

Disconnections and Reconnections

Policy #4.023

Policy Amended: July 30, 2024

Signed by: Jack Korman, Board Chair

Electric service shall be temporarily disconnected with a clear explanation of the fees involved in reconnecting the service in the same name within twelve months of disconnection. All services must pay the monthly basic service charge regardless of the kilowatt-hours used.

An account disconnected for any reason may be required to have the service brought in compliance with current NEC/ NESC codes and co-op policy requirements. Requirements include meter socket, attachment point, instrument metering if applicable, and a request for inspection from the State of MN. If the account has been final billed, shows an inactive status and more than 30 days have elapsed since the disconnect date, then update requirements shall be met. The 30-day requirement shall be waived if the new owner or tenant fails to complete the service transfer within five days of the original transfer request. If a lineman or meter technician finds a safety hazard, it is their discretion to request an electrical inspection. When FMEC receives the evidence of inspection by the licensed electrical contractor, electrical services will be restored within two business days.

If service is reconnected in the same name within twelve months of the disconnect date, the member is required to pay the basic service charge, taxes, and any applicable security lights or device fees for each of the disconnected months. The member will be back-billed on these charges on their first bill.

If service is disconnected for over twelve consecutive months, such disconnections are considered permanent.

Disconnection is made without charge when occupancy changes and the new party does not immediately move onto the premises.

If a request is made to temporarily reconnect electric service for a period of fewer than seven days, members will be required to pay a flat fee of \$250. At the time of disconnection, fees associated with reconnecting, disconnecting, pro-rated service charges, and any kWh will be applied to the flat fee. Any remaining amount will be refunded to the member. Members will be billed the difference if the \$250 does not cover the associated costs.

If an account is disconnected and reconnected within 48 hours, a service fee of \$25 will be added to the member's subsequent billing statement.

General Practices of Disconnections and Reconnections:

- a. Requests for disconnections or reconnections are to be made to the Cooperative.
- b. Reconnections, other than those disconnected for nonpayment, shall be made only during the Cooperative's working hours.
- c. Reconnects are to be channeled through the Cooperative, and actual reconnections are to be made by Cooperative personnel.
- d. Reconnections or new connections requested after regularly scheduled working hours or on Saturday, Sunday, or holidays are subject to a \$200.00 charge for extra costs involved in making such a special trip.

Disconnection of Service – Permissible Reasons

The Cooperative may disconnect service to any member for any reason stated below, (1) through (6).

1. With notice, the Cooperative may disconnect for nonpayment of the electric bill in accordance with existing policies.
2. With notice, the Cooperative may disconnect service to a member who breaches the contract for service between the Cooperative and the member.
3. Without notice, the Cooperative may disconnect service to a member in the event of the member's unauthorized use of Cooperative equipment or tampering with the Cooperative's equipment.
4. Without notice, the Cooperative may disconnect service to a member if a condition is deemed hazardous to the member, other members of the Cooperative, the Cooperative's equipment, or the public. For this reason, disconnection will not require the payment of a disconnect or reconnect fee.
5. With notice, the Cooperative may disconnect service to a member for the failure of the member to provide the Cooperative reasonable access to its equipment.
6. With notice, the Cooperative may disconnect service to a member for the failure of a member to furnish such service, equipment, and rights of way necessary to serve said member as shall have been specified by the Cooperative as a condition of obtaining service.

Disconnection of Service – Non-Permissible Reasons

1. The Cooperative may not disconnect service to a member for delinquency in payment for services rendered to previous members who occupied the premises unless said member continues to occupy the premises.
2. The Cooperative may not disconnect service to a member for failure to pay for merchandise, appliances, or service not considered an integral part of the Cooperative's service.
3. The Cooperative may not disconnect service to a member for failure to pay for a different class of service.
4. The Cooperative may not disconnect service to a member for failure to pay a charge billed because of an inaccurate meter until the member and Cooperative have agreed upon the amount due.
5. The Cooperative may only disconnect service to a member for failure to pay an estimated bill for past services if the member, upon request of the Cooperative, refuses to permit a reading of the meter during reasonable hours.
6. The Cooperative may not disconnect service to a member for failure to pay for a bill based on concurrent charges from another meter.
7. The Cooperative may not disconnect service to a member for failure to pay for a bill to correct previous underbilling due to misapplication of rates if the member agrees to pay over a reasonable period of time.