# CHAPTER 27
# REGULATION OF ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES AND MUNICIPAL ELECTRIC UTILITIES UNDER IOWA CODE CHAPTER 476

Chapter rescission date pursuant to Iowa Code section 17A.7: 12/16/31

**199—27.1(476) General information.** Iowa Code section 476.2(1) provides that the Iowa utilities commission has authority to establish all needful, just and reasonable rules, not inconsistent with law, to govern the exercise of its powers and duties; the practice and procedure before it; and to the form, content and filing of reports, documents and other papers provided for in Iowa Code chapter 476 or in the commission's rules.

**27.1(1)** *Application of rules.* The rules apply to electric cooperatives and municipal electric utilities operating within the state of Iowa subject to Iowa Code sections 476.1A and 476.1B, and to the construction, operation, and maintenance of electric transmission lines to the extent provided in Iowa Code chapter 478, and supersede all tariffs on file with the commission that are in conflict with these rules.

**27.1(2)** *Regulation of electric cooperatives.* Iowa Code section 476.1A provides that electric cooperatives are not subject to the regulation of the commission, except for regulatory action pertaining to the following:

*a.* Assessment of fees for the support of the commission and the office of consumer advocate pursuant to Iowa Code section 476.10.

*b.* Safety standards and engineering standards.

*c.* Assigned service areas, as set forth in Iowa Code sections 476.22 through 476.25.

*d.* Public utility railroad crossings, as set forth in Iowa Code section 476.27.

*e.* Filing of alternate energy purchase program plans with the commission, and offering such programs to customers, pursuant to Iowa Code section 476.47.

*f.* Iowa Code sections 476.20(1) through 476.20(4), 476.21, 476.51, 476.56, 476.58, 476.62, and 476.66 and chapters 476A and 478, to the extent applicable.

**27.1(3)** *Regulation of municipal electric utilities.* Iowa Code section 476.1B provides that municipal electric utilities are not subject to regulation by the commission under Iowa Code chapter 476, except for regulatory action pertaining to the following:

*a.* Assessment of fees for the support of the commission and the office of consumer advocate.

*b.* Safety standards.

*c.* Assigned areas of service as set forth in Iowa Code sections 476.22 through 476.26.

*d.* Public utility railroad crossings, as set forth in Iowa Code section 476.27.

*e.* An electric power agency as defined in Iowa Code chapter 28F and section 390.9 that includes as a member a city- or municipality-owned utility that builds transmission facilities after July 1, 2001, is subject to applicable transmission reliability rules or standards adopted by the commission for these facilities.

*f.* Filing of alternate energy purchase program plans with the commission, and offering such programs to customers, pursuant to Iowa Code section 476.47.

*g.* Iowa Code sections 476.20(1) through 476.20(4), 476.51, 476.56, 476.58, 476.62, and 476.66, as applicable.

*h.* An electric utility subject to regulatory action pursuant to Iowa Code section 476.1A or 476.1B is subject to complaints and investigations as set forth in Iowa Code section 476.3, but only with regard to matters within the regulatory authority of the commission as set forth in Iowa Code sections 476.1A and 476.1B.

**27.1(4)** *Abbreviations.* The following abbreviations are used in this chapter where appropriate:

ANSI—American National Standards Institute, www.ansi.org.

IEEE—Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, www.ieee.org.

NESC—National Electrical Safety Code.

NFPA—National Fire Protection Association, www.nfpa.org.

RUS—United States Department of Agriculture Rural Utilities Service, www.rd.usda.gov/about-rd/agencies/rural-utilities-service.

**27.1(5)** *Definitions.* The following words and terms, when used in these rules, have the meanings indicated below:

*"Capacity"* means the instantaneous rate at which energy can be delivered, received, or transferred, measured in kilowatts.

*"Complaint"* means a statement or question by any person, whether a utility customer or not, alleging a wrong, grievance, injury, dissatisfaction, illegal action or procedure, dangerous condition or action, or obligation of an electric cooperative or municipal electric utility.

*"Customer"* means any person, firm, association, or corporation; any agency of the federal, state, or local government; or any legal entity responsible by law for payment for the electric service or heat from the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility.

*"Delinquent"* or *"delinquency"* means an account for which a service bill or service payment agreement bill has not been paid in full on or before the last day for timely payment.

*"Distribution line"* means any single or multiphase electric power line operating at nominal voltage in either of the following ranges: 2,000 to 36,225 volts between ungrounded conductors or 1,155 to 20,914 volts between grounded and ungrounded conductors, regardless of the functional service provided by the line.

*"Electric plant"* includes all real estate, fixtures, and property owned, controlled, operated, or managed in connection with or to facilitate production, generation, transmission, or distribution in providing electric service or heat by an electric utility.

*"Electric service"* means furnishing electricity to the public for compensation for use as heat, light, power, or energy.

*"Energy"* means electric energy measured in kilowatt hours.

*"Engineering standards"* means standards adopted by ANSI, IEEE, RUS, or comparable engineering organization or engineering standards adopted by the commission.

*"Major event"* means when an event results in extensive physical damage to transmission or distribution facilities within an electric cooperative or municipal electric utility's operating area due to unusually severe and abnormal weather or event and:

1. Wind speed exceeds 90 mph for the affected area, or
2. One-half inch of ice is present and wind speed exceeds 40 mph for the affected area, or
3. 10 percent of the affected area total customer count is incurring a loss of service for a length of time to exceed five hours, or
4. 20,000 customers in a metropolitan area are incurring a loss of service for a length of time to exceed five hours, or
5. A regional transmission organization or independent system operator declares an energy emergency alert that the organization can no longer provide expected energy requirements or has lower than established reserves, implements procedures up to shedding load, or declares an Energy Emergency Alert Level 3 in compliance with North American Electric Reliability Corporation requirements.

*"Meter"* means, unless otherwise qualified, a device that measures and registers the integral of an electrical quantity with respect to time.

*"Power"* means electric power measured in kilowatts.

*"Rates"* means the same as defined in Iowa Code section 384.80 and includes all charges or fees imposed or collected for the provision of or incidental to utility service.

