

Office of People's Counsel  
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410-767-8150; 800-207-4055

### **COVID-19: What BGE Gas and Electric Customers Should Know**

Governor Hogan declared a State of Emergency for Maryland on March 5, 2020. On March 16, he announced an Executive Order prohibiting the termination of electric, gas, water and sewage services, as well as phone, cable, and internet services. The Order expired on September 1, 2020. The Public Service Commission made a ruling extending the moratorium until October 1, 2020 to prevent shut-offs and late fee collection for non-payment of electric, gas and private water. Any termination notice sent before October 1, 2020 is invalid.

The utility companies may not send a termination notice until October 1, 2020. The stated turn-off date cannot be before November 15, 2020.

#### **1. I have a pending BGE service termination notice for non-payment. Will my gas or electricity be shut-off?**

No. BGE will not terminate your service through November 15, 2020. You should still make every effort to pay your bill. Once the suspension is lifted, you will be responsible for the full amount. You may start receiving turn-off notices October 1, 2020.

OPC strongly recommends that you contact BGE to try and work out a payment plan. BGE will be offering 12-month payment plans to everyone and 24-month payment plans to OHEP-certified customers. There is no required down payment or security deposit to enter into a payment plan.

You can visit [www.bge.com/assistance](http://www.bge.com/assistance) for possible assistance options. You can go online to [www.bge.com/paymentarrangements](http://www.bge.com/paymentarrangements) or call their Customer Care team Mon-Fri, 7AM-7PM at 800-685-0123 to discuss payment arrangements. You can also visit [www.bge.com/assistance](http://www.bge.com/assistance) for possible assistance options. Let them know of a layoff or reduced hours due to the State of Emergency.

If you are concerned about your ability to pay your bill, there may be resources to help. Please contact us at [DLInfo\\_OPC@maryland.gov](mailto:DLInfo_OPC@maryland.gov) or review our resource guides at [www.opc.maryland.gov](http://www.opc.maryland.gov) to learn about different programs that might be able to assist you in getting back on track with your utility bill.

#### **2. If I can't make a payment right now, will I get a late fee added to my bill?**

No. BGE will not impose or collect any newly incurred late fees through October 1, 2020.

#### **3. What can I do if my gas or electric services are off right now?**

BGE will work with residents on a case-by-case basis who have had their service disconnected prior to the State of Emergency to have their service reconnected. If your BGE service is

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currently off, call BGE to discuss reconnection during the State of Emergency. To reconnect service during the State of Emergency contact BGE by calling their Customer Care team Mon-Fri, 7AM-7PM at 800-685-0123. As a part of the reconnection process BGE Customer Care agents will also work with you to identify assistance programs that can supplement bill payment and help ensure service remains connected after this crisis. Let them know of a layoff or reduced work hours due to the State of Emergency. BGE will not restore service in unsafe or hazardous conditions.

There may be other resources to help. Please contact us at [DLInfo\\_OPC@maryland.gov](mailto:DLInfo_OPC@maryland.gov) or review our resource guides at [www.opc.maryland.gov](http://www.opc.maryland.gov) to learn about different programs that might be able to assist you.

#### 4. What if someone in my household is critically ill or relies on electricity service for life support. What can I do to get service back on?

If someone in your home is critically ill and relies on electricity service for life support you should immediately contact BGE to discuss options. There may be options for your household. If you have a limited income and are receiving services at a hospital or medical facility, you should find out if there is a certified "Navigator" who can assist you with your utility service problem, or contact OPC for more information.

#### 5. What if I need to start or stop my utility service, report an outage, or report an issue?

If you need to access any of BGE's services, BGE recommends that you use their online portal at this time through [www.bge.com](http://www.bge.com). If you do not have access to the internet, you can call their Customer Care team Mon-Fri, 7AM-7PM for assistance with these services.

#### 6. Can I still make payments on my utility account?

Yes. While there are suspensions on non-payment service terminations, you can still make payments to your account. You can mail, call in to the automated system, or go online to [www.bge.com/payment](http://www.bge.com/payment) if you want to make a payment on your account. You can still go to some locations to pay in person, but because of the rapidly changing situation this option is not guaranteed. OPC recommends that you continue to make payments, even if partial payments, even though your utility services cannot be terminated.

