

Consumer Bill of Rights

An Overview

This flier is designed to provide residential customers with information regarding their rights under Chapter 13 of the Missouri Public Service Commission's rules and regulations.

As a residential customer of a utility regulated by the Missouri Public Service Commission you have certain rights. For example:

- If utility service is denied, the company must provide an explanation to you verbally and/or in writing for the refusal and advise you as to what steps are necessary to resolve the denial and to receive service.
- You have the right to speak to qualified utility personnel during normal business hours.
- You have the right to question and dispute all or part of a charge. The utility company is then required to investigate promptly and thoroughly; and attempt to resolve the dispute in a manner satisfactory to both parties.
- You have the right to file an informal/formal complaint against the utility company with the Public Service Commission.
- A utility shall postpone service disconnection for a time not in excess of 21 days if the service disconnection will aggravate an existing medical emergency of the customer, a member of his/her family or other permanent resident of the premises where service is rendered. Any person who alleges a medical emergency shall, if requested, provide the utility company with reasonable evidence of the necessity.
- At least 24 hours before a service disconnection, a utility company shall make reasonable efforts to contact the customer to advise the customer of the proposed service disconnection and what steps must be taken to avoid it.

Consumer Services Unit

The Missouri Public Service Commission's Consumer Services Unit handles thousands of calls a year and saves Missouri customers involved in utility-related problems hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Specialists can help you with:

- Improper termination of utility service
- Incorrect or unauthorized charges on the utility bill
- Problems with reading the utility meter
- Customer deposits for utility service
- Poor service quality
- High bill complaints
- Problems with delayed service connection
- Problems with back billing

Important Weather Related Information

- Under the Missouri Public Service Commission's Cold Weather Rule, utilities cannot disconnect heat related utility service to customers when the National Weather Service predicts, for the following 24 hour period, that the temperature will drop below 32 Degrees Fahrenheit. This applies when the Cold Weather Rule is in effect from November 1 to March 31.
- Under the state Hot Weather Law, cooling related service cannot be disconnected when the National Weather Service predicts, for the following 24 hour period, that the temperature will rise above 95 Degrees Fahrenheit or that the heat index will rise above 105 Degrees Fahrenheit. The Hot Weather Law is in effect from June 1 to September 30.

Consumer Responsibility

When working with a utility regulated by the Missouri Public Service Commission, it is important the customer provide the following information:

- Name and proof of identification
- Service and mailing address
- Contact information

In order to establish or maintain service, the customer should:

- Pay a deposit if required
- Pay your bill on time
- Follow through on payment arrangements
- Provide the company access to their equipment
- Pay a bill correcting a previous under charge

While not required, you may want to contact the utility company several weeks before you move.



Missouri Public Service Commission

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