*"Safety standard"* means applicable regulations promulgated by the United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Safety standards for electric utilities subject to Iowa Code section 476.1A also include outage notifications, safety standards contained in the National Electrical Safety Code, as published by IEEE, and electric safety standards approved by ANSI.

*"Secondary line"* means any single or multiphase electric power line operating at nominal voltage less than either 2,000 volts between ungrounded conductors or 1,155 volts between grounded and ungrounded conductors, regardless of the functional service provided by the line.

*"Service limitation"* means the establishment of a limit on the amount of power that may be consumed by a residential customer through the installation of a service limiter device on the customer's meter.

*"Tariff"* means the service classifications, rules, procedures, and policies filed with and approved by the commission.

*"Timely payment"* means a payment on a customer's account made on or before the date shown on a current bill for service, or on a form that records an agreement between the customer and a utility for a series of partial payments to settle a delinquent account, as the date that determines application of a late payment charge to the current bill or future collection efforts.

*"Transmission line"* means any single or multiphase electric power line operating at nominal voltages at or in excess of either 69,000 volts between ungrounded conductors or 40,000 volts between grounded and ungrounded conductors, regardless of the functional service provided by the line.

*"Utility"* means any person, partnership, business association, or corporation, domestic or foreign, owning or operating any facilities for furnishing electricity to the public for compensation.

**27.1(6)** *Electric cooperative service rules tariffs.* Electric cooperatives subject to the commission's jurisdiction under Iowa Code section 476.1A shall maintain tariffs in the commission's electronic filing system that are consistent with the rules in this chapter and that are approved by the commission.

*a.* Those portions of their tariff or tariff pages regarding matters over which the commission has jurisdiction are to be filed with strikethroughs for the language deleted and underlining of the language that is added.

*b.* Portions of electric cooperative tariffs that are nonjurisdictional are to be identified in the tariff.

*c.* An electric cooperative association may file a model tariff for commission approval that may be adopted by an electric cooperative with any revisions the electric cooperative proposes to the model tariff.

*d.* Any electric cooperative may concur with an approved model tariff on file with the commission. For any electric cooperative that chooses to concur, the commission shall acknowledge the electric cooperative's tariff as being in compliance.

*e.* Tariffs approved by the commission are to be made available to all customers.

**27.1(7)** *Municipal electric utilities service rules.* Municipal utilities service rules or other legally enforceable provisions are to be consistent with the provisions in this chapter and must be available to all customers.

[**ARC 0742D**, IAB 11/11/26, effective 12/16/26]

**199—27.2(476) Assigned area of service and maps.**

**27.2(1)** *Service areas.* Service areas are defined by the boundaries on service area maps. Electronic maps are available for viewing on the commission's website or at the commission's offices during regular business hours. These service area maps are the official electric service territory maps pursuant to Iowa Code section 476.24.

**27.2(2)** *Modification of service area and answers.*

*a.* An exclusive service area is subject to modification through a contested case proceeding that may be commenced by filing a petition for modification of service area with the commission. The commission may commence a service area modification proceeding on its own motion. The commission may grant a modification if the modification promotes the public interest. In determining whether the modification is in the public interest, the commission will consider the factors described in Iowa Code section 476.25(1) and any other relevant factors.

*b.* Any electric cooperative or municipal electric utility may file a petition for modification of service area, which includes:

(1) A legal description of the service area desired,

(2) A designation of the utilities involved in each boundary section,

(3) A justification for the proposed service area modification, including addressing the public interest,

(4) A PDF (portable document format) map, an electronic file of the proposed service area boundaries, in a format designated by the commission, as described on the electronic filing system (EFS) homepage under EFS filing standards, and

(5) A map showing the affected areas that complies with the map paragraph contained within this chapter is to be attached to the petition as an exhibit.

*c.* Electric cooperatives and municipal electric utilities may agree with other electric utilities to service territory modifications by contract pursuant to Iowa Code section 476.25(2). Contracts to be enforceable are to be approved by the commission.

**27.2(3)** *Certificate of authority.* A request for a service territory modification filed by an electric cooperative or municipal electric utility pursuant to this rule that would result in service to a customer by a public utility other than the public utility currently serving the customer will need a certificate of authority under Iowa Code section 476.23. Unless voluntarily agreed otherwise, the party currently serving the customer is to be paid a reasonable price for the facilities serving the customer.

**27.2(4)** *Maps.*

*a.* Each electric cooperative and municipal electric utility is to maintain a current map or set of maps showing the physical location of electric lines, stations, and electric transmission facilities for its service areas. The maps are to include the exact location of the following:

(1) Generating stations, with capacity designation.

(2) Purchased power supply points, with maximum contracted capacity designation.

(3) Purchased power metering points if located at other than power delivery points.

(4) Transmission lines, with size and type of conductor designation and operating voltage designation.

(5) Transmission-to-transmission voltage transformation substations, with transformer voltage and capacity designation.

(6) Transmission-to-distribution voltage transformation substations, with transformer voltage and capacity designation.

(7) Distribution lines, with size and type of conductor designation, phase designation, and voltage designation.

(8) All points at which transmission, distribution, or secondary lines of the utility cross Iowa state boundaries.

(9) All current information required in Iowa Code section 476.24(1).

(10) All county boundaries and county names.

(11) Natural and artificial lakes that cover more than 50 acres and all rivers.

(12) Any additional information required by the commission.

*b.* All maps, except those deemed confidential by the commission, are to:

(1) Be available for examination at the designated offices of the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility during regular office hours,

(2) Include clean, uniform lines to a scale of at least one inch per mile,

(3) Include a larger scale where it is necessary to clarify areas where there is a heavy concentration of facilities, and

(4) Ensure that cartographic details are clean cut, and the background contains little or no coloration or shading.