#### 7. I have contacted my utility about working out a payment plan and they have not assisted me. What do I do now?

Remember: Your utility cannot issue a turn off until October 1, 2020. However, you will be subject to a turn-off if you are behind on your bill after November 15, 2020. It is a good idea to be proactive in managing your bill during the emergency. You are entitled to be offered a 12-

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month payment plan and a 24-month payment plan if you are an OHEP-certified customer. There is no requirement to make a down payment or security deposit to enter into a payment plan. If your utility will not agree to assist you, you can submit a complaint to the Consumer Assistance Division of the Public Service Commission (PSC/CAD). Due to the limitations on public agencies, you will need to submit the complaint online at [www.psc.state.md.us](http://www.psc.state.md.us). If you are not able to fill out the form online, contact OPC at 410-767-8150 and leave a message with your name and phone # and state the problem, and someone will contact you to assist you.

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### **COVID-19: What Choptank Customers Should Know**

Governor Hogan declared a State of Emergency for Maryland on March 5, 2020. On March 16, he announced an Executive Order prohibiting the termination of electric, gas, water and sewage services, as well as phone, cable, and internet services. The Order expired on September 1, 2020. The Public Service Commission made a ruling extending the moratorium until October 1, 2020 to prevent shut-offs and late fee collection for non-payment of electric, gas and private water. Any termination notice sent before October 1, 2020 is invalid.

The utility companies may not send a termination notice until October 1, 2020. The stated turn-off date cannot be before November 15, 2020.

#### **1. I have a pending Choptank Electric service termination notice. Will my gas or electricity be shut-off?**

No. Choptank will not terminate your service through November 15, 2020. You should still make every effort to pay your bill. Once the suspension is lifted, you will be responsible for the full amount. You may start receiving turn-off notices October 1, 2020.

OPC strongly recommends that you contact Choptank to try and work out a payment plan. Choptank will be offering 12-month payment plans to everyone and 24-month payment plans to OHEP-certified customers. There is no required down payment or security deposit to enter into a payment plan.

Customers can contact their Member Services Center at 877-892-0001. Let them know of any layoff or reduced income as a result of the State of Emergency.

If you are concerned about your ability to pay your bill, there may be resources to help. Please contact us at [DLInfo\\_OPC@maryland.gov](mailto:DLInfo_OPC@maryland.gov) or review our resource guides at [www.opc.maryland.gov](http://www.opc.maryland.gov) to learn about different programs that might be able to assist you in getting back on track with your utility bill.

#### **2. If I can't make a payment right now, will I get a late fee added to my bill?**

No. Choptank will not impose or collect any newly incurred late fees through October 1, 2020.

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### 3. What can I do if my gas or electric services are off right now?

Your gas or electric service will not be automatically restored. However, if your services are off right now, OPC recommends that you contact Choptank Electric. Customers can contact their Member Services Center at 877-892-0001.

There may be other resources to help. Please contact us at [DLInfo\\_OPC@maryland.gov](mailto:DLInfo_OPC@maryland.gov) or review our resource guides at [www.opc.maryland.gov](http://www.opc.maryland.gov) to learn about different programs that might be able to assist you.

### 4. What if someone in my household is critically ill or relies on Choptank service for life support. What can I do to get service back on?

If someone in your home is critically ill and relies on Choptank service for life support you should immediately contact Choptank to discuss options. There may be options for your household. If you have a limited income and are receiving services at a hospital or medical facility, you should find out if there is a certified "Navigator" who can assist you with your utility service problem, or contact OPC for more information.

### 5. What if I need to start or stop my utility service, report an outage, or report an issue?

If you need to access any of Choptank's services, use their online portal at [www.choptankelectric.coop](http://www.choptankelectric.coop) or call their Member Services Center at 877-892-0001 for assistance with these services.

### 6. Can I still make payments on my utility account?

Yes. While there are suspensions on non-payment service terminations, you can still make payments to your account. You can mail, call in to the automated system (866-999-4574), utilize the drop-boxes, or go online to [www.choptankelectric.coop](http://www.choptankelectric.coop) if you want to make a payment on your account. Choptank will be closing their lobbies, walk-in offices, and the Denton drive-thru until further notice. OPC recommends that you continue to make payments, even if partial payments, even though your utility services cannot be terminated.

### 7. I have contacted my utility about working out a payment plan and they have not assisted me. What do I do now?

Remember: Your utility cannot issue a turn off until October 1, 2020. However, you will be subject to a turn-off if you are behind on your bill after November 15, 2020. It is a good idea to be proactive in managing your bill during the emergency. You are entitled to be offered a 12-month payment plan and a 24-month payment plan if you are an OHEP-certified customer. There is no requirement to make a down payment or security deposit to enter into a payment plan.

