

Personal Identification (I.D.)

Utility service is service on credit. Before you open an account, we will ask you to show I.D. Some types of valid I.D. include:

- Photo I.D. card or Driver's license
- U.S. military card
- Current utility bills or bank statements
- Rental agreements
- Social service agency letter I.D. or Employment letter I.D.

Meter Readings and Other Access

We equip all meters with automated meter reading units for remote meter reading without entering your yard. We use radio-equipped vehicles to read your meter monthly. For heavily wooded property we may need to use your driveway. We must occasionally enter your yard for meter maintenance. If we must disconnect your service for meter maintenance, we will call you in advance.

Meter Clearance for Emergency Access

You may not build a deck or other enclosure over your meter, as it will prevent emergency crews from having access to the shut-off valve. Call us to have the meter relocated.

Monthly Bills

You will be sent a bill on or around the 5th of each month. To avoid a late payment charge or shut-off notice, pay your bill by the 25th. The due date is printed on your bill.

Call us if you do not receive your bill. Notify us if you plan to move, so we may transfer the billing to the next resident's name or the landlord's name.

What's on your bill?

All bills include:

- Customer name
- Billing address
- Service address (if not the billing address)
- Current meter reading and date
- Prior meter reading and date
- Number of gas units (therms) used
- If it was an estimated reading
- Number of days billed

- Class of service
- Amount due
- Sales Tax

Late Payment Charges

We will add a late payment charge if your bill is not paid by the due date printed on your bill. The late payment charge will be a one time charge of 3 % of your current unpaid bill (minimum \$0.30).

Overdue Bill Collection Charges

Some customers do not pay their winter heating bills, although they have income greater than 250% of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines, and are therefore considered able to pay. We may take legal action in Small Claims court to collect payment from these customers, and/or may report the unpaid bill or judgment to a collection agency. These customers must pay our cost of collecting their overdue payments. For Small Claims judgments, these costs are assessed as treble damages for charges during the winter shut-off moratorium (Nov. 1 – April 15), plus court fees. Additional collection charges will be applied by the collection agency.

Credit Reporting

If an account becomes due and no payment arrangements have been established with us, we may report the account to a credit bureau. We may also use the services of a collection agency to collect on the account.

Installment Plans for Overdue Bills

You may use an installment plan to pay what you owe. This helps you pay your current bills and any overdue bills. You will be asked to make a "fair" down payment and "fair" installments. A "fair" amount is based on:

- Your ability to pay
- The size of your overdue bill
- How long your bill has been overdue
- Your payment history
- Reasons your bill is overdue
- Other important factors

We may ask you to sign an installment agreement. Do not sign it unless you agree to the terms. You have the right to negotiate an installment agreement. If you do not pay installments as agreed, we may shut off your service. If you do not pay, we do not have to renegotiate an agreement before we shut off your service. It is up to

you to call us and let us know about important reasons to negotiate a new plan. If you cannot agree with us on an installment plan, you can file a dispute with the PSC. While the PSC reviews your dispute, your service will not be shut off. However, you must pay all bills not in dispute.

Service Disconnections

Your service can be shut off if:

- You fail to pay your bills.
- You fail to pay installments as agreed.
- You fail to post a required deposit.
- A prior customer living at your address has an unpaid bill for the same address.
- You fail to pay our cost for collecting an overdue bill.
- You tamper with your meter.
- There is a safety hazard.

We are permitted to transfer a landlord's unpaid bill from a rental residential property to the office or home of the landlord or property manager. If the bill continues to go unpaid, service can be shut off at the landlord's or property manager's office or home.

We must send you a notice before your service is shut off for non-payment. This notice must include:

- Reasons for the shut-off.
- Date when service can be shut off.
- How to contact us about the shut off.

The notice must be mailed or hand-delivered to your home or mailing address at least eight (8) days before the shutoff. A notice must also be posted at the service address if it is not the same as your home or mailing address. We are also required to make a reasonable attempt to contact you by telephone or in person before the service is shut off.

If service is not shut off within 15 days after the notice is mailed, we must leave a new notice at the site 24 (but not more than 48) hours before the service is shut off.

