September 2016

Congratulations to the August Beat the Peak competition winners:
- 1st place winner - Tami Cline (290 pts) - $200
- 2nd place winner – Arlen Karau (185 pts) - $150
- 3rd place winner – Mark Sanderson (170 pts) - $100
- Prize drawing – Jerry Hawker - $50

The top three teams at the end of August are as follows:
- Zion Lutheran Church - 1,290 pts - $500
- Holy Family Catholic Church – 990 pts
- Lake Crystal Lion's Club – 525 pts

Thanks to everyone who participated in the 2016 Beat the Peak Competition!

Utility Happenings!

Suspended Services Policy reminder
Residents planning for an extended absence this winter for a period of at least 30 days may request to have their utility services suspended. The Utility will not charge a customer for water, sewer, refuse or recycling if that customer provides notice to the Utility and does not inhabit the residence throughout the identified time period. In order to have services suspended, residents must complete an application for suspended service and return with payment of a $25 application fee. If water is turned off at the curb, a one-time, $75 fee will be billed to the account, which will cover disconnection and reconnection of service upon your return. If water remains on at the residence, the minimum monthly water and sewer charges will continue to be billed as long as no water is consumed ($45/month). If any water passes through the meter, regular billing will automatically resume. More information on the suspended services policy and how to apply for suspended services can be found at: http://www.ci.lake-crystal.mn.us/suspendedservices.

Outdoor Use Water Meter Policy passed
At the 9/7/16 meeting, the Public Utilities Commission adopted a policy allowing the installation of a second water meter for outdoor faucets, sprinkler systems, etc. The meter must be purchased from LCMU and all installation expenses are the responsibility of the property owner. Sewer charges will not be applied for water run through this meter. More information on the outdoor use water meter policy can be found at: http://www.ci.lake-crystal.mn.us/waterwastewater.
MINNESOTA COLD WEATHER RULE
Notice of Residential Customer Rights and Responsibilities

This document explains the Cold Weather Rule (CWR) and the steps you must take if you cannot pay your bill or your electric service will be disconnected.

The CWR does not forbid all disconnections. If you receive a Notice of Pending Disconnection this winter you must act immediately.

Each year, some Lake Crystal Municipal Utility (LCMU) customers are unable to pay their electric bill during cold weather. If you can't pay your electric bill please contact us.

The Minnesota CWR was established to protect residential customers from electrical service disconnection between October 15 and April 15. CWR protection is available if all three of the following conditions exist:
1. The disconnection would affect your main heating source.
2. Your household meets CWR payment plan guidelines.
3. You and LCMU agree to a payment plan.

If you receive energy assistance between October 15 and April 15, you are eligible for CWR protection; however, you must call LCMU with your specific information.

AVOIDING DISCONNECTION
If you receive a Notice of Pending Disconnection, you must call LCMU at 507-726-2538 ext. 1 immediately and apply for CWR protection by filling out and returning the Inability to Pay Form to LCMU. You will not be protected from disconnection if LCMU does not receive this completed form.

Your service will be subject to disconnection without further notice if you do not make the agreed upon payments. If you cannot keep your original payment plan, advise LCMU immediately, it may be possible to make a new payment plan and avoid disconnection.

The law provides for income verification, which maybe requested by LCMU. The customer is automatically eligible for protection against disconnection if you are a recipient of energy assistance.

COLD WEATHER RULE PAYMENT PLANS
If you can't pay your entire bill and need to make arrangements, call LCMU at 507-726-2538 ext. 1 to enter into a payment plan which is acceptable to both you and LCMU. The arrangement must cover the amount that is past due plus your current charges must be paid each month. The arrangement must be put on the Inability to Pay Form and returned to LCMU.

If you and LCMU cannot agree on a payment plan, you have 10 days to appeal to the State Public Utilities Commission. Your service will stay on during the appeal process.

The CWR only protects you from having your electricity shut off and energy assistance can be applied only to electric charges on your bill. Water, sewer, and refuse charges are the customer's responsibility to pay each month. Your water can be shut off for non-payment.

THIRD PARTY NOTIFICATION
LCMU offers all customers the opportunity to have a third party notified when their electric service is about to be disconnected. This program can be especially helpful for the ill, senior citizens, or those who live alone. The purpose of this program is to notify a third party, as well as the customer, that a Notice of Pending Disconnection has been sent out. If you want to name a third party, please call and request the Third Party Notice Form.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

MEDICAL ALERT
If you have a medical emergency, disabled person in the residence or require medically necessary equipment, a Physician's Certificate of Illness Form needs to be filled out by your physician and given to LCMU.