[**ARC 0742D**, IAB 11/11/26, effective 12/16/26]

**199—27.3(476) Customer relations.**

**27.3(1)** *Notification to customers by bill insert at least annually.* Each electric cooperative or municipal electric utility shall notify its customers, by bill insert or notice on the bill form, of the address and telephone number where a utility representative qualified to assist in resolving the complaint can be reached, and include the following statement: "If (utility name) does not resolve your complaint, you may request assistance from the Iowa Utilities Commission by calling 515.725.7300 or toll-free 877.565.4450; by writing to 1375 E. Court Ave., Des Moines, IA 50319-0069; by filling out the form at iuc.iowa.gov; or by email to customer@iuc.iowa.gov." The utility may use different language with commission approval. A utility that bills by postcard may place an advertisement in a local newspaper of general circulation or a customer newsletter instead of a mailing. The advertisement must be of a type size that is easily legible and conspicuous and must contain the information required in this subrule.

**27.3(2)** *Payment agreements.*

*a. Availability of a first payment agreement.* When a residential customer cannot pay in full a delinquent bill for utility service or has an outstanding debt to the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility for residential utility service and is not in default of a payment agreement with the electric

cooperative or municipal electric utility, an electric cooperative or municipal electric utility shall offer the customer an opportunity to enter into a reasonable payment agreement. The offer of a payment agreement is to be made prior to disconnection. The electric cooperative or municipal electric utility is not required to offer a customer who has been disconnected from service a payment agreement consistent with these rules, unless the utility did not comply with these rules prior to disconnection.

*b. Reasonableness.* Whether a payment agreement is reasonable will be determined by considering the current household income, ability to pay, payment history including prior defaults on similar agreements, the size of the bill, the amount of time and the reasons why the bill has been outstanding, and any special circumstances creating extreme hardships within the household. The electric cooperative or municipal electric utility may require the person to confirm financial difficulty with an acknowledgment from the department of health and human services or another agency.

*c. Terms of payment agreements.*

(1) First payment agreement. The following conditions are to be offered to customers who have received a disconnection notice and are not in default of a payment agreement:

1. For customers who received a disconnection notice in conformance with these rules, an agreement with at least 12 even monthly payments is to be offered. A customer may pay off the delinquency early without incurring any prepayment penalties. A customer will not be charged interest, or a late payment charge, on a payment agreement where the customer is making payments consistent with the terms of the payment agreement, and the customer will not be required to pay a portion of the delinquent amount to enter into a payment agreement.

2. A provision for payment of the current amount owed by the customer is to be offered.

3. The electric cooperative or municipal electric utility may also require the customer to enter into a budget billing plan to pay the current bill.

4. When the customer makes the agreement in person, a signed copy of the agreement is to be provided to the customer.

5. The electric cooperative or municipal electric utility may offer the customer the option of making the agreement over the telephone or through electronic transmission.

6. When a payment agreement is made over the telephone or through electronic transmission, a written agreement reflecting the terms and conditions of the agreement is to be provided to the customer within three days of the date the oral or electronic agreement is entered into.

7. The document will be considered provided to the customer when addressed to the customer's last-known address and deposited in the U.S. mail with postage paid. If delivery is by other than U.S. mail, the document will be considered provided to the customer when delivered to the last-known address of the customer or sent via electronic delivery with customer consent. Such consent shall be deemed given when the customer consents to or requests electronic billing.

8. The payment agreement is deemed accepted by the customer unless the customer notifies the utility otherwise within ten days from the date the document is provided. The address and toll-free telephone number where a qualified representative can be reached is to be included in the payment agreement.

9. Once the first payment required by the agreement is made by the customer or on behalf of the customer, the oral or electronic agreement is deemed accepted by the customer.

10. Each customer entering into a first payment agreement is allowed at least one late payment that is four days or less beyond the due date for payment, and the first payment agreement remains in effect.

11. The initial payment is due on the due date for the next regular bill.

(2) Second payment agreement. A second payment agreement is to be offered to a customer who is in default of a first payment agreement if the customer has made at least two consecutive full payments under the first payment agreement.

1. The second payment agreement will be for a term at least as long as the term of the first payment agreement.

2. The customer is to pay for current service in addition to the monthly payments.

3. The customer may be required to make the first payment up front as a condition of entering into the second payment agreement.

4. The electric cooperative or municipal electric utility may also require the customer to enter into a budget billing plan to pay the current bill.

(3) Additional payment agreements. The electric cooperative or municipal electric utility may offer additional payment agreements to the customer.

*d. Refusal by electric cooperative or municipal electric utility.* A customer may offer the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility a proposed payment agreement. If the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility and the customer do not reach an agreement, the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility may refuse the offer orally, but the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility will provide a written refusal to the customer, stating the reason for the refusal, within three days of the oral notification. The written refusal is considered provided to the customer when addressed to the customer's last-known address and deposited in the U.S. mail with postage prepaid. If delivery is by other than U.S. mail, the written refusal is considered provided to the customer when handed to the customer or when delivered to the last-known address of the customer, or sent via electronic delivery with customer consent. Such consent shall be deemed given when the customer consents to or requests electronic billing.

*e. Customer request for assistance.* A customer may ask the commission for assistance in working out a reasonable payment agreement. The request for assistance is to be made to the commission within ten days after the written refusal is provided and disconnection will not take place during the commission's review.

**27.3(3)** *Bill payment terms.* The bill is to be considered provided to the customer when deposited in the U.S. mail with postage prepaid. If delivery is by other than U.S. mail, the bill is to be considered provided when delivered to the last-known address of the customer or sent via electronic delivery with customer consent. Such consent shall be deemed given when the customer consents to or requests electronic billing. An account shall not be delinquent until 20 days have passed since the bill was provided to the customer. For customers on more frequent billing intervals, an account shall not be delinquent until five days have passed since the bill was provided to the customer. A late payment charge cannot be assessed if payment is received within 20 days of the date the bill is provided.

*a.* The date of delinquency for all residential customers or other customers whose consumption is less than 3,000 kWh per month is changeable for cause; such as but not limited to 15 days from the approximate date each month upon which income is received by the person responsible for payment. Thirty days beyond the date of delinquency is the maximum delay allowed. Thirty days beyond the date of previous bill preparation is the maximum delay allowed.

