



## Public Utility Commission of Texas

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News Release  
October 20, 2022

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# PUCT Adopts Rule Prohibiting Disconnection of Water Service During Extreme Cold Weather Emergency

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## *New Rules Apply to non-Municipal Public Water and Sewer Utilities*

**Austin, Texas** – The Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUCT) today adopted rules prohibiting non-municipal public water and sewer utilities from disconnecting customers during extreme cold weather emergencies. The new rules mean those utilities cannot disconnect service or issue late fees for nonpayment of bills due during such emergencies, including for bills previously due.

“The new rules put the health and safety of Texans first during extreme cold weather emergencies,” said PUCT Chairman Peter Lake. “This means Texans can focus on their family’s safety during extreme cold and work with their water or sewer utility to make sure they pay their bills in a timely fashion.”

By rule, extreme cold weather emergencies are periods beginning when the previous day’s highest temperature in an area did not exceed 28 degrees Fahrenheit and the temperature is predicted to remain at or below that level for the next 24 hours according to the nearest National Weather Service reports for that area. For purposes of these rules, an extreme weather emergency ends on the second business day the temperature exceeds 28 degrees Fahrenheit.

Under the new rules, affected customers have a 30-day window to request a payment schedule. If a customer makes a request within those 30 days, the service provider must offer them a payment schedule. All non-municipal water and sewer utilities are required to notify their customers of these new rules by January 31, 2023.

The new rules are required under Senate Bill 3, passed by the 87<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Greg Abbott.

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### **About the Public Utility Commission**

Our mission is to serve Texans by regulating the state's electric, telecommunication, and water and sewer utilities, implementing respective legislation, and offering customer assistance in resolving consumer complaints. Since its founding in 1975, the Commission has a long and proud history of service to Texas, protecting customers, fostering competition, and promoting high quality infrastructure. To learn more, please visit <https://www.puc.texas.gov>.

## NOTICE REGARDING EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS

On or before **January 31, 2023**, all Investor-Owned Utilities (IOUs), Water Supply and Sewer Service Corporations (WSCs), Districts and Affected Counties must provide a one-time, written notice to customers in plain English and Spanish to inform the customer of new requirements to affected customers in extreme weather events. The one-time notice must include specific information as outlined in Texas Admin Code § 24.173(d).

Sample notice language is provided below to assist you with providing the notice.

### **NOTICE TO CUSTOMER REGARDING EXTREME WEATHER EMERGENCY**

Dear Customer:

The Public Utility Commission's rule in Title 16, Chapter 24 Texas Admin. Code § 24.173(d) prohibit (Company Name) from imposing a late fee or from disconnecting your retail water/sewer (select one or both) service for nonpayment of bills that are due during an extreme weather emergency until after the emergency is over.

An extreme weather event is defined as a period beginning when the previous day's highest temperature in your area did not exceed 28 degrees Fahrenheit, and the temperature is predicted to remain at or below that level for the next 24 hours according to the nearest National Weather Service reports for your area. For purposes of these requirements, an extreme weather emergency is over on the second business day the temperature exceeds 28 degrees Fahrenheit.

(Company Name) is required to offer a payment schedule to an affected customer that requests a payment schedule. If you are a customer of (Company Name) and are affected by an extreme weather emergency, you may request a payment schedule from (Company Name) for unpaid bills that are due during the extreme weather emergency.

For affected customers that request a payment schedule, (Company Name) is prohibited from disconnecting service for nonpayment of bills that are due during an extreme weather emergency. However, once a payment schedule is offered to the affected customer, **disconnections may resume if** (1) the affected customer declines to accept the payment schedule in a timely manner, **or** (2) if the affected customer has violated the terms of the payment schedule.

If you have a bill from (Company Name) due during an extreme weather emergency, then you are an affected customer and you qualify to request a payment schedule from (Company Name) for your bill. Please contact our office at: \_\_\_\_\_ (insert utility contact information for how to request a payment schedule here) \_\_\_\_\_.

Thank You,

(Company Name)

## AVISO AL CLIENTE CON RESPECTO A UNA EMERGENCIA CLIMÁTICA EXTREMA

Estimado cliente:

La Comisión de Servicios Públicos de Texas en su título 16, capítulo 24 Texas Admin. Code § 24.173(d) prohíbe (La empresa) de imponer un cargo por pago atrasado o desconectar su servicio de agua / drenaje (seleccione uno o ambos) por falta de pago de facturas que vencen durante una emergencia climática extrema hasta después del término de la emergencia.

Un evento climático extremo se define como un período que comienza cuando la temperatura más alta del día anterior en su área no superó los 28 grados Fahrenheit, y se pronostica que la temperatura permanecerá en o por debajo de ese nivel durante las próximas 24 horas de acuerdo con los informes del Servicio Meteorológico Nacional más cercanos de su área. Para los propósitos de estos requisitos, una emergencia climática extrema termina el segundo día en cual la temperatura excede los 28 grados Fahrenheit.

(La empresa) esta obligada a ofrecer un plan de pagos a un cliente afectado que solicite un plan de pagos. Si usted es cliente de (La empresa) y se ve afectado por una emergencia climática extrema, puede solicitar un plan de pagos a (La empresa) para las facturas no pagadas que vencieron durante la emergencia climática extrema..

