

South Dakota Public Utilities Commission  
Docket GE20-002  
MidAmerican Energy Company  
Second Data Requests

Responder Name: Gretta Knight  
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2-6. Refer to MEC's response to Staff DR 1-8. Confirm that the Company has continued to encourage customers to stay current on their utility bills or, if necessary, set up payment plans during the disconnection moratorium, and that service representatives have not discouraged customers from staying current on payments or setting up payment plans.

**Response:**

MidAmerican confirms that the Company has continued to encourage customers to stay current on their utility bills during the disconnection moratorium. MidAmerican provided the following guidance to its employees when communicating with customers:

- March 16, 2020: Notice that collection activity would be suspended. "This is a great time to remind customers that we have many electronic payment options. As always, work with customers needing assistance with paying and recommend they contact a community action agency when appropriate to do so."
- March 18, 2020: Employees were directed to press release "To support customers experiencing financial hardship or isolation as a result of the pandemic threat, MidAmerican has temporarily suspended all disconnections for non-payment. The company will work with customers who are impacted economically by COVID-19 by waiving deposits and fees for late payments and providing payment plans as needed. MidAmerican encourages any customer facing hardship to call us at 888-427-5632. We will make every effort to work with customers experiencing financial difficulties."
- March 27, 2020: An update was issued with additional information on how to assist customers. It stated "Encourage customers to pay what they can so they aren't in danger of disconnection at a later date."
- April 23, 2020: Talking points were provided to assist agents with discussing past due bills. Talking points included a recommendation to say "While we have suspended disconnects for nonpayment due to COVID-19, we do ask that if you are able, to please make every effort to pay a portion of your energy bill. If, in the future, you get a disconnect notice, please contact us to establish a payment

agreement.” It also reminded agents to tell customers we have many payment options and they can schedule future dated payments.

- April 27, 2020: Agents were notified that the credit department was going to begin a campaign to call customers with final bills. Credit personnel encouraged customers with final bills to establish a final bill payment agreement to avoid further collection activity.
- April 29, 2020: Agents were told that MidAmerican was not going to resume collections due to ongoing issues associated with COVID-19. The update states “Continue working with customers as you have been, encouraging those with past due balances to pay what they can.” It also states to work with each customer on an individual basis. Examples included setting up a payment agreement if the customer felt more comfortable with an established arrangement and offering customers options such as past due email and text alerts and budget billing. They were also reminded to inform customers about the advantages of having a My Account.”
- May 4, 2020: A proactive call-out campaign began for past due residential and commercial customers. For customers receiving voice mails who returned the call, agents were provided the same talking points as they were in the April 29, 2020 message. A corresponding email campaign started on May 7, 2020.
- June 1, 2020: MidAmerican began mailing letters to past due customers notifying them that collection activity will resume on July 1, 2020 and encouraging them to pay or call to discuss payment options. A bill message with the same information was added to customer bills. Agents were told to encourage payment and/or payment arrangements.