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NEWS

Cold Weather Rule protects eligible customers from service disconnection

DULUTH, Minn. – Minnesota Power reminds its residential customers who may have difficulty paying their energy bills in winter that help is available. The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule will protect eligible customers from service disconnection during the winter as long as they take steps to ensure that protection.

Under the statute, eligible residential energy customers are protected from service disconnection from October 15 through April 15 if the disconnection would affect the customer's primary heating source.

Customers must work out a monthly payment plan with Minnesota Power to be protected. The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule does not prevent winter shutoff if customers don't commit to a payment plan and don't make the agreed-to payments on time.

Any residential customer who receives a proposed shutoff notice during the winter should act promptly and **contact Minnesota Power at (800) 228-4966 to set up a payment plan or for more information.** Customers recently received detailed information about the Cold Weather Rule with their energy bills.

An Energy Assistance Program, or EAP, also may benefit customers who need help paying their bill. Visit mnpower.com/EAPproviders or call (800) 657-3710 for information. Minnesota Power's CARE program (Customer Affordability of Residential Electricity) is one program that may help. Customers can find out if they are eligible for a reduced electric rate through CARE by visiting mnpower.com/care. Households that qualify for energy assistance also may be eligible to receive other benefits, including exemptions from some fees and weatherization and energy efficiency programs.

Minnesota Power provides electric service within a 26,000-square-mile area in northeastern Minnesota, supporting comfort, security and quality of life for 145,000 customers, 15 municipalities and some of the largest industrial customers in the United States. More information can be found at www.mnpower.com.

The statements contained in this release and statements that ALLETE may make orally in connection with this release that are not historical facts, are forward-looking statements. Actual results may differ materially from those projected in the forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties and investors are directed to the risks discussed in documents filed by ALLETE with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