*b.* In any case where net and gross amounts are billed to customers, the difference between net and gross is a late payment charge and is valid only when part of a delinquent bill payment. A utility's late payment charge is limited to 1.5 percent per month of the past due amount. No collection fee may be levied in addition to this late payment charge.

*c.* If the customer makes partial payment in a timely manner, and does not designate the service or product for which payment is made, the payment is to be credited pro rata between the bill for utility services and related taxes.

*d.* Each account is allowed not less than one complete forgiveness of a late payment charge each calendar year. The utility's rules are to include that on one monthly bill in each period of eligibility, the utility will accept the net amount of such bill as full payment for such month after expiration of the net payment period. The utility's rules are to state how the customer is notified that the eligibility has been used. Complete forgiveness has no effect upon the credit rating of the customer or collection of late payment charges.

**27.3(4)** *Meter testing standards.* Electric cooperatives and municipal electric utilities are to establish written meter testing standards and procedures for customers who have complaints about the accuracy of the customer's meter. The meter testing standards are to be made available to a customer upon request.

[**ARC 0742D**, IAB 11/11/26, effective 12/16/26]

**199—27.4(476) Disconnection of service.**

**27.4(1)** *Disconnection procedures and notice.* Electric cooperatives and municipal electric utilities may only disconnect service to customers in compliance with the following procedure and requirements:

*a.* Service may be disconnected without notice:

(1) In the event of a condition on the customer's premises determined by the utility to be hazardous.

(2) In the event of customer use of equipment in a manner that adversely affects the utility's equipment or the utility's service to others.

(3) In the event of tampering with the equipment furnished and owned by the utility. A broken or absent meter seal alone does not constitute tampering.

(4) In the event of unauthorized use.

*b.* The electric cooperative or municipal electric utility shall give written notice of pending disconnection, except as specified in paragraph 27.4(1)*"a."* The notice will include the reason for the notice and the final date by which the account is to be settled or specific action taken. The notice is to be addressed to the customer's last-known address and deposited in the U.S. mail with postage prepaid. If delivery is by other than U.S. mail, the notice is to be delivered to the last-known address of the customer or sent via electronic delivery with customer consent. Such consent shall be deemed given when the customer consents to or requests electronic billing. The date for disconnection of service is not to be less than 12 days after the notice is provided. The date for disconnection of service for customers on shorter billing intervals is not to be less than 24 hours after the notice is posted at the service premises.

*c.* Where more than one cause of disconnection exists, one written notice is to be given that includes all reasons for the notice. In determining the final date by which the account is to be settled or other specific action taken, the days of notice for the causes run concurrently.

*d.* Service may be disconnected after proper notice:

(1) For violation of or noncompliance with the utility's rules.

(2) For failure of the customer to furnish the service equipment, permits, certificates, or rights-of-way that are specified to be furnished, in the utility's rules filed with the commission, as conditions of obtaining service, or for the withdrawal of that same equipment, or for the termination of those same permissions or rights, or for the failure of the customer to fulfill the contractual obligations imposed as conditions of obtaining service by any contract filed with and subject to the regulatory authority of the commission.

(3) For failure of the customer to permit the utility reasonable access to the utility's equipment.

*e.* Service may be disconnected after proper notice for nonpayment of a bill or deposit, provided that the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility has complied with the following provisions:

(1) Given the customer a reasonable opportunity to dispute the reason for the disconnection or refusal.

(2) Given the customer, and any other person or agency designated by the customer, written notice that the customer has at least 12 days in which to make settlement of the account to avoid disconnection and a written summary of the rights and responsibilities set out in subrule 27.4(2). Customers billed more frequently than monthly are to be given posted written notice that they have 24 hours to make settlement of the account to avoid disconnection and a written summary of the rights and responsibilities. All written notices include a toll-free or collect telephone number where a utility representative qualified to provide additional information about the disconnection can be reached. Each electric cooperative or municipal electric utility representative provides the representative's name and has immediate access to current, detailed information concerning the customer's account and previous contacts with the utility.

(3) A service limitation policy shall include the following sentence: "Service limitation: We have adopted a limitation of service policy for customers who otherwise could be disconnected. Contact our business office for more information or to learn if you qualify."

(4) When disconnecting service to a residence, a diligent attempt is to be made to contact, by telephone or in person, the customer to inform the customer of the pending disconnection and the customer's rights and responsibilities. Between November 1 and April 1, if the attempt at customer contact fails, the premises are to be posted at least one day prior to disconnection with a notice informing the customer of the pending disconnection and a copy of the rights and responsibilities available to avoid disconnection.

1. If an attempt at personal or telephone contact of a customer occupying a rental unit has been unsuccessful, the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility is to make a diligent attempt to contact the landlord of the rental unit, if known, to determine if the customer is still in occupancy and, if so, the customer's present location. The landlord is to be informed of the date when service may be disconnected.

The electric cooperative or municipal electric utility will make a diligent attempt to inform the landlord at least 48 hours prior to disconnection of service to a tenant.

2. If the disconnection will affect occupants of residential units leased from the customer, the premises of any building known by the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility to contain residential units affected by disconnection are to be posted at least two days prior to disconnection, with a notice informing any occupants of the date when service will be disconnected and the reasons for the disconnection.

3. If the customer has received notice of disconnection and has a dispute concerning a bill for electric service, the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility may require the customer to pay a sum of money equal to the amount of the undisputed portion of the bill pending settlement and thereby avoid disconnection of service. Disconnection for nonpayment of the disputed bill is delayed for up to 45 days after the providing of the bill if the customer pays the undisputed amount. The 45 days may be extended by up to 60 days if requested of the utility by the commission in the event the customer files a written complaint with the commission in compliance with 199—Chapter 6.

