

To pay by credit card or electronic check, visit the GRPUC website at:

[www.grpuc.org](http://www.grpuc.org)

or call

1-855-456-5158