



NEWS RELEASE

MASSACHUSETTS MUNICIPAL WHOLESALE ELECTRIC COMPANY

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Municipal Utilities Stand Ready to Help Customers During Pandemic

Ludlow, MA – October 9, 2020 – During this national Public Power Week, municipal utility members of the Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company (MMWEC), the joint action agency for municipal utilities in Massachusetts, are reminding customers they are available to assist them during these challenging economic times.

In consideration of a March request by Attorney General Maura Healey to investor-owned utilities Eversource and National Grid, the 20 municipal light plant (MLP) members of MMWEC have been consistent with their long-standing policies to find alternative solutions for customers struggling to pay their electric bills. With winter approaching, Attorney General Healey is reminding consumers that help is available to those who cannot pay their electric bills.

MMWEC member utilities have pledged to assist customers who may be struggling to pay their bills. The regular winter moratorium on shutoffs begins November 15th and runs through March 15th. MLPs encourage customers who are behind on their electric bills to contact them to discuss payment plans or make other arrangements.

Fortunately for most customers living in municipal utility communities, they already receive safe, reliable, superior service at a low cost. Municipal utilities are non-profit. They are locally controlled, owned by and accountable to the customers they serve, and committed to serving the community.

According to a new study by Filterbuy, Massachusetts families pay an average 18% of total housing costs spent on utilities. However, a typical residential MMWEC MLP customer using 750 kilowatt hours per month spends 40% less on their electric bill than they would in an investor-owned utility territory. Therefore, MLP customers are allocating a significantly smaller portion of their housing costs to utilities. During a time when more people are working remotely, the impact of electric bills is lessened for those living in municipal utility communities.

There are other ways MLP customers benefit from being part of a public power community. Customers experience fewer outages than residents living in investor-owned utility service territories. When customers of public power utilities do lose electricity, power is restored, on average, 74 minutes sooner than in an investor-owned utility territory, according to the American Public Power Association.

These trying times further demonstrate the benefits of the public power business model.

“During Public Power Week, MMWEC and its member municipal utilities highlight the many ways MLP customers benefit by living in an MLP community,” said MMWEC Chief Executive Officer Ronald C. DeCurzio. “More than 100 years ago, municipal officials had the foresight to gain control over the cost and quality of their electric service, leading to the establishment of municipal utilities that still today serve as a benchmark by which other utilities are measured.”

MMWEC is a non-profit, public corporation and political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, created by an Act of the General Assembly in 1975 and authorized to issue debt to finance a wide range of energy facilities. MMWEC provides a variety of power supply, financial, risk management and other services to the state’s consumer-owned municipal utilities. It has 20 municipal utility members and 28 project participants. As one of 83 public power joint action agencies in the United States, MMWEC uses the strengths of working together, greater efficiency and economies of scale to help its members provide superior service at low cost.
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