

# KNOWLEDGE IS POWER DISCONNECTION PROTECTIONS



## NEW PROTECTIONS FOR DISCONNECTIONS

Oregonians now have stronger permanent rules in place for consumer protections around disconnection. Regulators have also approved new customer protection rules for accessibility in starting utility service and communications from utilities.

*These rules apply to Oregon's for-profit utilities: PGE, Pacific Power, Idaho Power, NW Natural, Cascade, and Avista.*

## NEW DISCONNECTION AND RECONNECTION POLICIES

DON'T IGNORE



a disconnection notice!

### NOTICING AND OUTREACH BEFORE DISCONNECTION

After a past due bill, utilities are required to notify customers that a shutoff is possible. They must give a notice at least **20 days** and then **5 days** before shutting off service.

### DAYS WITH NO DISCONNECTIONS

- Weekends (Friday through Sunday)
- State or utility holidays **and** day before holiday (ex: July 3rd **and** 4th)
- Extreme weather events (see next page!)

### LIMITS ON RECONNECTION FEES

Utilities have strict limits on when they can charge a reconnection fee:

- No fees\* for bill discount program participants
- No fees\* for medical certificate holders
- No fees\* for remote reconnection

\* Does not apply to after hours (after 5 pm or weekends)

### LIMITS ON BILL REPAYMENT



**No more than \$200 upfront** for past due amounts for those with bill discounts or medical certificates. *Applied to the total owed.*



All customers can spread remaining past due amount repayment over at least six months.

### BILL RELIEF & FORGIVENESS PROGRAMS

- Ask your utility about **bill management or relief programs!** All for-profit energy utilities are required to have programs by October 2026.
- See if you qualify for a **monthly bill discount program!** Any customer making 60% or below the State Median Income can qualify for a discount every month.
- **Emergency energy assistance** can help! Funds are limited throughout the year but may be available in your area through a Community Action Agency.

### ACTION NEEDED!

You may need to call your utility to access these programs.

### HAVE AN ISSUE? FILE A COMPLAINT!

The Oregon Public Utility Commission regulates all for-profit gas and electric utilities. If you have an issue with your utility that cannot be solved by customer service, contact the Commission!

[puc.consumer@puc.oregon.gov](mailto:puc.consumer@puc.oregon.gov) • 503-378-6600 • [www.bit.ly/PUCcomplaints](http://www.bit.ly/PUCcomplaints)

# EXTREME WEATHER DISCONNECTION PROTECTIONS



## EXTREME WEATHER? CALL YOUR UTILITY

### DISCONNECTED: KEEP YOUR UTILITIES IN EXTREME WEATHER

If you have been disconnected for past due bills ahead of and into an extreme weather event, **you must call your gas or electric utility to restart service** during the protected times. Utilities will not reconnect you automatically.

### NO UPFRONT RECONNECTION COSTS FOR SOME CUSTOMERS

For Bill Discount Program customers and Medical Certificate homes, utilities cannot charge anything upfront to restart service during extreme weather. Past due amounts and qualifying fees will still be applied to future bills. This is only for those shut off for past due bills within 7 days of a weather event.

## COLD WEATHER PROTECTIONS

Cold-weather protections now go beyond just the winter months.

### November 1 - April 30

#### No disconnections

- ✓ 24 hours before cold event
- ✓ During cold event
- ✓ 48 hours after cold event



### May 1 - October 31

#### No disconnections

- ✓ During cold event
- ✓ 48 hours after cold event



For PGE, Pacific Power, Idaho Power, NW Natural, Avista, and Cascade.

## HEAT & AIR PROTECTIONS

**Hot-weather protections** apply when there is an extreme heat warning, extreme heat watch, or heat advisory issued.

#### No disconnections

- ✓ 24 hours before heat event
- ✓ During heat event
- ✓ 48 hours after heat event



For PGE, Pacific Power, and Idaho Power.

**Air quality protections** apply when the Air Quality Index (AQI) is forecasted to be at or above 100, any time of year.

#### No disconnections

- ✓ During air quality event
- ✓ 48 hours after air quality event



For PGE, Pacific Power, Idaho Power, NW Natural, Avista, and Cascade.

## WILDFIRE EVACUATION PROTECTIONS

Wildfire protections apply during **Level 2** and **Level 3** evacuation notices.

#### All Residential Customers:

- ✓ **No disconnections** for 48 hours after evacuation notice is lifted.

For PGE, Pacific Power, Idaho Power, NW Natural, Avista, and Cascade.

