

STATE OF VERMONT
PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

Case No. 20-0703-PET

Vermont Legal Aid request for a moratorium on utility and telecommunications shutoffs during State of Emergency	
---	--

Order entered: 05/24/2021

ORDER EXTENDING DISCONNECTION MORATORIUM UNTIL JUNE 30, 2021

Today's Order concerns a petition by Vermont Legal Aid to the Vermont Public Utility Commission ("Commission") requesting the temporary halt of involuntary utility disconnections during the state of emergency in Vermont because of the COVID-19 pandemic (the "temporary moratorium"). In today's Order, the Commission extends the temporary moratorium on the disconnection of certain utility services until June 30, 2021.¹

On March 18, 2020, the Commission issued an Order granting a temporary moratorium on involuntary utility service disconnections in Vermont. Over the course of many months, and after significant input from concerned parties, the Commission issued additional Orders that extended and expanded the temporary moratorium and the protections in the March 18, 2020, Order. Except for a single span of time during which the temporary moratorium was lifted to encourage utility customers to make use of time-limited federal funds before those funds expired, the Commission has maintained the temporary moratorium. In our most recent Order of March 29, 2021, we extended the temporary moratorium until May 31, 2021.

The Commission now extends the temporary moratorium until June 30, 2021, for the same reasons explained in our March 29, 2021, Order. In particular, the Governor has now extended the State of Emergency through June 15, 2021. While we do not necessarily need to extend the temporary moratorium every time the Governor extends the State of Emergency, we conclude that at the moment it would be premature to end the temporary moratorium. As we noted in our earlier Order, "many Vermonters are still suffering from the public health and economic impacts of COVID-19, and now is not the time to eliminate disconnection protections

¹ The temporary moratorium applies to involuntary disconnections of natural gas, electric, and traditional landline telecommunications service to consumers of regulated utilities in Vermont, except for unoccupied properties.

that have proven so beneficial to so many Vermonters, particularly Vermonters who are still struggling to find work. Rather than prematurely lift the moratorium, we must keep it in place at this time.”² Further, as was the case when we issued our March 29, 2021, Order, we are still “waiting to see how federal financial assistance is allocated” and whether state financial assistance may also be available to utility customers who are at risk of losing service for falling behind in their bills.³


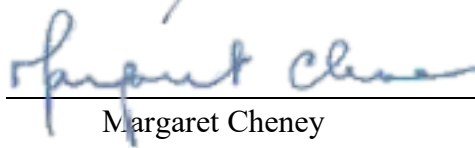
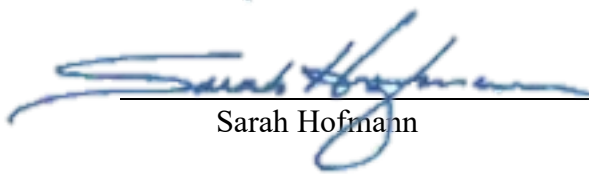
That said, we also note that Vermont is continuing to move towards reopening all sectors of the economy, and we may soon be at the point where there is no longer a need for a temporary moratorium. The Commission therefore directs the utilities in this proceeding to file with the Commission, **no later than June 15, 2021**, detailed descriptions of how they will engage with customers to resolve outstanding, past-due balances after the temporary moratorium ends and how they will address terminations of service for nonpayment going forward. The utilities and any other parties to this proceeding may file any other comments, recommendations, or objections regarding the next steps in this proceeding **no later than June 15, 2021**.

SO ORDERED.

² Order of March 29, 2021, at 6.


³ *Id.*

Dated at Montpelier, Vermont this 24th day of May, 2021.

 _____ Anthony Z. Roisman) PUBLIC UTILITY
 _____ Margaret Cheney) COMMISSION
 _____ Sarah Hofmann) OF VERMONT

OFFICE OF THE CLERK

Filed: May 24, 2021

Attest: 

Clerk of the Commission

Notice to Readers: This decision is subject to revision of technical errors. Readers are requested to notify the Clerk of the Commission (by e-mail, telephone, or in writing) of any apparent errors, in order that any necessary corrections may be made. (E-mail address: puc.clerk@vermont.gov).

Appeal of this decision to the Supreme Court of Vermont must be filed with the Clerk of the Commission within 30 days. Appeal will not stay the effect of this Order, absent further order by this Commission or appropriate action by the Supreme Court of Vermont. Motions for reconsideration or stay, if any, must be filed with the Clerk of the Commission within 28 days of the date of this decision and Order.