*f.* Disconnection and reconnection. Disconnection of a residential customer may take place only between the hours of 6 a.m. and 2 p.m. on a weekday and not on weekends or holidays. If a disconnected customer makes payment or other arrangements during normal business hours, or by 7 p.m. for utilities permitting such payment or other arrangements after normal business hours, all reasonable efforts are to be made to reconnect the customer that day. If a disconnected customer makes payment or other arrangements after 7 p.m., all reasonable efforts are to be made to reconnect the customer not later than 11 a.m. the next day.

*g.* Severe cold weather. A disconnection is not to take place where electricity is used as the only source of space heating or to control or operate the only space heating equipment at a residence when the actual temperature or the 24-hour forecast of the National Weather Service for the residence's area is predicted to be 20 degrees Fahrenheit or colder. If the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility has properly posted a disconnect notice but is precluded from disconnecting service because of severe cold weather, the utility may immediately proceed with appropriate disconnection procedures, without further notice, when the temperature in the residence's area rises above 20 degrees Fahrenheit and is forecasted to remain above 20 degrees Fahrenheit for at least 24 hours, unless the customer has paid in full the past due amount or is otherwise entitled to postponement of disconnection.

*h.* Medical stay. Disconnection of a residential customer will be postponed if the disconnection of service would present an especial danger to the health of any permanent resident of the premises.

(1) An especial danger to health is indicated if a person appears to be seriously impaired and may, because of mental or physical problems, be unable to manage the person's own resources, to carry out activities of daily living or to be protected from neglect or hazardous situations without assistance from others. Indicators of an especial danger to health include but are not limited to age, infirmity, or mental incapacitation; serious illness; physical disability, including blindness and limited mobility; and any other factual circumstances that indicate a severe or hazardous health situation.

(2) The electric cooperative or municipal electric utility may require written verification of the especial danger to health by a physician or a public health official, including the name of the person endangered; a statement that the person is a resident of the premises in question; the name, business address, and telephone number of the certifying party; the nature of the health danger; and approximately how long the danger will continue. Initial verification by the verifying party may be by telephone if written verification is forwarded to the utility within five days.

(3) Verification will postpone disconnection for 30 days. In the event service is terminated within 14 days prior to verification of illness by or for a qualifying resident, service is to be restored to that residence if a proper verification is thereafter made in accordance with the foregoing provisions. If the customer does not enter into a reasonable payment agreement for the retirement of the unpaid balance of the account within the first 30 days and does not keep the current account paid during the period that the unpaid balance is to be retired, the customer is subject to disconnection.

*i.* Winter energy assistance. If between November 1 through April 1 the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility is informed that the customer's household may qualify for winter energy

assistance or weatherization funds, service is not to be disconnected for 30 days from the date the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility is notified to allow the customer time to obtain assistance. Disconnection of service is not allowed from November 1 through April 1 for a resident who is a head of household and who has been certified to the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility by the community action agency as eligible for either the low-income home energy assistance program or the weatherization assistance program.

*j.* Deployment. If the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility is informed that one of the heads of household as defined in Iowa Code section 476.20 is a service member deployed for military service, as defined in Iowa Code section 29A.90, disconnection cannot take place at the residence during the deployment or prior to 90 days after the end of the deployment.

*k.* Abnormal electric consumption. A customer who is subject to disconnection for nonpayment of a bill, and who has electric consumption that appears to the customer to be abnormally high, may request the utility provide assistance in identifying the factors contributing to this usage pattern and to suggest remedial measures. Assistance will be provided by the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility by discussing patterns of electric usage that may be readily identifiable, suggesting that an energy audit be conducted, and identifying sources of energy conservation information and financial assistance available to the customer.

*l.* An electric cooperative or municipal electric utility may disconnect electric service after 24-hour notice (and without the written 12-day notice) for failure of the customer to comply with the terms of a payment agreement.

*m.* Prior to November 1, a notice describing the availability of winter energy assistance funds and the application process is to be mailed to customers. The notice is to be of a type size that is easily legible and conspicuous and contain the information set out by the state agency administering the assistance program. A utility serving fewer than 25,000 customers may publish the notice in a customer newsletter in lieu of mailing. An electric cooperative or municipal electric utility serving fewer than 6,000 customers may publish the notice in an advertisement in a local newspaper of general circulation or shopper's guide.

**27.4(2)** *Notice of customer rights and responsibilities.* The standard form of the summary of the rights and responsibilities to be provided to customers is set out below, and will be provided by an electric cooperative or municipal electric utility with all disconnection notices. A nonstandard rights and responsibilities notice may be used with commission approval. The standard customer rights and responsibilities notice is as follows:

**CUSTOMER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES TO AVOID SHUTOFF OF ELECTRIC SERVICE FOR NONPAYMENT**

**1. What can I do if I receive a notice from the utility that says my service will be shut off because I have a past due bill?**

a. Pay the bill in full;

b. Enter into a reasonable payment plan with the utility (see #2 below);

c. Apply for and become eligible for low-income energy assistance (see #3 below);

d. Give the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility a written statement from a doctor or public health official stating that shutting off your electric service would pose an especial health danger for a person living at the residence (see #4 below); or

e. Tell the utility if you think part of the amount shown on the bill is wrong. However, you must still pay the part of the bill you agree you owe the utility (see #5 below).

**2. How do I go about making a reasonable payment plan? (Residential customers only)**

a. Contact the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility as soon as you know you cannot pay the amount you owe. If you cannot pay all the money you owe at one time, you are to be offered a payment plan that spreads payments evenly over at least 12 months. The plan may be longer depending on your financial situation.

b. If you have not made the payments you promised in a previous payment plan with the utility and still owe money, you may qualify for a second payment agreement under certain conditions.

c. If you do not make the payments you promise, the utility may shut off your electric service on one day's notice, unless all the money you owe the utility is paid or you enter into another payment agreement.

