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Serving Electric, Water & Wastewater Since 1886

News Release

Stoughton Utilities

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Brian Hoops, Assistant Utilities Director

Stoughton Utilities cautions against electric service disconnections as winter moratorium ends

Stoughton Utilities is advising electric and water customers who are behind on their bills to immediately pay any delinquent balances, or make payment arrangements with the utility to avoid service disconnection.

Wisconsin's Winter Emergency Period, often referred to as the moratorium on residential service disconnection, ends April 15. After that date, utilities statewide may begin to disconnect service to customers who are past due on payment of their electric bills for any period of time, including the winter months. Stoughton Utilities plans to disconnect electric service to all severely delinquent accounts on April 19.

“The end of the winter moratorium on disconnections is fast approaching,” said Brian Hoops, Assistant Utilities Director. “Unpaid bills drive up costs for the whole community. It is Stoughton Utilities' goal to do what we can to collect unpaid bills while also attempting to help customers avoid service disruptions for nonpayment.”

The Public Service Commission of Wisconsin established the annual moratorium—from November 1 to April 15—to protect customers from service disconnection during harsh Wisconsin winters.

According to Hoops, more than 1,500 utility customers have overdue bills totaling over \$275,000. Despite these figures, over 75 percent of customers pay their bills on time each month.

“We understand that situations can arise, making it difficult for customers to pay their bills,” said Hoops. “However, to avoid disconnection, we are urging customers to make the appropriate payment arrangements.”

Customers can contact Stoughton Utilities to see if they are eligible to establish a deferred payment arrangement, which can spread payment of delinquent balances out over a period of time. The utility will negotiate payment options with each eligible customer based upon their unique financial situation, however will require a down-payment of at least one-third the past-due balance.

Deferred payment agreements can not be offered to any tenant customer who has defaulted on a deferred payment agreement in the past 12 months, or is responsible for any account arrearages that were placed on any property owner’s tax bill in the City of Stoughton in the past 24 months. Customers with greater than \$100 of account arrearages that are more than 90 days past due or any balance that accrued during the winter moratorium that is more than 80 days past due are also ineligible for a deferred payment agreement.

Various low-income assistance programs are offered to Stoughton Utilities customers through our Commitment to Community program, as well as other area resources. To apply for energy assistance, customers should immediately call 1-866-HEATWIS (432-8947). An appointment is necessary, and assistance payments may take up to six weeks to be received.

Customers can review their account balances and make payments online at stoughtonutilities.com. To make payment arrangements or to explore payment options with the utility, customers can contact Stoughton Utilities at (608) 873-3379 during normal business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

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