



Office of
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Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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Baker-Polito Administration Temporarily Prohibits Utility Shutoffs to Protect Massachusetts Ratepayers

BOSTON – The Baker-Polito Administration today announced further action to support ratepayers during the COVID-19 outbreak, directing the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) to issue an [Order](#) prohibiting investor-owned utility companies from shutting off gas, electric, and water utility service to any customers for failure to pay a bill or a portion of a bill until the State of Emergency is lifted or the DPU determines otherwise.

The announcement builds upon the DPU's March 13 [moratorium](#) requesting utility companies refrain from shutting off gas and electric service to residents across the Commonwealth. The new order will expand the moratorium to include any investor-owned utility customers, including industrial, commercial, and small business customers, during the State of Emergency.

“Protecting the health and safety of Massachusetts residents remains the Baker-Polito Administration’s highest priority, and this order will ensure the continued availability of gas, electric, and water service to all ratepayers during the state of emergency,” **said DPU Chairman Matthew Nelson**. “Today’s action will also protect residents and businesses from added economic pressure during these difficult and uncertain times.”

The Order also prohibits investor-owned utility companies from sending communications that threaten to shut off gas, electric, or water service to any of their customers for failure to pay a bill or any portion of a bill the Companies issued to a customer. Any company that fails to comply with these orders may be assessed penalties of up to \$1 million per violation.

Additionally, on March 13, the DPU [formally requested](#) that that residential competitive electricity suppliers and licensed electricity brokers cease door-to-door marketing activities to ensure that proper risk management protocols have been taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19, prioritizing the health and safety of both consumers and any agents conducting marketing efforts.

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