



# REVIEW OF OUR CUSTOMER PROGRAMS: FROM AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE TO BILLING, INCLUDING COLLECTION & DISCONNECTS

**INTRODUCTION** – CPS Energy has passionately served Greater San Antonio for 160 years. Our mission is to provide energy that is **Affordable, Reliable, Resilient, Environmentally Responsible, Safe, and Secure**. It is always important to work with our customers, especially when they are facing personal challenges, including difficulty paying their bills.

Working with our customers has been extra special this year. For example in March, we suspended all physical disconnect activities. We will not restart disconnects in 2020. We will also waive late fees for any customer who enrolls in our helpful payment plans.

We also have many assistance programs such as bill credits from our Residential Energy Assistance Partnership (REAP) with the City of San Antonio and Bexar County, Affordability Discounts; payment plans; senior and veteran support; and –this year– federal CARES Act funding. See a longer list to the top right. This list and other helpful information can be found at [www.cpsenergy.com](http://www.cpsenergy.com).

Additionally, in June of 2020, we began calling customers to make sure they know about our helpful programs, as well as the many resources that are offered by other organizations across San Antonio. To date, our helpful Energy Advisors (EA) have called over 51,000 customers, with:

- 56% of our customers answered our outreach the first time or calling us back.
- 89% of customers that we have spoken to were helped, including enrolling in a new payment plan that are easier to manage or by receiving a referral to an agency that can provide additional assistance.

## Helpful Links

- ▶ COVID-19 Updates
- ▶ REAP / Utility Assistance
- ▶ Affordability Discounts
- ▶ Budget Payment Plan
- ▶ Critical Care
- ▶ Casa Verde
- ▶ Disabled Billing Program
- ▶ Emergency Assistance Programs
- ▶ First Responders with Burn Injuries Discount Program
- ▶ Reconnection of Service (Self-Serve)
- ▶ Senior Citizen Billing Program
- ▶ Senior Citizen Late Fee Waiver
- ▶ Veterans Discount



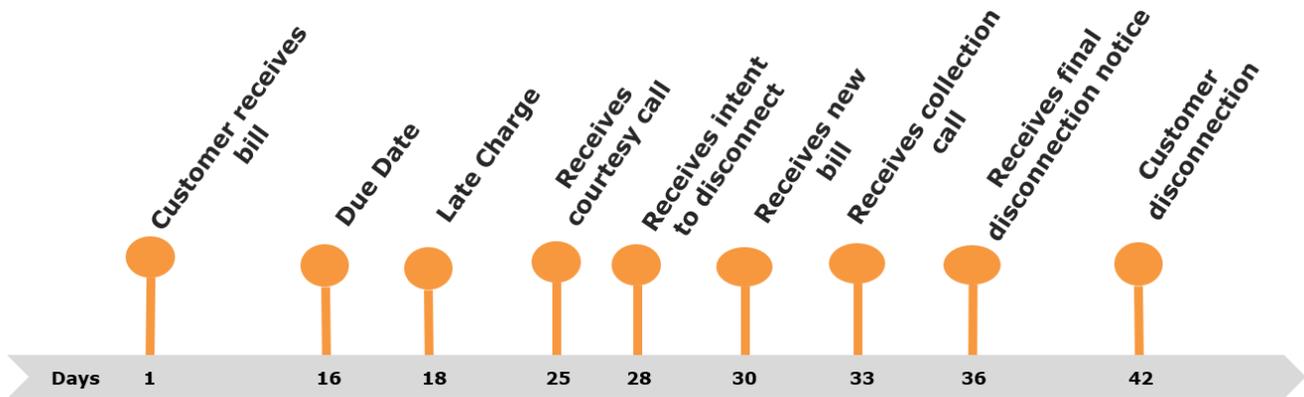


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Like all utilities, we also have a carefully sequenced monthly billing process, through which customers receive monthly statements, including notices of delinquency. These notices are designed to inform customers about the status of their account and encourage them to dial our EAs at (210) 353-2222. Our EAs are passionate to share information about the resources mentioned above.