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If your utility will not agree to assist you, you can submit a complaint to the Consumer Assistance Division of the Public Service Commission (PSC/CAD). Due to the limitations on public agencies, you will need to submit the complaint online at [www.psc.state.md.us](http://www.psc.state.md.us). If you are not able to fill out the form online, contact OPC at 410-767-8150 and leave a message with your name and phone # and state the problem, and someone will contact you to assist you.

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### **COVID-19: What Columbia Gas and Electric Customers Should Know**

Governor Hogan declared a State of Emergency for Maryland on March 5, 2020. On March 16, he announced an Executive Order prohibiting the termination of electric, gas, water and sewage services, as well as phone, cable, and internet services. The Order expired on September 1, 2020. The Public Service Commission made a ruling extending the moratorium until October 1, 2020 to prevent shut-offs and late fee collection for non-payment of electric, gas and private water. Any termination notice sent before October 1, 2020 is invalid.

The utility companies may not send a termination notice until October 1, 2020. The stated turn-off date cannot be before November 15, 2020.

#### **1. I have a pending Columbia Gas service termination notice. Will my gas or electricity be shut-off?**

No. Columbia Gas will not terminate your service through November 15, 2020. You should still make every effort to pay your bill. Once the suspension is lifted, you will be responsible for the full amount. You may start receiving turn-off notices October 1, 2020.

OPC strongly recommends that you contact Columbia Gas to try and work out a payment plan. Columbia Gas will be offering 12-month payment plans to everyone and 24-month payment plans to OHEP-certified customers. There is no required down payment or security deposit to enter into a payment plan.

You can call 888-460-4332 to discuss payment arrangements. Let them know of a layoff or reduced hours due to the State of Emergency.

If you are concerned about your ability to pay your bill, there may be resources to help. Please contact us at [DLInfo\\_OPC@maryland.gov](mailto:DLInfo_OPC@maryland.gov) or review our resource guides at [www.opc.maryland.gov](http://www.opc.maryland.gov) to learn about different programs that might be able to assist you in getting back on track with your utility bill.

#### **2. If I can't make a payment right now, will I get a late fee added to my bill?**

No. Columbia Gas will not impose or collect any newly incurred late fees through October 1, 2020.

#### **3. What can I do if my gas or electric services are off right now?**

Your service will not be automatically restored. However, if your services are off right now, OPC recommends that you contact Columbia Gas. Columbia Gas will be working with customers. You can call 888-460-4332 to discuss payment arrangements.

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#### 4. What if someone in my household is critically ill or relies on Columbia service for life support. What can I do to get service back on?

If someone in your home is critically ill and relies on Columbia Gas service for life support you should immediately contact Columbia Gas to discuss options. There may be options for your household. If you have a limited income and are receiving services at a hospital or medical facility, you should find out if there is a certified "Navigator" who can assist you with your utility service problem, or contact OPC for more information.

#### 5. What if I need to start or stop my utility service, report an outage, or report an issue?

If you need to access any of Columbia Gas's services, visit them online at [www.columbiagasmd.com](http://www.columbiagasmd.com) or call 888-460-4332 for assistance with these services.

#### 6. Can I still make payments on my utility account?

Yes. While there are suspensions on non-payment service terminations, you can still make payments to your account. You can mail, call in to the automated system, or go online to [www.columbiagasmd.com](http://www.columbiagasmd.com) if you want to make a payment on your account. OPC recommends that you continue to make payments, even if partial payments, even though your utility services cannot be terminated.

#### 7. I have contacted my utility about working out a payment plan and they have not assisted me. What do I do now?

Remember: Your utility cannot issue a turn off until October 1, 2020. However, you will be subject to a turn-off if you are behind on your bill after November 15, 2020. It is a good idea to be proactive in managing your bill during the emergency. You are entitled to be offered a 12-month payment plan and a 24-month payment plan if you are an OHEP-certified customer. There is no requirement to make a down payment or security deposit to enter into a payment plan. If your utility will not agree to assist you, you can submit a complaint to the Consumer Assistance Division of the Public Service Commission (PSC/CAD). Due to the limitations on public agencies, you will need to submit the complaint online at [www.psc.state.md.us](http://www.psc.state.md.us). If you are not able to fill out the form online, contact OPC at 410-767-8150 and leave a message with your name and phone # and state the problem, and someone will contact you to assist you.



