



# CITY OF LA CROSSE UTILITIES

## WATER - SEWER - STORM

400 La Crosse St

La Crosse WI 54601-3396

Phone (608) 789-7536

Fax (608) 789-7592

[utilities@cityoflacrosse.org](mailto:utilities@cityoflacrosse.org)

## MEMORANDUM

**To: Board of Public Works**  
**From: Bernard Lenz, Utilities Manager**  
**Date: 6-29-2020**  
**Subject: State Moratorium on Utility Disconnections During COVID-19 to End July 25, 2020**

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In response to Governor Evers' initial Safer at Home order, the PSC met on March 24 and ordered that:

- No public utility may disconnect or refuse service to any customer for nonpayment;
- No public utility may refuse service to a new customer for failure to provide documentation to prove identity and residency;
- Every public utility shall offer to any customer a deferred payment agreement;
- No public utility may assess upon any customer any fee or charge for late payment; and
- No public utility may require a cash deposit or other guarantee as a condition of a new service.

On May 13, 2020, the Wisconsin Supreme Court struck down Safer at Home, ending measures put in place to manage the spread of COVID-19. The utility disconnection moratorium, however, remained in place.

On June 11, 2020 the PSC voted to end these March 24<sup>th</sup> mandates as of July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020. However, Chairperson Rebecca Cameron Valcq of the PSC stated, "I strongly encourage utilities to provide extra flexibility for those whose lives and employment continue to be severely impacted by this disease."

Thus, the Utility respectfully asks the Board of Public Works for permission to use the PSC Chairman's direction and staff digression in the application of late fees and use of deferred payment agreements during the remainder of this pandemic.

The other options are to simply return to putting all accumulated late fees and unpaid bills on the tax assessments and bring requests for a late fee waiver or deferred payment plans to the BPW as appeals. Or to direct the Utility to continue waiving all late fees.