Utility Shut-Offs

Categories : Energy Assistance/Utilities

Connecticut residents are protected from shut-off of their utility services, under certain circumstances. The following outlines the circumstances that apply for water, telephone, electric, and natural gas services.

WATER
Households with a person who is seriously ill or who has a life threatening illness are protected from water shut-off as follows: If a doctor provides written verification that a person in the household is “seriously ill”, the household is protected from shut-off during the winter moratorium period (Nov. 1-May 1). If a doctor’s verification states that the person has a “life threatening illness”, the household is protected from shutoff year round.
IF THE CUSTOMER’S WATER IS ALREADY SHUTOFF: If their water company is a regulated water company, the protection is the same and the company would have to turn them back on. If it is an unregulated water company, the company is not required to turn the customer back on, but many water companies do try to “mirror” what the regulated companies do. Generally, the municipal water companies are unregulated, but the customer would have to call PURA to see if their water company is regulated or not.

TELEPHONE (LAND-LINE ONLY)
State regulations state that residential land-line phone service cannot be terminated for non-payment while any resident is seriously ill, as certified to the phone company by a doctor. However, the customer must agree to a payment arrangement for the unpaid balance AND keep the account current while paying off the unpaid balance.

ELECTRIC AND GAS

WINTER MORATORIUM:
2023 Update: Eligible households (financial hardship) are protected against heat AND non-heat source shut offs between 11/1/2022 and 5/1/2024. Program usually runs each year between 11/1 and 5/1, yet has been extended to include the period between 5/1/2023 and 11/1/2023. This protection is guaranteed for all eligible electric customers by Connecticut Statute and cannot be denied, regardless of shut offs, nonpayment, or any other reason. There is no minimum amount that must be paid before a household will be turned back on at the beginning of the moratorium period.

In Connecticut, utility companies that provide natural gas and/or electric service are limited by law as to when and under what circumstances they are permitted to shut off a customer’s service.
• Life-threatening Shut-offs: Electric and gas companies may not shut off or refuse to turn on utility service at any time during the year if a lack of service is life-threatening, regardless of the amount of money a customer owes.
• Winter Shut-offs: Protection for low-income persons from winter shut-offs that are not life-threatening is available from November 1 to May 1, under certain circumstances, depending on whether the company provides electric or gas service.

REGULATIONS

To read about consumer rights as they pertain to utility shutoffs, see “Your Utility Service Rights and Responsibilities” on the Connecticut Public Utility Regulatory Authority website.
https://portal.ct.gov/PURA/Consumer-Services/Customer-Rights–Responsibilities

To Browse the Regulations of Title 16 – Public Service Companies
Department of Public Utility Control regarding:

**Termination of Electric, Gas, Water and Sewage Utility Service
–https://eregulations.ct.gov/eRegsPortal/Browse/RCSA/Title_16Subtitle_16-3Section_16-3-100/

**Security Deposits Requested by Gas or Electric Companies
– https://eregulations.ct.gov/eRegsPortal/Browse/RCSA/Title_16Subtitle_16-262jSection_16-262j-1/

TO FIND PROVIDERS IN CONNECTICUT'S COMMUNITY RESOURCES DATABASE:

• **Search by service name:** Seasonal/Year-Round Utility Disconnection Protection

---

SOURCES: Connecticut Department of Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA); Secretary of State
PREPARED BY: 211/ch
CONTENT LAST REVIEWED: May2023