ACCURACY AND SAFETY



Meter Readings and Other Access

We equip all meters with automated meter reading units for remote meter reading without entering your yard. We use radio-equipped vehicles to read your meter each month. For heavily wooded property we may need to use your driveway for good reception.

Accuracy Checks and Maintenance

Meters are removed for accuracy checks and maintenance every 15 years. If we must disconnect your service for meter removal, we will call you in advance.

Emergency Access to Meters for your safety

We cannot allow you to build a deck or other enclosure over your meter, as it will prevent emergency responders from having access to the gas shut-off valve. Call us to have your meter relocated to a safer location.

Gas Leak Checks

If you smell gas, indoors or out, call us immediately for a free gas leak check. This service is for your safety.

If a repair to your own piping is called for, we may be able to repair it for you, but there will be a charge. This repair service is also available from heating contractors.

Safety Reminders

In order to prevent severe burns and unnecessary energy consumption, we recommend that water heater thermostats should be set no higher than 125 degrees.

We remind you that all rental properties with natural gas in Wisconsin must have a carbon monoxide detector, and we recommend them for all homes and businesses.

USEFUL ACCOUNT RECORDS

Energy Usage Reports

You may ask us for the gas usage and costs for the last 12 months if you are moving into a home. We can also provide reports to your realtor to aid in selling your home.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Budget Payment Plans

To enable you to more easily manage high winter gas bills, you may ask us for a budget payment plan. This allows you to average your estimated annual use into even monthly payments. In February your payment amount is readjusted to reflect your actual use. In July, your bill is adjusted to correct over-billing or under-billing. These payment plans are available to all residential gas customers, even if in arrears.

Medical problems delaying your ability to pay?

If there is a medical problem or other crisis, we will delay service shut-off, or restore service if shut off, for up to 21 days to give you extra time to make payment arrangements. We may ask for a letter about the crisis from your doctor or public health official, social service official, police or sheriff. It is also possible to extend the 21-day delay.

Installment Plans for Overdue Bills (Deferred Payment Plans)

You may use an installment plan to pay your overdue bills. This helps you pay your current bills and any past unpaid bills. You will be asked to make a "fair" down payment and "fair" installments. A "fair" amount is based on:

- Your ability to pay
- The size of your overdue bill
- How long your bill has been overdue
- Your payment history
- Reasons your bill is overdue
- Other important factors

We may ask you to sign an installment agreement. Do not sign it unless you agree to the terms. You have the right to negotiate an installment agreement. If you do not pay installments as agreed, we may shut off your service. If you do not pay, we do not have to renegotiate an agreement before we shut off your service. It is up to you to call us and let us know about important reasons to negotiate a new plan. If you cannot agree with us on an installment plan, you can file a dispute with the PSC. While the PSC reviews your dispute, your service will not be shut off. However, you must pay all bills not in dispute.

Extra Billing and Payment Services offered for your convenience

We offer free automatic check withdrawal for your monthly bills. Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT).

Pay online with credit/debit card, or e-check using link at www.stcroixgas.com or call Payment Service Network (PSN) 877.885.7968. PSN charges varying fees starting at $4.40 per transaction.

For details on all of these options call our office at 715-425-6177 or check our website, www.stcroixgas.com.

AVOIDING PENALTIES AND DISCONNECTION OF SERVICE

Late Charges

Bills are sent on or around the 5th of each month. The due date is printed on your bill. To avoid a late payment charge or shut-off notice, pay your bill by the due date. The late payment charge will be a one-time charge of 3% of your current unpaid bill (minimum $0.30).

Call us if you do not receive your bill. Notify us if you plan to move, so we may send your last bill to your new mailing address in time for you to avoid a late charge.

We have convenient payment options to help you avoid late charges; see above.

Service Disconnections

Your service can be shut off if:

- You fail to pay your gas bill.
- You fail to pay installments as agreed.
- You tamper with your meter.
- You fail to post a properly assessed deposit.
- There is a safety hazard.
- A prior customer living at your address has an unpaid bill for the same address.
- You fail to provide us access to your meter or other utility equipment.

