



## ***The 2017/2018 Wisconsin Public Service Commission Winter Moratorium Set to End April 15th***

**For Immediate Release**

**(March 22, 2018)**

(Marshfield, WI) – Spring brings the end of the moratorium on disconnection of electric service for non-payment. Only a small portion of Marshfield Utilities (MU) customers fall into this category, unfortunately the number is growing. In February there was \$186,000 in past due balances over 31 days old compared to \$158,000 for the previous year.

In 2017 there were 181 customers that did contact MU and set-up a payment agreement to get caught up on their bill. However, there were 141 disconnections last April. This is a lose-lose proposition for customer and Utility alike. MU wants to help.

MU has taken significant measures to reach out to these at-risk customers. “Our goal is to help them understand that the possibility of disconnection is real and also how they can obtain help”, says Ross Larson, Office Supervisor.

To make sure the past due customer is aware of any balance and date of disconnection, MU has printed the information on the March bill and has included a blaze orange card alerting them of the end of the moratorium. The March bill also has been mailed in a blaze orange envelope that states "Immediate Action Required". The customer will also receive an automated reminder call on April 9<sup>th</sup> to the phone number they provided; customers without a phone number on file will have a disconnection notice placed on their door on April 10th.

In an effort to be proactive, MU is releasing this information to the media to help get the word out. Several other steps have been taken including working with Wood County Human Services staff that handles Energy Assistance requests to provide them information to identify their previous recipients that are in-need and preparing a special mailing of 500 other customers that have not received Energy Assistance in the past, but may qualify this year. MU also stream-lined the process to request a Deferred Payment Agreement online at [MarshfieldUtilities.org](http://MarshfieldUtilities.org). Lastly, MU has complied with Wisconsin State statute and informed affected landlords of the possibility of disconnection at their property.

“There is no winner in a disconnection and all these communications are our attempt to avoid the interruption of service and to make certain our customers are aware of their options”, shares Larson.

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***Marshfield Utilities is a progressive customer-focused organization providing value and resources to the community. Operating since 1904, Marshfield Utilities now has more than 13,800 electrical customers and 8,300 water customers and is a stabilizing presence in the community. For more information, please visit [www.marshfieldutilities.org](http://www.marshfieldutilities.org) or look for us on <https://www.facebook.com/marshfieldutilities/>.***

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