Charge for Reconnection of Service

When you request reconnection after being disconnected for nonpayment of bills, you must pay a reconnection charge in advance. The reconnection charge is \$35 for reconnection on weekdays, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and \$50 for after-hours reconnections. Customer tampering incurs significant penalties, including loss of service.

Medical Problems

If there is a medical problem or other crisis, we will delay service shut-off, or restore service if shut off, for up to 21 days to give you extra time to make payment arrangements. We may ask for a letter about the crisis from your doctor or public health official, social service official, police or sheriff. It is also possible to extend the 21-day delay.

Third Party Shut-off Notice

You can ask us to send a copy of your shut-off notice to a relative, guardian, or other third party.

Winter Shut-off Rules

If natural gas is the primary heat source to your home, we cannot shut off service from November 1 - April 15.

Before winter, we must attempt to contact customers whose service was shut off for nonpayment of bills. We make a special effort to turn on service before it gets cold.

If you know of someone who has no heat, call us. You do not have to give your name. If service is not turned on in a reasonable time, call the PSC.

Deposits

If you are a **new** residential customer you may be asked to post a deposit if you did not pay an undisputed bill for gas service anywhere in Wisconsin during the last six years.

If you are a **current** residential customer, you may be asked to post a deposit if:

- Your service was shut off during the last 12 months for non payment.
- You falsified a service application.
- Your payment for service from November 1 - April 15 is 80 days or more overdue and you have the ability to pay*.

A normal deposit is the sum of the **two** largest consecutive bills during the last 12 months:

Example:	January	\$225
	February	<u>+\$200</u>
		\$425 deposit

The deposit for those who are able to pay their winter heating bill but do not, and have an arrears amount incurred during the winter shut-off rules period that be-

comes 80 days or more past due, is the sum of the **four** largest consecutive bills during the last 12 months:

Example:	December	\$200
	January	\$225
	February	\$200
	March	<u>+\$150</u>
		\$775 deposit

We must pay you interest on your deposit. Each year the PSC sets a new interest rate. Your deposit and any interest earned will be returned to you after you have paid your gas bills promptly for 12 months.

*You do **not** have to post a deposit if your income is below 200% of the Federal Poverty level guidelines. These guidelines can be found on the PSC's website, <http://psc.wi.gov>.

Have a Dispute?

First contact us to try to solve the problem. If you are behind on your bill, we may offer you an installment plan to pay your bill. If we cannot solve your problem, call the PSC at **1-800-225-7729**. While the PSC reviews your dispute, your service will not be shut off. However, you must still promptly pay any charge not in dispute. After the PSC completes its review, a staff member will contact you and our company and will attempt to find an agreement that is acceptable to all parties.

Water Heater Safety Note

In order to prevent severe burns and unnecessary energy consumption, water heater thermostats should be set no higher than 125 degrees.

Budget Payment Plans

To manage high winter gas bills, ask us about a budget payment plan. This allows you to average your estimated annual use into even monthly payments. In February your payment amount is readjusted to reflect your actual use. In July, your bill is adjusted to correct over-billing or under-billing. These payment plans are available to all residential gas customers, even if in arrears.

Energy Usage Reports

We can give you an annual average of how much energy was used at your home during the last 36 months, and the average annual cost. At your request, we will provide this information to the realtor selling your home. If you have just moved into a home, we can give you the usage for the last 12 months.



Your Bill of Rights as a Residential Gas Utility Customer

St. Croix Gas prepared this brochure to let you know your rights as a gas customer. It includes answers to your most common questions and concerns.

If you have a question or problem with your bill or service, first contact us. Our office hours are weekdays, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Our phone number is (715) 425-6177.

If we cannot solve your problem, call the Public Service Commission (PSC):

Consumer Affairs (800) 225-7729
General (888) 816-3831
Fax (608) 266-3957
TTY (800) 251-8345
Website: <http://psc.wi.gov>

Financial assistance may be available to help you pay your heating bill. Call your county Health and Human Services agency.

*Pierce County: 715-273-6788
St. Croix County: 715-246-8337*