

STATE OF IOWA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
UTILITIES BOARD

<p>IN RE:</p> <p>EMERGENCY ORDER REGARDING DISCONNECTION OF ELECTRIC, NATURAL GAS, AND WATER UTILITY CUSTOMERS</p>	<p>DOCKET NO. SPU-2020-0003</p>
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**ORDER REGARDING DISCONNECTION OF ELECTRIC, NATURAL GAS, AND
WATER UTILITY CUSTOMERS**

(Issued March 27, 2020)

On January 31, 2020, the United States Department of Health and Human Services declared a national public health emergency based on the World Health Organization's (WHO) report concerning an outbreak of tens of thousands of cases, and thousands of deaths, associated with novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19), in multiple countries across the globe. Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds issued a statewide disaster proclamation of public health emergency commencing on March 9, 2020, to continue until the state public health emergency has been formally lifted by Governor Reynolds in writing, pursuant to the provisions in Iowa Code chapter 29C.

In response to the March 9, 2020 proclamation, the Utilities Board (Board) issued an order on March 13, 2020, which extended the winter moratorium for eligible electric and natural gas customers from April 1, 2020, to May 1, 2020. This extension prevented disconnection of eligible customers until after May 1, 2020.

On March 17, 20, and 23, 2020, Governor Reynolds issued supplemental

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proclamations that expanded on the original by ordering, among other provisions, the closing of public facilities, including restaurants, bars, theaters, salons, pools, and similar facilities; suspending certain licensing requirements; limiting gatherings to 10 or fewer people; and providing relief in the form of temporarily relaxed and modified regulations. The Governor issued the proclamations with the continued goal of freeing up resources to address the public health emergency and mitigate its impact.

The Board applauds and thanks the utilities for the leadership they have shown by voluntarily ceasing customer disconnections prior to this point. To help protect the public health, the Board is officially adopting the current practice of utilities that restricts the disconnection of electric and natural gas customers to apply to customers of all municipal, cooperative, and investor-owned utilities. The Board is adopting this policy for all investor-owned water utilities for the duration of this public health emergency.

The Board finds that disconnection of water utility customers during this public emergency is not acceptable. It is in the public interest for customers to have access to water since personal hygiene is a critical part of limiting the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

The Board strongly encourages and requests that all public water utilities allow customers to retain water service during this public health emergency and suspend disconnections for the same time frame as ordered for regulated utilities.

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IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

1. All electric and natural gas utilities, including municipal, cooperative, and investor-owned, and all investor-owned water utilities are restricted from disconnecting any customers until the public health emergency is lifted by written statement of Governor Kim Reynolds.

2. All water utilities, including rural, municipal, and cooperative, are strongly encouraged and requested to suspend disconnecting any customers until the public health emergency has been lifted by written statement of Governor Kim Reynolds.

UTILITIES BOARD

/s/ Geri D. Huser

/s/ Nick Wagner

ATTEST:

/s/ Louis Vander Streek

/s/ Richard W. Lozier, Jr.

Dated at Des Moines, Iowa, this 27th day of March, 2020.