**3. How do I apply for low-income energy assistance? (Residential customers only)**

a. Applications are taken at your local community action agency. If you are unsure where to apply, call 211 or 800.244.7431, or visit hhs.iowa.gov/programs/programs-and-services/liheap. To prevent disconnection, contact the utility prior to disconnection of your service.

b. To avoid disconnection, you must apply for energy assistance or weatherization before your service is shut off. Notify your utility that you may be eligible and have applied for energy assistance. Once your service has been disconnected, it will not be reconnected based on approval for energy assistance.

c. Being certified eligible for energy assistance will prevent your service from being disconnected from November 1 through April 1. Between November 1 and April 1, the utility will delay disconnection of your service for 30 days once you notify the utility that you are applying for energy assistance or weatherization assistance, to allow you time to obtain assistance. Only one 30-day delay is required during the moratorium period.

**4. What if someone living at the residence has a serious health condition? (Residential customers only)**

Contact the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility if you believe this is the case. Contact your doctor or a public health official and ask the doctor or health official to contact the utility and state that shutting off your electric service would pose an especial health danger for a person living at your residence. The doctor or public health official must provide a written statement to the electric cooperative's or municipal electric utility's office within five days of when your doctor or public health official notifies the utility of the health condition; otherwise, your electric service may be shut off. If the utility receives this written statement, your service will not be shut off for 30 days. This 30-day delay is to allow you time to arrange payment of your utility bill or find other living arrangements. After 30 days, your service may be shut off if payment arrangements have not been made.

**5. What should I do if I believe my bill is not correct?**

You may dispute your bill by telling the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility that you dispute the bill and paying the part of the bill you think is correct. If you do this, the utility will not shut off your service for 45 days from the date the bill was mailed while you and the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility work out the dispute over the part of the bill you think is incorrect. You may ask the Iowa Utilities Commission for assistance in resolving the dispute (see #9 below).

**6. When can the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility shut off my electric service because I have not paid my bill?**

a. Your electric cooperative or municipal electric utility can shut off service between the hours of 6 a.m. and 2 p.m. Monday through Friday.

b. The electric cooperative or municipal electric utility will not shut off your service on nights, weekends, or holidays for nonpayment of a bill.

c. The electric cooperative or municipal electric utility will not shut off your service if you enter into a reasonable payment plan to pay the overdue amount (see #2 above).

d. The electric cooperative or municipal electric utility will not shut off your service if the temperature is forecasted to be 20 degrees Fahrenheit or colder during the following 24-hour period, including the day your service is scheduled to be shut off.

e. If you have qualified for low-income energy assistance, the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility cannot shut off your service from November 1 through April 1. However, you will still owe the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility for the service used during this time.

f. The electric cooperative or municipal electric utility will not shut off your service if you have notified the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility that you dispute a portion of your bill and you pay the part of the bill that you agree is correct.

g. If one of the heads of household is a service member deployed for military service, electric service cannot be shut off during the deployment or within 90 days after the end of deployment. In order for this exception to disconnection to apply, the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility will need to be informed of the deployment prior to disconnection. However, you will still owe the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility for service used during this time.

**7. How will I be told the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility is going to shut off my service?**

a. You must be given a written notice at least 12 days before the electric service can be shut off for nonpayment. This notice will include the reason for shutting off your service.

b. If you have not made payments required by an agreed-upon payment plan, your service may be disconnected with only one day's notice.

c. The electric cooperative or municipal electric utility must try to reach you by telephone or in person before it shuts off your service. From November 1 through April 1, if the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility cannot reach you by telephone or in person, the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility will put a written notice on the door of or another conspicuous place at your residence to tell you that your electric service will be shut off.

**8. If service is shut off, when will it be turned back on?**

a. The electric cooperative or municipal electric utility will turn your service back on if you pay the whole amount you owe. The service shall be restored for 30 days if you provide the utility with medical verification from a doctor or public health official of an especial danger to health within 14 days of a shut off for nonpayment.

b. If you make your payment during regular business hours, or by 7 p.m. for electric cooperatives or municipal electric utilities permitting such payment or other arrangements after regular business hours, the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility must make a reasonable effort to turn your service back on that day. If service cannot reasonably be turned on that same day, the utility is to do it by 11 a.m. the next day.

c. The electric cooperative or municipal electric utility may charge you a fee to turn your service back on. That fee may be higher in the evening or on weekends, so you may ask that your service be turned on during normal utility business hours.

**9. Is there any other help available besides my electric cooperative or municipal electric utility?**

If the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility has not been able to help you with your problem, you may contact the Iowa Utilities Commission toll-free at 877.565.4450. You may also write the Iowa Utilities Commission at 1375 E. Court Ave., Des Moines, IA 50319-0069, or email customer@iuc.iowa.gov. Low-income customers may also be eligible for free legal assistance from Iowa Legal Aid and may contact Iowa Legal Aid at 800.532.1275.

**27.4(3)** *When disconnection is not allowed.*

*a.* No disconnection may take place from November 1 through April 1 for a resident who has been certified to the utility by the local community action agency as being eligible for either the low-income home energy assistance program or weatherization assistance program.

*b.* If the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility is informed that one of the heads of household as defined in Iowa Code section 476.20 is a service member deployed for military service, as defined in Iowa Code section 29A.90, disconnection cannot take place at the residence during the deployment or prior to 90 days after the end of the deployment.

**27.4(4)** *Servicing of utilization control equipment.* Each electric cooperative or municipal electric utility is to service and maintain any equipment it uses on a customer's premises and correctly set and keep in proper adjustment any utility-owned thermostats, clocks, relays, time switches or other devices that control the customer's service in accordance with the provisions in the utility's schedules.

**27.4(5)** *Customer complaints.* A utility will promptly and thoroughly investigate all complaints concerning its practices, facilities, or service. The electric cooperative or municipal electric utility is to keep such records of customer complaints as will enable it to review and analyze its procedures and actions.

*a.* Each electric cooperative and municipal electric utility is to develop a fully informative procedure for the resolution of customer complaints.

*b.* The utility is to take reasonable steps to ensure that customers unable to travel are not denied the right to be heard.

*c.* The final step in a complaint review procedure, if the utility and customer are not able to agree on a resolution of the complaint, is a filing for commission resolution of the issues if the commission determines it has jurisdiction.