**BACKGROUND** – Historically, our collection process provides customers multiple reminder opportunities of payments due, multiple paths to seek assistance, and immediate response through the walk-in and call centers.

### Collection Process:



Customer bills are sent one day after reading the meter and are due 16 days later. If unpaid, a late charge is added two days after the due date. A week later, an automated courtesy call is made, followed in three days by a delinquency notice. The next bill follows in two days, with an automated reminder call in three days. The required Final Disconnection Notice is mailed 36 days from the first billing date advising the customer that their service is in jeopardy of being disconnected. Five days after the Final Disconnection Notice, the account becomes eligible for disconnection (42 days after the first billing date).

After the other options are exhausted, the last step in the billing process is the potential physical disconnect. Due to the implementation of an updated digital Automated Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system, disconnects and reconnects are now done by the system, automatically and remotely.



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The enhanced technology eliminates the need for our team members to access property access to customers' homes or businesses, which many customers prefer. This said, even under this upgraded technology enabled system, no disconnections are performed on weekends or in extreme weather (hot or cold). It has also been our practice in recent years not to perform disconnections on or around national holidays.

While we saw disconnects for non-payment increase for several years through 2018, they declined notably again in 2019. The level of disconnects was exceptionally low in 2020, since this activity was suspended in March of this year, as mentioned earlier.

The prior increase primarily was due to a change to new technology. The core disconnect & reconnect processes no longer require human intervention. Their automation has eliminated the need to send our employees onto a customer's property and therefore has improved our customers' security.

With implementation that stepped up in 2013, the primary benefit of the AMI system is that customers can manage their energy consumption better and reduced our own cost to serve our customers. Customers can log into an online portal on their computers or mobile devices and see their usage by 15-minute intervals to control how they use their power.

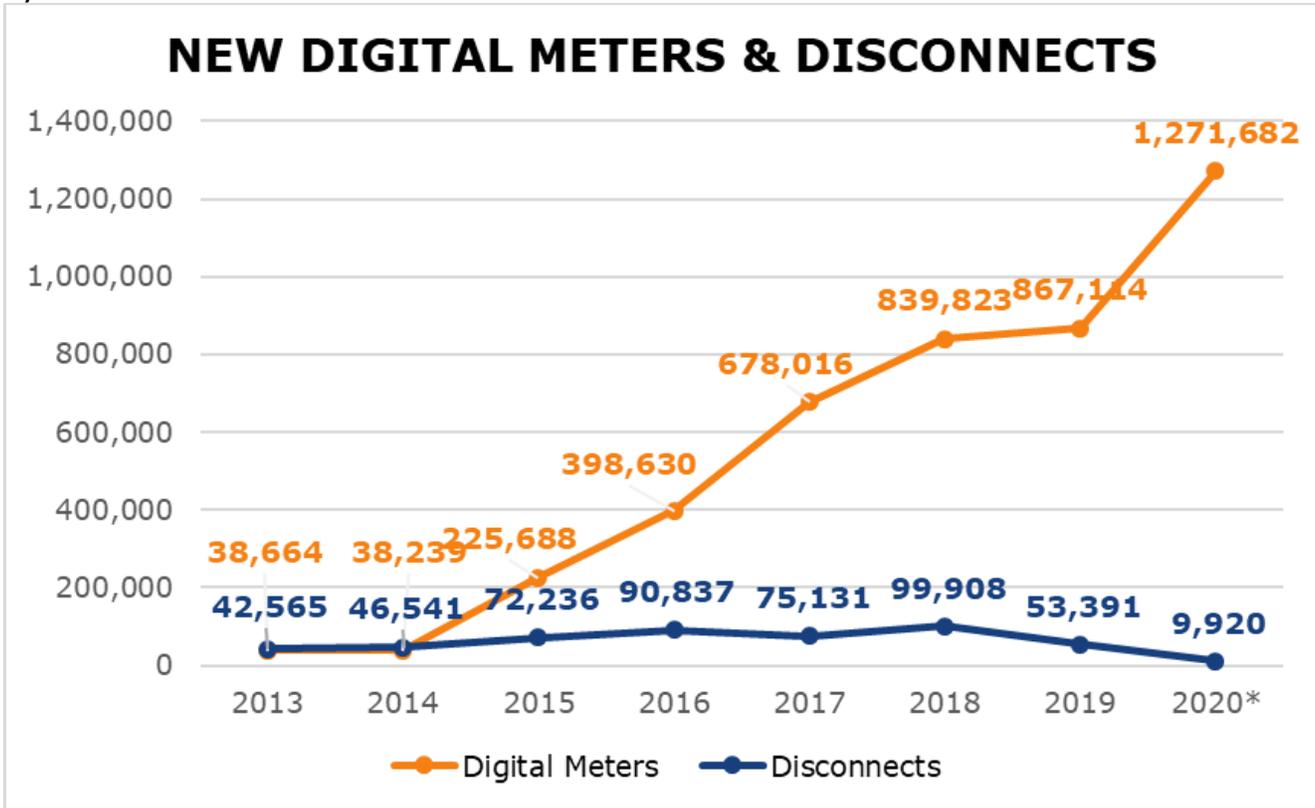
The AMI technology enabled efficiencies for both our customers and our company. For example, the enhanced technology eliminates the need for our team members to access property access to customers' homes or businesses, which many customers prefer.

