

For more information please call WMECo's Special Assistance Team at 1.800.286.5844 Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

- You have an unpaid balance of \$100 or more that is more than 60 days past-due.
- You are a WMECo customer who is on the residential discount rate or are receiving an income-eligible public benefit (such as Fuel Assistance), and

NUStart helps qualifying customers eliminate their past-due balance within one year. If you enroll in NUSstart and make the established budget payments each month, WMECo will pay a portion of your past-due balance. Over the course of 12 months, this balance can be completely eliminated. You may qualify for NUSstart if:

Can I get assistance with my bill through WMECo's NUSstart program?

If your Financial Hardship Statement or any other required documentation is rejected, we will notify you within seven (7) days after receiving the documents. You may dispute our determination by calling the Massachusetts DPU at 1.877.886.5066 or by writing to the Consumer Division at 1 South Station, Boston MA 02110 within seven (7) days of receiving the notice of rejection.

What should I do if my Shutoff Protection documentation is rejected?

2011-2012 WMECO SHUTOFF PROTECTION GUIDELINES

WMECo provides protection from electricity shutoff to those customers whose household income does not exceed 60 percent of the estimated state median income listed below.

Household Size	Maximum Annual Income	Household Size	Maximum Annual Income
1	\$31,218	5	\$69,641
2	\$40,824	6	\$79,246
3	\$50,429	7	\$81,047
4	\$60,035	8	\$82,848

Customers who meet the income guidelines described above and have a past-due balance may be eligible for WMECo's NUSstart program. Through NUSstart, eligible customers can eliminate their past-due balance in 12 months. For more information, see back panel.

Who is eligible for Shutoff Protection?

Between November 15, 2011 and March 15, 2012 protection from shutoff is provided to those income-eligible customers who have electric heat or whose heating system is started with electricity.

Shutoff Protection is also available to income-eligible households that have a current Financial Hardship Statement on file and where the following conditions exist:

- **All adult residents are 65 years of age or older** (*minors may live in the household*). Electricity cannot be shut off without approval by the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities.
- You or someone in the home is **seriously ill**. Initially your physician, a local Board of Health official, a nurse practitioner or a physician assistant can certify the serious illness by telephone. The verbal certification must be followed up with written communication within seven (7) days.
- You have a **child under the age of twelve (12) months** living in your home and have provided proof of the child's age within seven (7) days of telephone notification.

How do I know if I am income-eligible?

Customers who declare financial hardship are income-eligible for shutoff protection.

To declare financial hardship, the maximum annual income of your household cannot exceed 60 percent of the estimated state median income. Call Customer Service to request a Financial Hardship Statement form, at 413.781.4300 within the Springfield calling area or 1.877.OK.WMECO (1.877.659.6326) outside the Springfield calling area.

You are also considered income-eligible if you meet the income guidelines and one or more of the following applies:

- You currently receive Fuel Assistance (LIHEAP)
- The head of your household is unemployed
- You receive Aid to the Blind, MassHealth, Aid for the Elderly, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Aid to the Disabled, or Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC)
- Your major source of financial support is from Social Security, Veterans Administration, or Unemployment Compensation Benefits