



April 10, 2020

CONSUMER ALERT

Utility Payments During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

In response to the COVID 19 health emergency, the Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia (Commission) is encouraging District residents to contact their utility provider if they are having difficulties paying their utility bills.

The D.C. Council passed [emergency legislation](#) prohibiting the disconnection of electric and natural gas services for non-payment during the COVID-19 public health emergency. Although disconnection of service for non-payment has been suspended, consumers will continue to be billed as usual by their utilities for services consumed.

[Supplemental emergency legislation](#) was also passed prohibiting a telecommunications service provider from disconnecting, suspending or degrading telecommunications service for non-payment of a bill, any fees for service or equipment, and other charges, or noncompliance with a deferred payment agreement during a public health emergency or for 15 calendar days thereafter.

It is important that those consumers who are able to pay for these services during the emergency period continue to pay their bills in a timely manner, as to avoid a high utility bill in upcoming months.

For consumers facing difficulty paying their utility bills, it is equally important to contact your utilities as soon as possible. The utility companies are committed to helping consumers weather this public health emergency by providing payment arrangements and consumer assistance programs.

- Pepco Customer Service Number: 202-833-7500
- Washington Gas Customer Service Number: 1-844-WASHGAS (927-4427)
- Verizon Customer Service Number: 1-800-922-0204

With more people at home during the day, the Commission is also encouraging residents to monitor their energy usage to avoid high utility bills. Here are tips to help manage your energy costs during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.

- Take advantage of daylight instead of artificial lighting.
- Turn off lights in unoccupied rooms and unplug electronics not in use.
- Turn down your thermostat a few degrees lower when heating and higher when cooling to reduce energy use.
- Turn down the temperature of your water heater.
- Take shorter showers to reduce hot water use.
- Wash only full loads of dishes and clothes. Consider air drying both dishes and clothing.

If you have questions or need help understanding what assistance may be available to you, please contact the Public Service Commission's Office of Consumer Services at 202-626-5120.

For Commission updates related to COVID-19, please visit our resource page at <https://dcpsc.org/Coronavirus.aspx>