**27.4(6)** *Limitation of service.* The electric cooperative or municipal electric utility may adopt a policy for service limitation at a customer's residence as a measure to be taken in lieu of disconnection of service to the customer. The service limiter policy is to contain the following:

*a.* No activation without the customer's agreement.

*b.* A requirement for default on all payment agreements the customer has qualified for and agreed to.

*c.* Usage of a minimum of 3,600 watts. If the service limiter policy provides for different usage levels for different customers, specific nondiscriminatory criteria for determining the usage levels are set out. Electric-heating residential customers may have their service limited if otherwise eligible, but consumption limits are to be set at a level that allows customers to continue to heat their residences. For purposes of this rule, "electric heating" means heating by means of a fixed-installation electric appliance that serves as the primary source of heat and not, for example, one or more space heaters.

*d.* A provision that, if the minimum usage limit is exceeded such that the limiter function interrupts service, the service limiter function is to be capable of being reset manually by the customer, or the service limiter function will reset itself automatically within 15 minutes after the interruption. In addition, the service limiter function may also be capable of being reset remotely. If the option of resetting the meter remotely is available, the utility is to provide a 24-hour toll-free number for the customer to notify the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility that the limiter needs to be reset and the meter is to be reset immediately following notification by the customer. If the remote reset option is used, the meter is to be capable of being reset manually by the customer or the service limiter function will reset itself automatically within 15 minutes after the interruption.

*e.* There may be no disconnect, reconnect, or other charges associated with service limiter interruptions or restorations.

*f.* A provision that, upon installation of a service limiter or activation of a service limiter function on the meter, the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility is to provide the customer with information on the operation of the limiter, including how it can be reset, and information on what appliances or combination of appliances can generally be operated to stay within the limits imposed by the limiter.

*g.* A provision that the service limiter function of the meter is to be disabled no later than the next working day after the residential customer has paid the delinquent balance in full.

*h.* A service limiter customer that defaults on the payment agreement is subject to disconnection after a 24-hour notice.

[**ARC 0742D**, IAB 11/11/26, effective 12/16/26]

**199—27.5(476) Engineering standards.**

**27.5(1)** *Requirement for good engineering practice.* The electric plant of the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility shall be constructed, installed, maintained, and operated in accordance with accepted good engineering practice in the electric industry to ensure, as far as reasonably possible, continuity of service, uniformity in the quality of service furnished, and the safety of persons and property.

**27.5(2)** *Standards incorporated by reference.* Applicable provisions in the publications listed below as standards of accepted good practice unless otherwise ordered by the commission. The standards listed below are recommended for use by municipal electric utilities.

*a.* Iowa Electrical Safety Code, as defined in 199—Chapter 25.

*b.* National Electrical Code, ANSI/NFPA 70-2026, published October 3, 2025.

*c.* IEEE C57.13.1-2017, IEEE Guide for Field Testing of Relaying Current Transformers, as published October 31, 2018; and IEEE PC57.13.3, IEEE Approved Draft Guide for Grounding of Instrument Transformer Secondary Circuits and Cases, as published March 10, 2026.

*d.* American National Standard for Electric Power Systems and Equipment Voltage Ratings (60 Hertz), ANSI C84.1-2020, published September 3, 2020.

*e.* Recommended Practice for System Grounding of Industrial and Commercial Power Systems, IEEE 3003.1-2019, published August 9, 2019.

*f.* IEEE 1159-2019, IEEE Recommended Practice for Monitoring Electric Power Quality, as published August 13, 2019.

*g.* IEEE 519-2022, IEEE Standard for Harmonic Control in Electric Power Systems, as published August 5, 2022.

*h.* At railroad crossings, the engineering standards for pipelines rule found in 199—Chapter 42.

*i.* Iowa Stray Voltage Guide, located at www.iowastrayvoltageguide.com, published July 2014.

*j.* American National Standard for Electric Meters—Code for Electricity Metering, ANSI C12.1-2026, published February 3, 2026.

*k.* IEEE Guide for Electric Power Distribution Reliability Indices, IEEE 1366-2022, published November 22, 2022.

[**ARC 0742D**, IAB 11/11/26, effective 12/16/26]

**199—27.6(476) Safety.**

**27.6(1)** *Interconnection compliance.* Each electric cooperative and municipal electric utility shall comply with commission rules for standards for interconnection, safety, and operating reliability under this subrule and rule 199—15.9(476).

**27.6(2)** *Protective measures.* Each electric cooperative and municipal electric utility shall exercise reasonable care to reduce those hazards inherent in connection with its electric service and to which its employees, its customers, and the general public may be subjected and shall adopt and execute a safety program designed to protect the public and fitted to the size and type of its operations.

**27.6(3)** *Accident investigation and prevention.* Electric cooperatives and municipal electric utilities are to give reasonable assistance to the commission in the investigation of the cause of accidents and in the determination of suitable means of preventing accidents.

**27.6(4)** *Reportable accidents.* Electric cooperatives and municipal electric utilities are to maintain a summary of all reportable accidents, as defined in rule 199—25.5(476,478), arising from operations.

**27.6(5)** *Grounding of secondary distribution system.* Unless otherwise specified by the commission, each electric cooperative and municipal electric utility is to comply with, and encourage customers to comply with, the applicable provisions of the acceptable standards for the grounding of secondary circuits and equipment.

*a.* Ground connections should be tested for resistance at the time of installation. Each electric cooperative and municipal electric utility are to keep a record of all ground resistance measurements.

*b.* Each electric cooperative and municipal electric utility is to establish a program of inspection so that all artificial grounds installed are inspected within reasonable periods of time.

[**ARC 0742D**, IAB 11/11/26, effective 12/16/26]

**199—27.7(476) Customer contribution fund.**

**27.7(1)** *Applicability and purpose.* This rule applies to each electric cooperative and municipal electric utility as defined in Iowa Code sections 476.1A and 476.1B. Pursuant to Iowa Code section 476.66, each electric cooperative or municipal electric utility is to maintain a program plan to assist the electric cooperative's or municipal electric utility's low-income customers with weatherization and to supplement assistance received under the federal low-income home energy assistance program for the payment of winter heating bills.