PUC Case No. 20-0703-PET - SERVICE LIST

Parties:

Carolyn Browne Anderson, Esq. (for Green Mountain Power Corporation)
Green Mountain Power Corporation
2152 Post Road
Rutland, VT 05702
carolyn.anderson@greenmountainpower.com

Kevin Babic (for Mountain Water Company)
Mountain Water Company
1840 Sugarbush Access Road
Warren, VT 05674
kbabic@sugarbush.com

Christopher Bean (for MCI Communications Services, Inc.)
Verizon
Christopher.e.bean@verizon.com

Christopher Bean (for MCImetro Access Transmission Services
Verizon LLC)
Christopher.e.bean@verizon.com

Reginald Beliveau, Jr. (for Swanton Village, Inc. Electric
Swanton Village, Inc. Electric Department Department)
P.O. Box 279
120 First Street
Swanton, VT 05488
rbeliveau@swanton.net

Sue Benedek (for Level 3 Communications, LLC) (for
CenturyLink Communications, LLC Global Crossing Local Services, Inc.) (for
240 N. Third Street Broadwing Communications, LLC) (for
Suite 300 Global Crossing Telecommunications, Inc.)
Harrisburg, PA 17101 (for TelCove Operations, LLC) (for Wiltel
sue.benedek@centurylink.com Communications, LLC) (for CenturyLink
Communications, LLC) (for Level 3 Telecom
Data Services, LLC)

Jireh Billings (for Woodstock Aqueduct Company)
Woodstock Aqueduct Company
P.O.Box 441
Woodstock, VT 05091
jirehsr@gmail.com

Meredith Birkett
Village of Johnson Water & Light Department
P.O. Box 603
Johnson, VT 05656
vojmanager@townofjohnson.com

(for Village of Johnson Water & Light
Department)

Alexandre Bonneville
VERMONT WATER UTILITIES, INC.
60 Robin Lane
Georgia, VT 05468
info@vwui.com

(for VERMONT WATER UTILITIES, INC.)

Victoria J. Brown, Esq.
Vermont Electric Cooperative, Inc.
42 Wescom Road
Johnson, VT 05656
vbrown@vermontelectric.coop

(for Vermont Electric Cooperative Inc.)

Mary Burgess
FirstLight Fiber
mburgess@firstlight.net

(for FirstLight Fiber, Inc.)

Ellen Burt
Town of Stowe Electric Department
P.O.Box 190
Stowe, VT 05672
eburt@stoweelectric.com

(for Town of Stowe Electric Department)

James Bushey
854 Tri-Town Road
Addison, VT 05491
tooshort1941@gmail.com

(for KO's Farm, LLC)

Bill Cairns
Bromley Water Company
PO Box 1130
Manchester Center, VT 05255
BC@Bromley.com

(for Bromley Water Company, Inc.)

Ronald Colton
Chalet Village Water System, Inc.
P.O. Box 662
Pittsfield, VT 05762
recwaterbaron@aol.com

(for Chalet Village Water System, Inc.)

Sandra M. Conklin
Pines Water Company/Conklin Marital Trust
717 Fontaine Hill Road
Morrisville, VT 05661
sconklin1125@gmail.com

(for Pines Water Company/Conklin Marital Trust)

Lindsay DesLauriers
Bolton Valley Community Water and Sewer, LLC
26 Wentworth Road
Bolton Valley, VT 05477
lindsay@lmdcapitolstrategies.com

(for Bolton Valley Community Water and Sewer, LLC)

William F. Ellis
McNeil, Leddy & Sheahan
271 South Union Street
Burlington, VT 05401
wellis@mcneilvt.com

(for City of Burlington Electric Department)

William F. Ellis
McNeil, Leddy & Sheahan
271 South Union Street
Burlington, VT 05401
wellis@mcneilvt.com

(for Vermont Public Power Supply Authority)

Jonathan Elwell
Village of Enosburg Falls Water & Light
42 Village Drive
Enosburg Falls, VT 05450
jelwell@enosburg.net

(for Village of Enosburg Falls Water & Light Department Inc.)