Para los clientes afectados que solicitan un cronograma de pagos, (La empresa) tiene prohibido desconectar el servicio por falta de pago de facturas vencidas durante una emergencia climática extrema. Sin embargo, una vez que se ofrece un plan de pagos al cliente afectado, **las desconexiones pueden reanudarse si** (1) el cliente afectado se niega a aceptar el plan de pagos de manera oportuna, o (2) si el cliente afectado ha violado los términos del plan de pagos.

Si tiene una factura de (La empresa) que vence durante una emergencia climática extrema, entonces usted es un cliente afectado y califica para solicitar un plan de pagos de (La empresa) para su factura. Por favor, póngase en contacto con nuestra oficina en: \_\_\_\_\_ ( Inserte la información de contacto de la empresa de servicios públicos sobre cómo solicitar un plan de pagos aquí ) \_\_\_\_\_.

Gracias,

(La empresa)



**Cross Country Water Supply Corporation**  
14933 Wortham Bend Road  
China Spring, TX 76633  
Phone: 254-836-9962  
[Office@crosscountrywsc.org](mailto:Office@crosscountrywsc.org)  
[www.crosscountrywsc.org](http://www.crosscountrywsc.org)

January 3, 2023

#### **NOTICE TO CUSTOMER REGARDING EXTREME WEATHER EMERGENCY**

Dear Customer: The Public Utility Commission's rule in Title 16, Chapter 24 Texas Admin. Code § 24.173(d) prohibit (**Cross Country Water Supply Corporation**) from imposing a late fee or from disconnecting your retail water service for nonpayment of bills that are due during an extreme weather emergency until after the emergency is over. An extreme weather event is defined as a period beginning when the previous day's highest temperature in your area did not exceed 28 degrees Fahrenheit, and the temperature is predicted to remain at or below that level for the next 24 hours according to the nearest National Weather Service reports for your area. For purposes of these requirements, an extreme weather emergency is over on the second business day the temperature exceeds 28 degrees Fahrenheit. (**Cross Country Water Supply Corporation**) is required to offer a payment schedule to an affected customer that requests a payment schedule. If you are a customer of (**Cross Country Water Supply Corporation**) and are affected by an extreme weather emergency, you may request a payment schedule from (**Cross Country Water Supply Corporation**) for unpaid bills that are due during an extreme weather emergency. For affected customers that request a payment schedule, (**Cross Country Water Supply Corporation**) is prohibited from disconnecting service for nonpayment of bills that are due during an extreme weather emergency. However, once a payment schedule is offered to the affected customer, disconnections may resume if (1) the affected customer declines to accept the payment schedule in a timely manner, or (2) if the affected customer has violated the terms of the payment schedule. If you have a bill from (**Cross Country Water Supply Corporation**) due during an extreme weather emergency, then you are an affected customer and you qualify to request a payment schedule from (**Cross Country Water Supply Corporation**) for your bill. Please contact our office at: **254-836-9962** to make payment arrangements if necessary.

Sincerely,

**Cross Country Water Supply Corporation**



**Cross Country Water Supply Corporation**  
14933 Wortham Bend Road  
China Spring, TX 76633  
Phone: 254-836-9962  
[Office@crosscountrywsc.org](mailto:Office@crosscountrywsc.org)  
[www.crosscountrywsc.org](http://www.crosscountrywsc.org)

January 3, 2023

### **AVISO AL CLIENTE CON RESPECTO A UNA EMERGENCIA CLIMÁTICA EXTREMA**

Estimado cliente: La Comisión de Servicios Públicos de Texas en su título 16, capítulo 24 Texas Admin. Code § 24.173(d) prohíbe (**Cross Country Water Supply Corporation**) de imponer un cargo por pago atrasado o desconectar su servicio de agua por falta de pago de facturas que vencen durante una emergencia climática extrema hasta después del término de la emergencia. Un evento climático extremo se define como un período que comienza cuando la temperatura más alta del día anterior en su área no superó los 28 grados Fahrenheit, y se pronostica que la temperatura permanecerá en o por debajo de ese nivel durante las próximas 24 horas de acuerdo con los informes del Servicio Meteorológico Nacional más cercanos de su área. Para los propósitos de estos requisitos, una emergencia climática extrema termina el segundo día en el cual la temperatura excede los 28 grados Fahrenheit. (**Cross Country Water Supply Corporation**) esta obligada a ofrecer un plan de pagos a un cliente afectado que solicite un plan de pagos. Si usted es cliente de (**Cross Country Water Supply Corporation**) y se ve afectado por una emergencia climática extrema, puede solicitar un plan de pagos a (**Cross Country Water Supply Corporation**) para las facturas no pagadas que vencieron durante la emergencia climática extrema. Para los clientes afectados que solicitan un cronograma de pagos, (**Cross Country Water Supply Corporation**) tiene prohibido desconectar el servicio por falta de pago de facturas vencidas durante una emergencia climática extrema. Sin embargo, una vez que se ofrece un plan de pagos al cliente afectado, las desconexiones pueden reanudarse si (1) el cliente afectado se niega a aceptar el plan de pagos de manera oportuna, o (2) si el cliente afectado ha violado los términos del plan de pagos. Si tiene una factura de (**Cross Country Water Supply Corporation**) que vence durante una emergencia climática extrema, entonces usted es un cliente afectado y califica para solicitar un plan de pagos de (**Cross Country Water Supply Corporation**) para su factura. Por favor, póngase en contacto con nuestra oficina en: **254-836-9962**.

Gracias,

**Cross Country Water Supply Corporation**