**27.7(2)** *Notification.* Notice of the customer contribution fund is to be given to all customers at least twice a year. Upon commencement of service and at least once a year, the notice is to be mailed or personally delivered to all customers, or provided by electronic means to those customers who have consented to receiving electronic notices. The other notice may be published in a local newspaper(s) of general circulation within the service territory of the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility. A utility serving fewer than 6,000 customers may publish its semiannual notices locally in a free newspaper, utility newsletter or shopper's guide instead of a newspaper. At a minimum, the notice is to include:

*a.* A description of the availability and the purpose of the fund.

*b.* A customer authorization form that includes a monthly billing option and methods of contribution.

**27.7(3)** *Methods of contribution.* Contribution methods may include monthly pledges, as well as one-time or periodic contributions. A pledge by a customer or other party is not a binding contract between

the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility and the pledger. Delayed contributions are not subject to late payment charges. Each electric cooperative or municipal electric utility may allow persons or organizations to contribute matching funds.

**27.7(4)** *Annual report.* On or before September 30 of each year, each electric cooperative or municipal electric utility is to file with the commission a report of all the customer contribution fund activity for the previous fiscal year from July 1 through June 30, on a form provided by the commission that contains an accounting of the total revenues collected and all distributions of the fund.

[**ARC 0742D**, IAB 11/11/26, effective 12/16/26]

**199—27.8(476,478) Service reliability requirements for electric utilities.** Each electric cooperative and municipal electric utility is to adopt and have approved by its board of directors or governing authority a reliability plan. The reliability plan is to be updated not less than annually. A copy of the EC-1 (Annual Report) or ME-1, as applicable, is to be filed with the commission for informational purposes.

[**ARC 0742D**, IAB 11/11/26, effective 12/16/26]

**199—27.9(476,478) Notification of outages.**

**27.9(1)** *Notification.* The notification requirements in this rule are for the timely collection of electric outage information that may be useful to emergency management agencies in providing for the safety and welfare of individual Iowa citizens. Each electric cooperative and municipal electric utility shall notify the commission when it is projected that an outage may result in a loss of service for more than six hours and the outage meets one of the following criteria:

*a.* Loss of service for more than six hours to substantially all of a municipality, including the surrounding area served by the same electric cooperative or municipal electric utility. An electric cooperative or municipal electric utility may use loss of service within the utility's service territory to 75 percent or more of customers within a municipality, including the surrounding area served by the utility, to meet this criterion;

*b.* A major event as defined in this chapter, except for notifications of emergency alerts from regional transmission organizations or independent system operators; or

*c.* Any other outage considered significant by the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility. This includes loss of service for more than six hours to significant public health and safety facilities known to the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility at the time of the notification.

**27.9(2)** *Information about outages.*

*a.* Notification shall be provided regarding outages that meet the requirements of subrule 27.9(1) by notifying the commission duty officer by email at dutyofficer@iuc.iowa.gov or, in appropriate circumstances, by telephone at 515.745.2332. Notification shall be made at the earliest possible time after it is determined the event may be reportable and should include the following information, as available:

(1) The general nature or cause of the outage;

(2) The area affected;

(3) The approximate number of customers that have experienced a loss of electric service as a result of the outage;

(4) The time when service is estimated to be restored; and

(5) The name of the electric cooperative or municipal electric utility, the name and telephone number of the person making the report, and the name and telephone number of a contact person knowledgeable about the outage. The notice should be supplemented as more complete or accurate information is available.

*b.* The electric cooperative or municipal electric utility is to provide to the commission updates of the estimated time when service will be restored to all customers able to receive service or of significantly changed circumstances, unless service is restored within one hour of the time initially estimated.

*c.* The electric cooperative or municipal electric utility is to notify the commission once service is fully restored to all customers after an outage meeting the requirements of subrule 27.9(1).

**27.9(3)** *Planned interruptions.* Planned interruptions by electric cooperatives and municipal electric utilities are to be made at a time that will not cause an unreasonable inconvenience to customers. Adequate

notice should be provided to customers that will be affected when a planned interruption lasts longer than one hour.
[**ARC 0742D**, IAB 11/11/26, effective 12/16/26]

**199—27.10(476) Electric vehicle charging service.** The requirements in rule 199—20.20(476) regarding electric vehicle charging stations apply to electric cooperatives and municipal electric utilities.
[**ARC 0742D**, IAB 11/11/26, effective 12/16/26]

**199—27.11(476) Exterior flood lighting.**

**27.11(1)** *Newly installed lighting.* All newly installed exterior flood lighting owned by an electric cooperative or municipal electric utility are to be solid-state lighting or lighting with equivalent or better energy efficiency.

**27.11(2)** *In-service lighting replacement schedule.* In-service lighting is to be replaced with solid-state lighting or lighting with equivalent or better energy efficiency when worn out due to ballast, lamp, or fixture failure or for any other reason, such as vandalism or storm damage. Electric cooperatives and municipal electric utilities are to include in their annual report to be filed pursuant to 199—Chapter 23 a report stating the progress in converting to higher pressure sodium lighting or lighting with equivalent or higher energy efficiency.

**27.11(3)** *Efficacy standards.* Lighting other than solid-state has equivalent or better efficacy if one or more of the following can be established:

*a.* For fixtures, the mean lumens-per-watt lamp rating is greater than 100;

*b.* The new lighting uses no more energy per installation than comparable, suitably sized solid-state; or

*c.* The new lighting luminaires have a mean efficacy rating equal to or greater than 100 lumens per watt according to a Department of Energy (DOE) Lighting Facts label, testing under the DOE Commercially Available LED Product Evaluation and Reporting Program (CALiPER), Design Lights Consortium (DLC) or any other testing agency that follows Illuminating Engineering Society of North America LM-79-19, as approved May 14, 2019, test procedures.
[**ARC 0742D**, IAB 11/11/26, effective 12/16/26]

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code sections 476.1A, 476.1B, 476.2, and 476.20.

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