

CUSTOMER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES TO AVOID SHUTOFF OF WATER SERVICE FOR NONPAYMENT

- 1. What can I do if I receive a notice from the utility that says my water service will be shut off because I have a past due bill?**
 - a. Pay the bill in full;
 - b. Enter into a reasonable payment plan with the utility (see #2 below); or
 - c. Tell the utility if you think part of the amount shown on the bill is wrong. However, you must still pay the part of the bill you agree you owe the utility (see #3 below).
- 2. How do I go about making a reasonable payment plan? (Residential customers only)**
 - a. Contact the utility as soon as you know you cannot pay the amount you owe. If you cannot pay all the money you owe at one time, the utility may offer you a payment plan that spreads payments evenly over at least 6 months. The plan may be longer depending on your financial situation.
 - b. If you have not made the payments you promised in a previous payment plan with the utility and still owe money, you may qualify for a second payment agreement under certain conditions. If you do not make the payments you promise, the utility may shut off your utility service on one day's notice unless all the money you owe the utility is paid or you enter into another payment agreement.
- 3. What should I do if I believe my bill is not correct?**

You may dispute your utility bill. You must tell the utility that you dispute the bill. You must pay the part of the bill you think is correct. If you do this, the utility will not shut off your service for 45 days from the date the bill was mailed while you and the utility work out the dispute over the part of the bill you think is incorrect. You may ask the Iowa Utilities Commission for assistance in resolving the dispute. (See #6 below.)
- 4. When can the utility shut off my utility service because I have not paid my bill?**

The utility will not shut off your service for up to 45 days from the rendering of the bill if you have notified the utility that you dispute a portion of your bill and you pay the part of the bill that you agree is correct. The 45 days will be extended if requested of the utility by the Utilities Commission in the event you file a written complaint with the Utilities Commission.
- 5. How will I be told the utility is going to shut off my service?**

You must be given a written notice at least 12 days before the utility service can be shut off for nonpayment.
- 6. If service is shut off, when will it be turned back on?**
 - a. The utility will turn your service back on promptly if you pay the whole amount you owe or, in the event that you dispute a portion of the bill, you pay the portion of the bill that is not under dispute (see #2 above).
 - b. The utility may charge you a fee to turn your service back on. Those fees may be higher in the evening or on weekends, so you may ask that your service be turned on during normal utility business hours.
- 7. Is there any other help available besides my utility?**

If the utility has not been able to help you with your problem, you may contact the Iowa Utilities Commission toll-free at 877.565.4450. You may also write the Iowa Utilities Commission at 1375 E. Court Ave., Des Moines, IA 50319, or by email at customer@iuc.iowa.gov. Low-income customers may also be eligible for free legal assistance from Iowa Legal Aid, and may contact Legal Aid at 800.532.1275.