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### **COVID-19: What Delmarva Power Customers Should Know**

Governor Hogan declared a State of Emergency for Maryland on March 5, 2020. On March 16, he announced an Executive Order prohibiting the termination of electric, gas, water and sewage services, as well as phone, cable, and internet services. The Order expired on September 1, 2020. The Public Service Commission made a ruling extending the moratorium until October 1, 2020 to prevent shut-offs and late fee collection for non-payment of electric, gas and private water. Any termination notice sent before October 1, 2020 is invalid.

The utility companies may not send a termination notice until October 1, 2020. The stated turn-off date cannot be before November 15, 2020.

#### **1. I have a pending Delmarva Power service termination notice. Will my gas or electricity be shut-off?**

No. Delmarva Power will not terminate your service through November 15, 2020. You should still make every effort to pay your bill. Once the suspension is lifted, you will be responsible for the full amount. You may start receiving turn-off notices October 1, 2020.

OPC strongly recommends that you contact Delmarva Power to try and work out a payment plan. Delmarva Power will be offering 12-month payment plans to everyone and 24-month payment plans to OHEP-certified customers. There is no required down payment or security deposit to enter into a payment plan.

You can call their Customer Care team Mon-Fri, 7AM-7PM at 800-375-7117 to discuss payment arrangements. Let them know if your income has been reduced due to a layoff or reduced income due to the State of Emergency.

If you are concerned about your ability to pay your bill, there may be resources to help. Please contact us at [DLInfo\\_OPC@maryland.gov](mailto:DLInfo_OPC@maryland.gov) or review our resource guides at [www.opc.maryland.gov](http://www.opc.maryland.gov) to learn about different programs that might be able to assist you in getting back on track with your utility bill.

#### **2. If I can't make a payment right now, will I get a late fee added to my bill?**

No. Delmarva Power will not impose or collect any newly incurred late fees through October 1, 2020.

#### **3. What can I do if my gas or electric services are off right now?**

Your gas or electric service will not be automatically restored. However, if your services are off right now, OPC strongly recommends that you contact Delmarva Power. Delmarva Power will be

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working with customers. You can call their Customer Care team Mon-Fri, 7AM-7PM at 800-375-7117 to discuss payment arrangements.

There may be other resources to help. Please contact us at [DLInfo\\_OPC@maryland.gov](mailto:DLInfo_OPC@maryland.gov) or review our resource guides at [www.opc.maryland.gov](http://www.opc.maryland.gov) to learn about different programs that might be able to assist you.

#### 4. What if someone in my household is critically ill or relies on electricity service for life support. What can I do to get service back on?

If someone in your home is critically ill and relies on electricity service for life support you should immediately contact Delmarva Power to discuss options. There may be options for your household. If you have a limited income and are receiving services at a hospital or medical facility, you should find out if there is a certified "Navigator" who can assist you with your utility service problem, or contact OPC for more information.

#### 5. What if I need to start or stop my utility service, report an outage, or report an issue?

If you need to access any of Delmarva Power's services, you can use their online portal or all their Customer Care team at 800-375-7117 for assistance with these services.

#### 6. Can I still make payments on my utility account?

Yes. While there are suspensions on non-payment service terminations, you can still make payments to your account. You can mail, call, go online, or pay in person. You can pay in person anywhere where Western Union is accepted or at the Delmarva Power walk-in KIOSK located at 2530 N. Salisbury Boulevard, Salisbury. OPC recommends that you continue to make payments, even if partial payments, even though your utility services cannot be terminated.

#### 7. I have contacted my utility about working out a payment plan and they have not assisted me. What do I do now?

Remember: Your utility cannot issue a turn off until October 1, 2020. However, you will be subject to a turn-off if you are behind on your bill after November 15, 2020. It is a good idea to be proactive in managing your bill during the emergency. You are entitled to be offered a 12-month payment plan and a 24-month payment plan if you are an OHEP-certified customer. There is no requirement to make a down payment or security deposit to enter into a payment plan. If your utility will not agree to assist you, you can submit a complaint to the Consumer Assistance Division of the Public Service Commission (PSC/CAD). Due to the limitations on public agencies, you will need to submit the complaint online at [www.psc.state.md.us](http://www.psc.state.md.us). If you are

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not able to fill out the form online, contact OPC at 410-767-8150 and leave a message with your name and phone # and state the problem, and someone will contact you to assist you.

