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ICC Calls on Utilities to Halt Shut-Offs and Late Payment Fees Amid Coronavirus Concerns

In response to Governor JB Pritzker’s call for a moratorium on water, natural gas and electric service disconnections, the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) has been in contact with investor-owned regulated utilities urging them to take immediate steps to cease disconnections for non-payment, and to suspend the imposition of late payment fees or penalties, until May 1, 2020.

“The ICC is prepared to do everything possible within our authority to ensure consumers’ essential water, natural gas, and electric services remain intact for all Illinois citizens. We have already reached out to the utilities seeking confirmation that they have plans in place to prevent service disruptions, and to request that they stop disconnections and suspend late payment fees or penalties, until May 1, 2020,” said Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) Chairman Carrie Zalewski.

In addition to phone calls by ICC senior staff to the regulated utilities, a letter sent by the ICC on Friday (see attached), said that it is likely that the disconnection of services for non-payment may disproportionately affect the elderly and persons with medical conditions, and other vulnerable persons.

“Families coping with the illness or uncertainty about COVID-19, or a loss of income as a result of this public health emergency shouldn’t have to worry about disruptions in critical utility services or being hit with hefty late fees. The ICC is in the process of determining what formal steps need to be taken regarding the termination of utility service to customers and will react expeditiously as allowed under the law,” said Zalewski.

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About the Illinois Commerce Commission

The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) is a quasi-judicial body made up of five Commissioners. Through its Public Utility Program, the Commission oversees the provision of adequate, reliable, efficient and safe utility services at the least possible cost to Illinois citizens served by electric, natural gas, telecommunications, water and sewer public utility companies. Through its Transportation Regulatory Program, the Commission oversees public safety and consumer protection programs with regard to intrastate commercial motor carriers of general freight, household goods movers, relocation towers, safety towers, personal property warehouses and repossession agencies. The Commission's Rail Safety Program also inspects and regulates the general safety of railroad tracks, facilities and equipment in the state.

To learn more about the Commission, its offices and bureaus, click [here](#). If you are a consumer who needs help resolving a utility dispute call 800-524-0795 or file an online complaint [here](#). For a complaint related to transportation, call 217-782-6448.

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