Elijah D Emerson, Esq.
Primmer Piper Eggleston & Cramer PC
PO Box 1309
Montpelier, VT 05601
eemerson@primmer.com

(for Village of Enosburg Falls Water & Light Department Inc.) (for Town of Hardwick Electric Department) (for Village of Johnson Water & Light Department) (for Town of Northfield Electric Department)

Gary Endicott
Burke Mountain Water Company
223 Sherburne Lodge Road
East Burke, VT 05832
genticott@leisurehotel.com

(for Burke Mountain Water Company)

Steven R Farman
Vermont Public Power Supply Authority
5195 Waterbury-Stowe rd
Waterbury Center, VT 05766
sfarman@vppsa.com

(for Vermont Public Power Supply Authority)

Linda Fawcett
Westminster Aqueduct Society
PO Box 205
3505 US RT 5
Westminster, VT 05158
lbfawcett@comcast.net

(for Westminster Aqueduct Society)

James Gibbons
City of Burlington Electric Department
585 Pine Street
Burlington, VT 05401
jgibbons@burlingtonelectric.com

(for City of Burlington Electric Department)

Michael J. Hall
Stackpole & French Law Offices
PO Box 819
Stowe, VT 05672
mhall@stackpolefrench.com

(for Town of Stowe Electric Department)

Deane Hedges
111 Freedom Drive
Montpelier, VT 05602
RayleneHedges@gmail.com

(for Berlin Water Company, Inc)

Deane Hedges
111 Freedom Drive
Montpelier, VT 05602
RayleneHedges@gmail.com

(for Crystal Springs Water Co)

Bill Humphrey
Village of Lyndonville Electric Department
P.O. Box 167
20 Park Avenue
Lyndonville, VT 05851
bhumphrey@lyndonvilleelectric.com

(for Village of Lyndonville Electric
Department)

James A. Huttenhower, Esq.
225 West Randolph Street, Floor 25D
Chicago, IL 60606
jh7452@att.com

(for AT&T Corporation)

James A. Huttenhower, Esq.
225 West Randolph Street, Floor 25D
Chicago, IL 60606
jh7452@att.com

(for Teleport Communications America, LLC)

Penny Jones
Village of Morrisville Water & Light
Department
857 Elmore Street
Morrisville, VT 05661
pjones@mwlvt.com

(for Village of Morrisville Water & Light
Department)

W. David Koeninger
Vermont Legal Aid
264 North Winooski Ave.
Burlington, VT 05401
DKoeninger@vtlegalaid.org

(for Vermont Legal Aid)

Katelyn Kran
Barton Village Inc. Electric Department
kkran@bartonvt.com

(for Barton Village Inc. Electric Department)

Michael Lazorchak
Town of Stowe Electric Department
PO Box 190
Stowe, VT 05672
mlazorchak@stoweelectric.com

(for Town of Stowe Electric Department)

Kevin Mack
Burke Mountain Water Company
223 Sherburne Lodge Road
East Burke, VT 05832
kmack@skiburke.com

(for Burke Mountain Water Company)

William T. Matteson
Colonial Estates Water System
95 Georgeanna Boulevard
Rutland, VT 05701
william832@comcast.net

(for Colonial Estates Water System)

Mari McClure
Green Mountain Power Corporation
163 Acorn Lane
Colchester, VT 05446
ceo@greenmountainpower.com

(for Green Mountain Power Corporation)

Joseph McKearin
Green Mountain Power Corporation
2152 Post Road
Rutland, VT 05701
Joseph.McKearin@greenmountainpower.com

(for Green Mountain Power Corporation)

Alexander W. Moore, Esq.
Verizon
6 Bowdoin Square, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02114
alexander.w.moore@verizon.com

(for MCI Communications Services, Inc.)

Alexander W. Moore, Esq.
Verizon
6 Bowdoin Square, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02114
alexander.w.moore@verizon.com

(for MCI metro Access Transmission Services
LLC)

Pamela Moore
Village of Jacksonville Electric Company
P.O. Box 169
Jacksonville, VT 05342
pmoore@jacksonvilleelectric.net

(for Village of Jacksonville Electric Company)

John Morley
Village of Orleans Electric Department
Municipal Building
One Memorial Square
Orleans, VT 05860
jmorley@villageoforleansvt.org

(for Village of Orleans Electric Department)

Ken Nolan
Vermont Public Power Supply Authority
P.O. Box 126
Waterbury Center, VT 05677
knolan@vppsa.com

(for Vermont Public Power Supply Authority)

Jessica Patterson
Town of Hardwick Electric Department
PO Box 516
Hardwick, VT 05843
jess@hardwickelectric.com

(for Town of Hardwick Electric Department)

Kelly Pembroke
The Housing Foundation, Inc.
One Prospect Street
Montpelier, Vermont 05602
kelly@vsha.org

(for The Housing Foundation, Inc.)