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### **COVID-19: What Pepco Customers Should Know**

Governor Hogan declared a State of Emergency for Maryland on March 5, 2020. On March 16, he announced an Executive Order prohibiting the termination of electric, gas, water and sewage services, as well as phone, cable, and internet services. The Order expired on September 1, 2020. The Public Service Commission made a ruling extending the moratorium until October 1, 2020 to prevent shut-offs and late fee collection for non-payment of electric, gas and private water. Any termination notice sent before October 1, 2020 is invalid.

The utility companies may not send a termination notice until October 1, 2020. The stated turn-off date cannot be before November 15, 2020.

#### **1. I have a pending Pepco service termination notice. Will my gas or electricity be shut-off?**

No. Pepco will not terminate your service through November 15, 2020. You should still make every effort to pay your bill. Once the suspension is lifted, you will be responsible for the full amount. You may start receiving turn-off notices October 1, 2020.

OPC strongly recommends that you contact Pepco to try and work out a payment plan. Pepco will be offering 12-month payment plans to everyone and 24-month payment plans to OHEP-certified customers. There is no required down payment or security deposit to enter into a payment plan.

You can call their Customer Care team Mon-Fri, 7AM-8PM at 202-833-7500 to discuss payment arrangements. Let them know about any layoff or loss of income due to the State of Emergency.

If you are concerned about your ability to pay your bill, there may be resources to help. Please contact us at [DLInfo\\_OPC@maryland.gov](mailto:DLInfo_OPC@maryland.gov) or review our resource guides at [www.opc.maryland.gov](http://www.opc.maryland.gov) to learn about different programs that might be able to assist you in getting back on track with your utility bill.

#### **2. If I can't make a payment right now, will I get a late fee added to my bill?**

No. Pepco will not impose or collect any newly incurred late fees through October 1, 2020.

#### **3. What can I do if my gas or electric services are off right now?**

Pepco will work with residents who have had their service disconnected prior to the State of Emergency to have their service reconnected. If your Pepco service is currently off, call Pepco to discuss reconnection during the State of Emergency. To reconnect service during the State of Emergency contact Pepco by calling their Customer Care team Mon- Fri, 7AM-8PM at 202-833-7500. As a part of the reconnection process Pepco Customer Care agents will also work with you

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to identify assistance programs that can supplement bill payment and help ensure service remains connected after this crisis. Let them know of a layoff or reduced work hours due to the State of Emergency. Pepco will not restore service in unsafe or hazardous conditions.

There may be other resources to help. Please contact us at [DLInfo\\_OPC@maryland.gov](mailto:DLInfo_OPC@maryland.gov) or review our resource guides at [www.opc.maryland.gov](http://www.opc.maryland.gov) to learn about different programs that might be able to assist you.

#### 4. What if someone in my household is critically ill or relies on electricity service for life support. What can I do to get service back on?

If someone in your home is critically ill and relies on electricity service for life support you should immediately contact Pepco to discuss options. There may be options for your household. If you have a limited income and are receiving services at a hospital or medical facility, you should find out if there is a certified "Navigator" who can assist you with your utility service problem, or contact OPC for more information.

#### 5. What if I need to start or stop my utility service, report an outage, or report an issue?

If you need to access any of Pepco's services, Pepco recommends that you use their online portal at [www.pepco.com](http://www.pepco.com) or their Pepco mobile app. If you do not have access to the internet, you can call their Customer Care team Mon-Fri, 7AM-8PM at 202-833-7500 or 24/7 for emergencies at 877-737-2662.

#### 6. Can I still make payments on my utility account?

Yes. While there are suspensions on non-payment service terminations, you can still make payments to your account. You can mail, call, go online, or pay in person. You can pay in person anywhere where Western Union is accepted or at the Pepco walk-in KIOSK located at 8300 Old Marlboro Pike, Upper Marlboro. OPC recommends that you continue to make payments, even if partial payments, even though your utility services cannot be terminated.

#### 7. I have contacted my utility about working out a payment plan and they have not assisted me. What do I do now?

Remember: Your utility cannot issue a turn off until October 1, 2020. However, you will be subject to a turn-off if you are behind on your bill after November 15, 2020. It is a good idea to be proactive in managing your bill during the emergency. You are entitled to be offered a 12-month payment plan and a 24-month payment plan if you are an OHEP-certified customer. There is no requirement to make a down payment or security deposit to enter into a payment plan.

