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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** May 20, 2020

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## **IUB order directs phasing in disconnection of utility service, modifies March 27 order**

(Des Moines) – In connection with the May 27, 2020, expiration of Governor Kim Reynolds’ proclamation that eases restrictions and permits the reopening of some businesses, the Iowa Utilities board (IUB) today issued an [order](#) that establishes requirements that Iowa utilities must follow before they can resume disconnections of customers’ utility service.

Today’s order provides that municipal utilities providing electric and natural gas service and electric cooperatives may resume the disconnection of gas or electric service, subject to conditions and requirements, **on or after May 28, 2020**. The order allows investor-owned utilities that are rate-regulated by the IUB to resume the disconnection of natural gas, electric, and water service, subject to conditions and requirements, **on or after July 1, 2020**.

The conditions and requirements in today’s order establish a phase-in approach to disconnections and give customers time to contact a community action agency or other organization for available assistance if needed. In addition, the phase-in will allow customers who have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and who may not be familiar with the IUB’s disconnection process time to seek financial assistance from or enter into a payment agreement with the utility.

In order to initiate the process for the disconnection of a customer, the utility must comply with the IUB’s current disconnection rules. If the utility has previously provided a 12-day notice prior to May 21, 2020, it must provide an additional seven-day disconnection notice and contact the customer by telephone or door hanger 48 hours prior to date of disconnection. The telephone contact must be to a person in the residence and not to a messaging device.

In addition, each customer subject to disconnection must be allowed a 30-day extension of disconnection for any special health condition, pursuant to IUB rules, and if either of the following conditions applies:

- The customer has a health condition that requires the use of electric or natural gas service. The utility may request verification of the health condition.
- The customer or a member of the customer’s household has tested positive for COVID-19. The utility may require verification of the test. The 30-day extension must be extended if the customer, or a person in the household, is still under COVID-19 quarantine at the end of the original 30-day period.

Investor-owned electric, natural gas, and water utilities are subject to the same disconnection requirements set out for municipal electric and natural gas utilities and electric cooperatives. In addition, an investor-owned utility may decide to waive some portion, or all, of a customer's past due amount, or enter into an alternate payment agreement for the past due amount. If an investor-owned utility waives a portion of a customer's past due bill, the utility may include those amounts in a regulatory asset account approved by the IUB.

Income-eligible lowans may continue to apply for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) program through the extended deadline of June 30, 2020, as approved by the Iowa Department of Human Rights.

Customers who are unable to reach a resolution with their utility may call the IUB at 877.565.4450 (toll-free) or 515.725.7300 or email [customer@iub.iowa.gov](mailto:customer@iub.iowa.gov). Any customer who has a complaint about utility service and is unable to resolve the issue with their utility may use the IUB online complaint form to [file a complaint](#) with the IUB.

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*The Iowa Utilities Board regulates utilities to ensure that reasonably priced, reliable, environmentally responsible, and safe utility services are available to all lowans.*

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