**Better processes, especially those enhanced by investments in technology, have made CPS Energy more efficient. This has led to helpful cost control, which in turn has helped us significantly reduce the need for frequent rate increases. The fact is that we have only had one (1) rate increase in 10 years and that was six (6) years ago. This helps all customers across San Antonio.**



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Back to the original observation about the increase in disconnects, the chart below shows that they were generally correlated to the implementation of the AMI system.



While the activities in the new system are automated, in 2019, we suspended disconnects due to extreme storms that impacted our community throughout June of that year and because of the high temperatures that occurred later in the summer.

While disconnect are a part of our operations, it is important to note reconnects are too. We typically see that 93-95% of customers reach out to reconnect their services.

We are a cost-plus business. So consistent recovery from everyone is crucial. Again, while we cannot forgive bills, we do have payment assistance and discount programs that are very helpful.



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## APPENDIX A

### WEEKDAY TRACKING OF NON-DISCONNECT DAYS FOR FY 2020

We did not perform disconnects for cut-off non-payment on the following days between February 1, 2019 and January 31, 2020, nor on the weekends.

In summary, the primary drivers of non-disconnection days are as follows:

Reason for no disconnection	Number of days	Percent of total
Severe weather and restoration	55	42%
Anticipated high customer service volume	36	27%
Holidays	34	26%
Technology related	7	5%

A detailed breakdown by day for non-disconnects dates:

Date	Day	Reason
2/4/2019	Mon	Anticipated high customer service volume
3/4/2019	Mon	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
3/5/2019	Tue	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
3/8/2019	Fri	System Maintenance
3/13/2019	Wed	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
4/1/2019	Mon	Anticipated high customer service volume
4/8/2019	Mon	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
4/12/2019	Fri	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
4/17/2019	Wed	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
4/18/2019	Thu	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
4/24/2019	Wed	Holiday
4/26/2019	Fri	Holiday
4/29/2019	Mon	Anticipated high customer service volume
5/3/2019	Fri	Severe Weather and Restoration
5/24/2019	Fri	Holiday
5/27/2019	Mon	Holiday
5/28/2019	Tue	Anticipated high customer service volume
6/3/2019	Mon	Anticipated high customer service volume
6/5/2019	Wed	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
6/7/2019	Fri	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
6/10/2019	Mon	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
6/11/2019	Tue	Severe Weather and/or Restoration