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If your utility will not agree to assist you, you can submit a complaint to the Consumer Assistance Division of the Public Service Commission (PSC/CAD). Due to the limitations on public agencies, you will need to submit the complaint online at [www.psc.state.md.us](http://www.psc.state.md.us). If you are not able to fill out the form online, contact OPC at 410-767-8150 and leave a message with your name and phone # and state the problem, and someone will contact you to assist you.

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### **COVID-19: What Potomac Edison Customers Should Know**

Governor Hogan declared a State of Emergency for Maryland on March 5, 2020. On March 16, he announced an Executive Order prohibiting the termination of electric, gas, water and sewage services, as well as phone, cable, and internet services. The Order expired on September 1, 2020. The Public Service Commission made a ruling extending the moratorium until October 1, 2020 to prevent shut-offs and late fee collection for non-payment of electric, gas and private water. Any termination notice sent before October 1, 2020 is invalid.

The utility companies may not send a termination notice until October 1, 2020. The stated turn-off date cannot be before November 15, 2020.

#### **1. I have a pending Potomac Edison service termination notice. Will my gas or electricity be shut-off?**

No. Potomac Edison will not terminate your service through November 15, 2020. You should still make every effort to pay your bill. Once the suspension is lifted, you will be responsible for the full amount. You may start receiving turn-off notices October 1, 2020.

OPC strongly recommends that you contact Potomac Edison to try and work out a payment plan. Potomac Edison will be offering 12-month payment plans to everyone and 24-month payment plans to OHEP-certified customers. There is no required down payment or security deposit to enter into a payment plan.

You can call their utility call center 888- 544-4877 to discuss payment arrangements. Let them know of any layoff or reduced income as a result of the State of Emergency.

If you are concerned about your ability to pay your bill, there may be resources to help. Please contact us at [DLInfo\\_OPC@maryland.gov](mailto:DLInfo_OPC@maryland.gov) or review our resource guides at [www.opc.maryland.gov](http://www.opc.maryland.gov) to learn about different programs that might be able to assist you in getting back on track with your utility bill.

#### **2. If I can't make a payment right now, will I get a late fee added to my bill?**

No. Potomac Edison will not impose or collect any newly incurred late fees through October 1, 2020.

#### **3. What can I do if my gas or electric services are off right now?**

Your electric service will not be automatically restored. However, if your services are off right now, OPC recommends that you contact Potomac Edison to try and work out a payment plan. Potomac Edison will be working with customers. You can call their utility call center 888- 544-4877 to discuss payment arrangements.

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#### 4. What if someone in my household is critically ill or relies on electricity service for life support. What can I do to get service back on?

If someone in your home is critically ill and relies on electricity service for life support you should immediately contact Potomac Edison to discuss options. There may be options for your household. If you have a limited income and are receiving services at a hospital or medical facility, you should find out if there is a certified "Navigator" who can assist you with your utility service problem, or contact OPC for more information.

#### 5. What if I need to start or stop my utility service, report an outage, or report an issue?

If you need to access any of Potomac Edison's services, Potomac Edison recommends that you use their online portal at this time through [www.firstenergycorp.com/help](http://www.firstenergycorp.com/help) or call the utility call center at 888-544-4877.

#### 6. Can I still make payments on my utility account?

Yes. While there are suspensions on non-payment service terminations, you can still make payments to your account. You can mail, call in to utility call center, go online, or walk-in to a payment site. OPC recommends that you continue to make payments, even if partial payments, even though your utility services cannot be terminated.

#### 7. I have contacted my utility about working out a payment plan and they have not assisted me. What do I do now?

Remember: Your utility cannot issue a turn off until October 1, 2020. However, you will be subject to a turn-off if you are behind on your bill after November 15, 2020. It is a good idea to be proactive in managing your bill during the emergency. You are entitled to be offered a 12-month payment plan and a 24-month payment plan if you are an OHEP-certified customer. There is no requirement to make a down payment or security deposit to enter into a payment plan.

If your utility will not agree to assist you, you can submit a complaint to the Consumer Assistance Division of the Public Service Commission (PSC/CAD). Due to the limitations on public agencies, you will need to submit the complaint online at [www.psc.state.md.us](http://www.psc.state.md.us). If you are not able to fill out the form online, contact OPC at 410-767-8150 and leave a message with your name and phone # and state the problem, and someone will contact you to assist you.