Thomas Petraska
Village of Ludlow Electric Light Department
9 Pond Street
Ludlow, VT 05149
tpetraska@tds.net

(for Village of Ludlow Electric Light
Department)

Jill Pfenning
Vermont Gas Systems, Inc.
85 Swift Street
South Burlington, VT 05403
jpfenning@vermontgas.com

(for Vermont Gas Systems, Inc.)

Paul J. Phillips, Esq.
Primmer Piper Eggleston & Cramer PC
100 East State Street
P.O. Box 1309
Montpelier, VT 05601-1309
pphillips@primmer.com

(for Ludlow Telephone Company) (for
Waitsfield-Fayston Telephone Company, Inc.)
(for Perkinsville Telephone Company) (for
Franklin Telephone Company) (for Vermont
Telephone Company, Inc.) (for Topsham
Telephone Company) (for Shoreham
Telephone LLC)
(for Northfield Telephone Company)

Paul J. Phillips, Esq.
Primmer Piper Eggleston & Cramer PC
100 East State Street
P.O. Box 1309
Montpelier, VT 05601-1309
pphillips@primmer.com

James Porter, Esq.
Vermont Department of Public Service
112 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620
james.porter@vermont.gov

(for Vermont Department of Public Service)

Patricia Richards
Washington Electric Cooperative, Inc.
P.O. Box 8
East Montpelier, VT 05651
patty.richards@wec.coop

(for Washington Electric Cooperative Inc.)

Carol Robertson
Village of Hyde Park Electric Department
P.O. Box 400
Hyde Park, VT 05655
carol.robertson@hydeparkvt.com

(for Village of Hyde Park Electric Department)

Jeffrey Schulz
Town of Northfield Electric Department
51 South Main Street
Northfield, VT 05663
jschulz@northfield.vt.us

(for Town of Northfield Electric Department)

Ronald A. Shems, Esq.
Tarrant, Gillies, Richardson & Shems
P.O. Box 1440
Montpelier, VT 05601-1440
rshems@tarrantgillies.com

(for Washington Electric Cooperative Inc.)

Pamela Sherwood
CenturyLink
4625 West 86th Street, Suite 500
Indianapolis, IN 46268
pamela.sherwood@centurylink.com

(for Level 3 Communications, LLC) (for
Global Crossing Local Services, Inc.) (for
Broadwing Communications, LLC) (for
Global Crossing Telecommunications, Inc.)
(for TelCove Operations, LLC) (for Wiltel
Communications, LLC) (for CenturyLink
Communications, LLC) (for Level 3 Telecom
Data Services, LLC)
(for Consolidated Communications of Vermont
Company, LLC)

Erika Smith
Consolidated Communications
266 Main Street
Burlington, VT 05401
erika.smith@consolidated.com

Darren Springer
City of Burlington Electric Department
585 Pine Street
Burlington, VT 05401
dspringer@burlingtonelectric.com

(for City of Burlington Electric Department)

Emily Stebbins-Wheelock
City of Burlington Electric Department
585 Pine Street
Burlington, VT 05401
estebbins-wheelock@burlingtonelectric.com

(for City of Burlington Electric Department)

Brian Stevens
Smugglers' Notch Water Company
4323 VT RTE 108 South
Jeffersonville, VT 05646
bstevens@smuggs.com

(for Smugglers' Notch Water Company)

Michael Sullivan
Town of Hardwick Electric Department
P.O. Box 516
Hardwick, VT 05843
msullivan@hardwickelectric.com

(for Town of Hardwick Electric Department)

Amber L. Thibeault
Bauer Gravel Farnham, LLP
401 Water Tower Circle
Suite 101
Colchester, VT 05446
athibeault@vtlawoffices.com

(for Champlain Broadband LLC)

Rebecca Towne
Vermont Electric Cooperative, Inc.
42 Wescom Road
Johnson, VT 05656
rtowne@vermontelectric.coop

(for Vermont Electric Cooperative Inc.)

George R. Wagner
Wagner Water System
P.O. Box 23
West Burke, VT 05871

(for Wagner Water System)