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Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Public Utilities Regulatory Authority

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PURA to Expand Scope of its Investigation to Address Issues Arising from the COVID-19 State of Emergency

Press Releases

News Release

Public Utilities Regulatory Authority

Ten Franklin Square
New Britain, CT 06051

03/18/2020

PURA to Expand Scope of its Investigation to Address Issues Arising from the COVID-19 State of Emergency

Expanded Protections include shut-off moratorium for non-residential customers

Connecticut's Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) announced today that it has issued a motion ruling in response to a petition received yesterday by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to expand the scope of PURA docket number 20-03-15, Emergency Petition of William Tong, Attorney General for the State of Connecticut, for a Proceeding to Establish a State of Emergency Utility Shut-Off Moratorium.

Last week, PURA announced a shut-off moratorium for residential customers of PURA-regulated gas, electric and water public service companies. Today's ruling expands the scope of docket number **20-03-15** and will immediately increase customer protections by:

- **Expanding** the shut-off moratorium to all non-residential customers of PURA-regulated gas, electric and water utilities through May 1, 2020;
- **Granting** a temporary waiver of financial security deposits and balance reduction payments normally required for reconnection of service through May 1, 2020; □
- **Ordering** PURA-regulated gas, electric and water utilities to track all costs related to the implementation of these emergency measures; and
- **Creating** a forum to consider thoroughly the expansion of existing affordability measures to all customers, such as an increased offering of flexible payment plans and late fee waivers.

PURA reminds customers that they should conserve energy whenever possible and also continue to make payments toward their utility costs during this difficult time, if the customer's situation permits. If a customer is unable to make a full payment, they should make every effort to pay whatever they can and as close to on time as possible, since customers will ultimately be responsible for utility services accrued during the shut-off moratorium.

Chairman Marissa P. Gillett stated, "Access to affordable utilities is essential to our daily lives, but never more so than in times of crisis like the current emergency. PURA will remain laser-focused on investigating and deploying workable solutions both in the short- and long-term."

Vice Chairman John W. Betkoski, III observed, "It is critical that we acted immediately to protect all customers, and also that our ruling applies to water utilities in addition to electric and gas utilities. My career passion has been to teach people about the connection between water and electricity, which is too often overlooked. We thank all of our regulated entities for their rapid response to our orders."

Commissioner Michael Caron noted, "It is very important that we remain aware of the extraordinary circumstances our commercial and industrial companies are dealing with in this crisis. From supply-chain breakdowns to simply having few to no customers – these situations will have dramatic effects on cash flows for otherwise strong businesses. A disconnection moratorium extended to these companies will hopefully provide a little more comfort to those in a very uncomfortable position."

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