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### **COVID-19: What SMECO Customers Should Know**

Governor Hogan declared a State of Emergency for Maryland on March 5, 2020. On March 16, he announced an Executive Order prohibiting the termination of electric, gas, water and sewage services, as well as phone, cable, and internet services. The Order expired on September 1, 2020. The Public Service Commission made a ruling extending the moratorium until October 1, 2020 to prevent shut-offs and late fee collection for non-payment of electric, gas and private water. Any termination notice sent before October 1, 2020 is invalid.

The utility companies may not send a termination notice until October 1, 2020. The stated turn-off date cannot be before November 15, 2020.

#### **1. I have a pending SMECO service termination notice. Will my gas or electricity be shut-off?**

No. SMECO will not terminate your service through November 15, 2020. You should still make every effort to pay your bill. Once the suspension is lifted, you will be responsible for the full amount. You may start receiving turn-off notices October 1, 2020.

OPC strongly recommends that you contact SMECO to try and work out a payment plan. SMECO will be offering 12-month payment plans to everyone and 24-month payment plans to OHEP-certified customers. There is no required down payment or security deposit to enter into a payment plan. You can call their Customer Care team at 888-440-3311 to discuss payment arrangements. Let them know of any layoff or reduced income as a result of the State of Emergency.

If you are concerned about your ability to pay your bill, there may be resources to help. Please contact us at [DLInfo\\_OPC@maryland.gov](mailto:DLInfo_OPC@maryland.gov) or review our resource guides at [www.opc.maryland.gov](http://www.opc.maryland.gov) to learn about different programs that might be able to assist you in getting back on track with your utility bill.

#### **2. If I can't make a payment right now, will I get a late fee added to my bill?**

No. No. SMECO will not impose or collect any newly incurred late fees through October 1, 2020.

#### **3. What can I do if my gas or electric services are off right now?**

Your gas or electric service will not be automatically restored. However, if your services are off right now, OPC strongly recommends that you contact SMECO to try and get reconnected. You can call their Customer Care team at 888-440-3311 to discuss payment arrangements.

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There may be other resources to help. Please contact us at [DLInfo\\_OPC@maryland.gov](mailto:DLInfo_OPC@maryland.gov) or review our resource guides at [www.opc.maryland.gov](http://www.opc.maryland.gov) to learn about different programs that might be able to assist you.

#### 4. What if someone in my household is critically ill or relies on electricity service for life support. What can I do to get service back on?

If someone in your home is critically ill and relies on electricity service for life support you should immediately contact SMECO to discuss options. There may be options for your household. If you have a limited income and are receiving services at a hospital or medical facility, you should find out if there is a certified "Navigator" who can assist you with your utility service problem, or contact OPC for more information.

#### 5. What if I need to start or stop my utility service, report an outage, or report an issue?

Customers can submit start/stop service requests either online from SMECO's website or by calling SMECO directly and speaking with a customer care representative. Customers can report outages or service problems through SMECO's web site, by SMS text, through the SMECO 24/7 app, or by speaking to a customer care representative. SMECO will respond to all outages and system emergencies regardless of any challenges related to COVID-19.

#### 6. Can I still make payments on my utility account?

Yes. While there are suspensions on non-payment service terminations, you can still make payments to your account. Customers may pay bills by mail, by AutoPay, by telephone, online, or by mobile app. OPC recommends that you continue to make payments, even if partial payments, even though your utility services cannot be terminated.

#### 7. I have contacted my utility about working out a payment plan and they have not assisted me. What do I do now?

Remember: Your utility cannot issue a turn off until October 1, 2020. However, you will be subject to a turn-off if you are behind on your bill after November 15, 2020. It is a good idea to be proactive in managing your bill during the emergency. You are entitled to be offered a 12-month payment plan and a 24-month payment plan if you are an OHEP-certified customer. There is no requirement to make a down payment or security deposit to enter into a payment plan.

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If your utility will not agree to assist you, you can submit a complaint to the Consumer Assistance Division of the Public Service Commission (PSC/CAD). Due to the limitations on public agencies, you will need to submit the complaint online at [www.psc.state.md.us](http://www.psc.state.md.us). If you are not able to fill out the form online, contact OPC at 410-767-8150 and leave a message with your name and phone # and state the problem, and someone will contact you to assist you.

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### **COVID-19: What Washington Gas Customers Should Know**

Governor Hogan declared a State of Emergency for Maryland on March 5, 2020. On March 16, he announced an Executive Order prohibiting the termination of electric, gas, water and sewage services, as well as phone, cable, and internet services. The Order expired on September 1, 2020. The Public Service Commission made a ruling extending the moratorium until October 1, 2020 to prevent shut-offs and late fee collection for non-payment of electric, gas and private water. Any termination notice sent before October 1, 2020 is invalid.