We must send you a notice before your service is shut off for non-payment. This notice must include:

- Reasons for the shut-off.
- Date when service can be shut off.
- How to contact us about the shut off.

Service Disconnections, continued:

The notice must be mailed or hand-delivered to your home or mailing address at least eight (8) days before the shutoff. A notice must also be posted at the service address if it is not the same as your home or mailing address. We are also required to make a reasonable attempt to contact you by telephone or in person before the service is shut off.

If service is not shut off within 15 days after the notice is mailed, we must leave a new notice at the site 24 hours (but not more than 48 hours) before the service is shut off.

Charge for Reconnection of Service

When you request reconnection after being disconnected for nonpayment of bills, you must pay a reconnection charge in advance. The reconnection charge is $35 for reconnection on weekdays, 8am to 5pm., and $65 for after-hours reconnections. Customer self-reconnection (tampering) incurs significant penalties, including loss of service. You can be legally charged with gas theft.

Third Party Notification of Gas Shut-off warnings

You can ask us to send a copy of your shut-off notice to a relative, guardian, or other third party.

Winter Shut-off Rules

If natural gas is the primary heat source to your home, we cannot shut off service from November 1 - April 15.

Before winter, we must attempt to contact customers whose service was shut off for nonpayment of bills. We make a special effort to turn on service before it gets cold.

If you know of someone who has no heat, call us. You do not have to give your name. If service is not turned on in a reasonable time, call the PSC.

Deposits

Deposits are not normally required. If we do require you to pay a deposit, we must pay you interest on your deposit. Each year the PSC sets a new interest rate. Your deposit and any interest earned will be returned to you after you have paid your gas bills promptly for 12 months.

If you are a **new** residential customer you may be asked to post a deposit if you did not pay an undisputed bill for gas service anywhere in Wisconsin during the last six years.

If you are a **current** residential customer, you may be asked to post a deposit if:

• Your service was shut off during the last 12 months for non payment.

• You falsified a service application.

• Your payment for service from November 1 - April 15 is 80 days or more overdue and you have the ability to pay*.

A normal deposit is the sum of the **two** largest consecutive bills during the last 12 months:

Example:	January	$225
	February	+$200
		$425 deposit

The deposit for those who are able to pay their winter heating bill but do not, and have an arrears amount incurred during the winter shut-off rules period that becomes 80 days or more past due, is the sum of the **four** largest consecutive bills during the last 12 months:

Example:	December	$200
	January	$225
	February	$200
	March	+$150
		$775 deposit

*You do **not** have to post a deposit if your income is below 200% of the Federal Poverty level guidelines. These guidelines can be found on the PSC's website, http://psc.wi.gov.

Additional charges from Collections or Legal Action for Non-Payment

We may take legal action in Small Claims court to collect payment from customers who have not made or kept deferred payment arrangements for their delinquent accounts. We recover the costs of pursuing Small Claims judgments by requesting treble damages for charges during the winter shut-off moratorium (Nov. 1 – April 15), plus court fees. Customers with income less than 250% of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines are exempt from treble damages.

We may report the unpaid bill or judgment to a collection agency. Accounts sent to a collections agency are also subject to costs incurred in court action.

St Croix Gas

Your Bill of Rights as a Residential Natural Gas Utility Customer

St. Croix Gas prepared this brochure to let you know your rights as a residential natural gas customer. It includes answers to your most common questions and concerns. It also addresses services we adopted to provide a convenience to you.

If you have a question or problem with your bill or service, first contact us. Our office hours are weekdays, 8am–5pm. Our phone number is 715-425-6177. If you are behind on your bill, we may offer you an installment plan to pay your bill.

If we cannot solve your problem, call the Public Service Commission (PSC) Consumer Affairs Department:

Toll Free: 800-225-7729

Website: http://psc.wi.gov/consumerInfo/complaints/index-complaints.htm

While the PSC reviews your dispute, your service will not be shut off. However, you must still promptly pay any charge not in dispute. After the PSC completes its review, a staff member will contact you and our company and will attempt to find an agreement that is acceptable to all parties.

Limited Funds?

Financial assistance may be available to help you pay your heating bill. Call WestCap 715-265-4271.