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6/12/2019	Wed	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
6/13/2019	Thu	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
6/14/2019	Fri	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
6/17/2019	Mon	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
6/18/2019	Tue	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
6/19/2019	Wed	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
6/20/2019	Thu	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
6/21/2019	Fri	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
6/24/2019	Mon	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
6/25/2019	Tue	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
6/26/2019	Wed	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
6/27/2019	Thu	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
6/28/2019	Fri	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
7/3/2019	Wed	Holiday
7/4/2019	Thu	Holiday
7/5/2019	Fri	Holiday
7/8/2019	Mon	Anticipated high customer service volume
7/15/2019	Mon	Anticipated high customer service volume
7/19/2019	Fri	System Issues
7/26/2019	Fri	Anticipated high customer service volume
8/2/2019	Fri	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
8/6/2019	Tue	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
8/7/2019	Wed	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
8/8/2019	Thu	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
8/9/2019	Fri	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
8/12/2019	Mon	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
8/13/2019	Tue	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
8/14/2019	Wed	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
8/15/2019	Thu	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
8/16/2019	Fri	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
8/20/2019	Tue	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
8/21/2019	Wed	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
8/23/2019	Fri	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
8/26/2019	Mon	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
8/27/2019	Tue	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
8/28/2019	Wed	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
8/29/2019	Thu	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
8/30/2019	Fri	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
9/2/2019	Mon	Holiday
9/3/2019	Tue	Anticipated high customer service volume
9/4/2019	Wed	Anticipated high customer service volume



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9/5/2019	Thu	Anticipated high customer service volume
9/6/2019	Fri	Anticipated high customer service volume
9/10/2019	Tue	Anticipated high customer service volume
9/17/2019	Tue	Anticipated high customer service volume
9/19/2019	Thu	Anticipated high customer service volume
9/20/2019	Fri	Anticipated high customer service volume
9/23/2019	Mon	Anticipated high customer service volume
9/30/2019	Mon	Anticipated high customer service volume
10/4/2019	Fri	Anticipated high customer service volume
10/7/2019	Mon	Anticipated high customer service volume
10/9/2019	Wed	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
10/11/2019	Fri	Anticipated high customer service volume
10/14/2019	Mon	Anticipated high customer service volume
10/16/2019	Wed	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
10/17/2019	Thu	Anticipated high customer service volume
10/18/2019	Fri	MDS/MMA outage for the weekend
10/21/2019	Mon	Anticipated high customer service volume
10/24/2019	Thu	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
10/25/2019	Fri	Anticipated high customer service volume
10/28/2019	Mon	Anticipated high customer service volume
10/31/2019	Thu	Holiday
11/1/2019	Fri	Holiday
11/4/2019	Mon	Anticipated high customer service volume
11/5/2019	Tue	Anticipated high customer service volume
11/6/2019	Wed	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
11/7/2019	Thu	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
11/8/2019	Fri	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
11/11/2019	Mon	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
11/12/2019	Tue	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
11/13/2019	Wed	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
11/14/2019	Thu	Payment file delay
11/15/2019	Fri	Anticipated high customer service volume
11/18/2019	Mon	Anticipated high customer service volume
11/22/2019	Fri	Anticipated high customer service volume
11/25/2019	Mon	Holiday
11/26/2019	Tue	Holiday
11/27/2019	Wed	Holiday
11/28/2019	Thu	Holiday
11/29/2019	Fri	Holiday
12/2/2019	Mon	Anticipated high customer service volume
12/3/2019	Tue	System Issues



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12/5/2019	Thu	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
12/6/2019	Fri	Anticipated high customer service volume
12/12/2019	Thu	Year End Support Packs
12/13/2019	Fri	Year End Support Packs
12/16/2019	Mon	Holiday
12/17/2019	Tue	Holiday
12/18/2019	Wed	Holiday
12/19/2019	Thu	Holiday
12/20/2019	Fri	Holiday
12/23/2019	Mon	Holiday
12/24/2019	Tue	Holiday
12/25/2019	Wed	Holiday
12/26/2019	Thu	Holiday
12/27/2019	Fri	Holiday
12/30/2019	Mon	Holiday
12/31/2019	Tue	Holiday
1/1/2020	Wed	Holiday
1/2/2020	Thu	Holiday
1/3/2020	Fri	Holiday
1/6/2020	Mon	Holiday
1/13/2020	Mon	Anticipated high customer service volume
1/17/2020	Fri	Holiday
1/20/2020	Mon	Holiday
1/21/2020	Tue	Holiday
1/22/2020	Wed	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
1/23/2020	Thu	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
1/24/2020	Fri	Anticipated high customer service volume
1/27/2020	Mon	Anticipated high customer service volume