The utility companies may not send a termination notice until October 1, 2020. The stated turn-off date cannot be before November 15, 2020.

#### **1. I have a pending Washington Gas service termination notice. Will my gas be shut-off?**

No. Washington Gas will not terminate your service through November 15, 2020. You should still make every effort to pay your bill. Once the suspension is lifted, you will be responsible for the full amount. You may start receiving turn-off notices October 1, 2020.

OPC strongly recommends that you contact Washington Gas to try and work out a payment plan. Washington Gas will be offering 12-month payment plans to everyone and 24-month payment plans to OHEP-certified customers. There is no required down payment or security deposit to enter into a payment plan.

You can call the Washington Gas Customer Service line at 844-927-4427 Mon-Fri, 8AM-9PM; Sat, 8AM-4:30PM to discuss payment arrangements. Let them know of any layoff or reduced income as a result of the State of Emergency.

If you are concerned about your ability to pay your bill, there may be resources to help. Please contact us at [DLInfo\\_OPC@maryland.gov](mailto:DLInfo_OPC@maryland.gov) or review our resource guides at [www.opc.maryland.gov](http://www.opc.maryland.gov) to learn about different programs that might be able to assist you in getting back on track with your utility bill.

#### **2. If I can't make a payment right now, will I get a late fee added to my bill?**

No. Washington Gas will not impose or collect any newly incurred late fees through October 1, 2020.

#### **3. What can I do if my gas service is off right now?**

Your gas service will not automatically be restored during the State of Emergency unless continuation of the termination will aggravate an existing serious illness or prevent the use of

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life-support equipment of any occupant of the premises. You must provide certification of a serious illness or the need for life-support equipment by a licensed physician, a certified nurse practitioner, or a physician assistant. If you need assistance with this process contact OPC to discuss your situation. If your services are off right now, OPC recommends that you contact Washington Gas. You can call the Washington Gas Customer Service line at 844-927-4427 Mon-Fri, 8AM-9PM; Sat, 8AM-4:30PM to discuss payment arrangements.

There may be other resources to help. Please contact us at [DLInfo\\_OPC@maryland.gov](mailto:DLInfo_OPC@maryland.gov) or review our resource guides at [www.opc.maryland.gov](http://www.opc.maryland.gov) to learn about different programs that might be able to assist you.

#### 4. What if someone in my household is critically ill or relies on Washington Gas services for life support. What can I do to get service back on?

If someone in your home is critically ill and relies on Washington Gas service for life support you should immediately contact Washington Gas to discuss options. There may be options for your household. If you have a limited income and are receiving services at a hospital or medical facility, you should find out if there is a certified "Navigator" who can assist you with your utility service problem, or contact OPC for more information.

#### 5. What if I need to start or stop my utility service, report an outage, or report an issue?

If you need to access any of Washington Gas's services, you can call 844-927-4427 Mon-Fri, 8AM-9PM; Sat, 8AM-4:30PM or go online at [www.washingtongas.com](http://www.washingtongas.com).

#### 6. Can I still make payments on my utility account?

Yes. While there are suspensions on non-payment service terminations you can still make payments to your account. You can mail, call in, go online, or walk-in. You can still go to some locations to pay in person, but because of the rapidly changing situation this option is not guaranteed. OPC recommends that you continue to make payments, even if partial payments, even though your utility services cannot be terminated.

#### 7. I have contacted my utility about working out a payment plan and they have not assisted me. What do I do now?

Remember: Your utility cannot issue a turn off until October 1, 2020. However, you will be subject to a turn-off if you are behind on your bill after November 15, 2020. It is a good idea to be proactive in managing your bill during the emergency. You are entitled to be offered a 12-month payment plan and a 24-month payment plan if you are an OHEP-certified customer. There is no requirement to make a down payment or security deposit to enter into a payment plan.

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If your utility will not agree to assist you, you can submit a complaint to the Consumer Assistance Division of the Public Service Commission (PSC/CAD). Due to the limitations on public agencies, you will need to submit the complaint online at [www.psc.state.md.us](http://www.psc.state.md.us). If you are not able to fill out the form online, contact OPC at 410-767-8150 and leave a message with your name and phone # and state the problem, and someone will contact you to assist you.