

STATE OF IOWA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
UTILITIES BOARD

IN RE: EMERGENCY EXTENSION OF WINTER MORATORIUM FOR NATURAL GAS AND ELECTRIC SERVICE CUSTOMERS	DOCKET NO. SPU-2020-0003
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**ORDER EXTENDING WINTER MORATORIUM FOR ELECTRIC AND
NATURAL GAS CUSTOMERS**

(Issued March 13, 2020)

On January 31, 2020, the United States Department of Health and Human Services declared a national public health emergency based on the World Health Organization's report concerning an outbreak of tens of thousands of cases, and thousands of deaths, associated with Novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19), in multiple countries across the globe.

On March 9, 2020, multiple individuals within the state of Iowa tested presumptive positive for COVID-19 and Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds issued a statewide disaster proclamation of public health emergency, commencing on March 9, 2020, pursuant to the provisions in Iowa Code section 29C.

The proclamation was issued because the global pandemic alert issued by the World Health Organization and the confirmed cases in Iowa impact the state due to the need for federal, state, and local officials to employ resources, personnel, facilities, equipment, and other necessary assets needed to assist with the effort to perform any and all activities to prevent, contain, or mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 virus in a coordinated fashion across the state of Iowa. Efforts to contain

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the virus may include self-quarantines that could require Iowans to remain in their homes for an extended period.

The Governor's proclamation states that the COVID-19 virus threatens the public health and safety of the citizens of the state of Iowa and authorizes the use of state resources to assist the citizens of Iowa in all 99 counties.

Iowa Code § 476.20(2) establishes a moratorium from disconnection of natural gas and electric customers who are eligible for low-income home energy assistance between November 1 and April 1. The statute required the Utilities Board (Board) to adopt rules to implement requirements for eligible customers and for the utilities that are providing natural gas and electric service. The Board adopted rules at 199 IAC 19.4(17) for natural gas service and at 20.4(17) for electric service that provide: "No disconnection may take place from November 1 through April 1 for a resident who is a head of household and who has been certified to the public utility by the local community action agency as being eligible for either the low-income home energy assistance program or weatherization assistance program."

Consistent with the Governor's disaster proclamation of public health emergency, the Board will extend the period covered by the winter moratorium that previously would have ended on April 1, 2020. The moratorium will now continue until May 1, 2020. This extension of the moratorium will apply to those already-qualified persons in the state of Iowa who would otherwise be subject to possible disconnection on April 1, 2020. At this time, the application period for those not currently qualified remains April 30, 2020. The primary purpose of the extension is to allow those customers to remain in their residences to quarantine in place, as

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necessary, and to mitigate the potential economic impact that could otherwise create a hardship. This extension applies to all electric and natural gas investor-owned, municipal, and cooperative utilities that provide natural gas or electric service to customers in the state of Iowa.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

The winter moratorium, which normally prevents disconnection of eligible electric and natural gas customers between November 1 and April 1, is extended until May 1, 2020, and applies to all 99 counties, which have been declared to be impacted by the public health emergency resulting from the global pandemic.

UTILITIES BOARD

/s/ Geri D. Huser

/s/ Nick Wagner

ATTEST:

/s/ Kelsie Vanderflute

/s/ Richard W. Lozier, Jr.

Dated at Des Moines, Iowa, this 13th day of March, 2020.