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ICC Formalizes Order to Stop Utility Disconnections and Late Payment Fees

Chicago, IL...The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) on Wednesday in Regular Open Session voted unanimously to formalize Governor Pritzker and the ICC's request of Illinois electric, natural gas, water and wastewater utilities to cease disconnections and the threat of disconnections during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) public health emergency. The order also calls on the utilities to suspend late payment fees until May 1, or the crisis has passed, and to implement flexible utility credit and collection procedures to ensure customers remain connected to essential utility services when the emergency status ends.

"Life changed seemingly overnight for all Illinois residents due to COVID-19. As regulators, it is our responsibility to balance the interest of the utilities with the needs of consumers. Now is not the time to be cutting off potentially life-saving utility services. Ceasing disconnections and threatening notices, and hefty fines will give residents some much-needed peace of mind during these difficult days," said Illinois Commerce Commission Chairman Carrie Zalewski.

"The citizens of Illinois are being asked to take unprecedented steps to curb the spread of this dangerous virus. By staying at home and limiting contact with others, many businesses are now faced with closure or reducing operations leaving many people with little or no pay in the coming weeks," said Commissioner Sadzi Martha Oliva. "This emergency order ensures that no one loses power, natural gas or running water because they can't afford to pay their bills during these hard times. If we all work together, we can make it through this crisis."

The Commission intends to initiate a docketed proceeding on the matter involving all of the utilities to ensure that consumers remain connected to essential utility services during the recovery process. Each Illinois gas, electric distribution, water, and sewer utility will be required to file proposed revised credit and collections procedures in this proceeding for the Commission's consideration and approval.

A copy of the Emergency Order, Docket No. 20-0309, can be found [here](#) on the ICC website.

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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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