2/3/2020	Mon	Anticipated high customer service volume
2/5/2020	Wed	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
2/6/2020	Thu	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
2/10/2020	Mon	Anticipated high customer service volume
2/11/2020	Tue	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
2/12/2020	Wed	Anticipated high customer service volume
2/13/2020	Thu	Anticipated high customer service volume
2/14/2020	Fri	Anticipated high customer service volume
2/17/2020	Mon	Anticipated high customer service volume
2/18/2020	Tue	Anticipated high customer service volume



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2/19/2020	Wed	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
2/20/2020	Thu	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
2/21/2020	Fri	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
2/25/2020	Tue	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
2/26/2020	Wed	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
2/27/2020	Thu	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
3/2/2020	Mon	Anticipated high customer service volume
3/3/2020	Tue	Anticipated high customer service volume
3/4/2020	Wed	Severe Weather and/or Restoration
3/12/2020	Thu	Begin Disconnection Halt due to COVID-19

## APPENDIX B

Agencies we partner with to provide holistic support to our customers include:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>AARC - ALAMO AREA RESOURCE CENTER<br/>         AGAPE MINISTRIES<br/>         ALAMO AREA COUNCIL OF GOVT (AACOG)<br/>         ALAMO AREA AGENCY ON AGING<br/>         ALAMO AREA COUNCIL OF GOVT (AACOG)<br/>         TXSERVES<br/>         ALAMO AREA COUNCIL OF GOVT (AACOG)<br/>         WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM<br/>         AMERICAN GI FORUM<br/>         ANIMAL CARE SERVICES - PET PANTRY<br/>         ANY BABY CAN<br/>         BEXAR COUNTY - COMMUNITY RESOURCES<br/>         BEXAR COUNTY - HOUSING AUTHORITY<br/>         BLESSED ANGELS COMMUNITY CENTER<br/>         BLUEPRINT MINISTRIES<br/>         BRIGHTON CENTER<br/>         CAM - CHRISTIAN ASSISTANCE<br/>         MINISTRIES (DeZavala &amp; McCullough)<br/>         CATHOLIC CHARITIES - GUADALUPE<br/>         COMMUNITY CENTER<br/>         CATHOLIC CHARITIES - ST STEPHENS<br/>         CARE CENTER<br/>         CENTROMED<br/>         CHILDCARE MANAGEMENT SERVICES<br/>         CHILDREN'S BEREAVEMENT CENTER<br/>         CHRYSALIS MINISTRIES<br/>         CITY OF SAN ANTONIO DEPT OF HUMAN<br/>         SERVICES</p> | <p>GRASP - GREATER RANDOLPH AREA<br/>         SERVICES PROGRAM<br/>         GREEN AND HEALTHY HOMES-CITY OF SAN<br/>         ANTONIO<br/>         HABITAT FOR HUMANITY<br/>         HELPING HANDS OF SAN ANTONIO<br/>         HOUSE OF NEIGHBORLY SERVICES<br/>         INNER CITY DEVELOPMENT<br/>         MEALS ON WHEELS<br/>         MERCED MINOR REPAIR PROGRAM<br/>         METHODIST HEALTHCARE MINISTRIES<br/>         NORTHEAST SENIOR ASSISTANCE (NESA)<br/>         NW VISTA COLLEGE- STUDENT ADVOCACY<br/>         CENTER<br/>         OPERATION HOMEFRONT-MILITARY<br/>         SERVICES<br/>         OWNER OCCUPIED REHABILITATION<br/>         PROGRAM- CITY OF SAN ANTONIO<br/>         PRESA COMMUNITY CENTER<br/>         PROJECT MEND<br/>         SA CHRISTIAN HOPE RESOURCE CENTER<br/>         SAC - SAN ANTONIO STUDENT ADVOCACY<br/>         CENTER<br/>         SAFB - SAN ANTONIO FOOD BANK<br/>         SALVATION ARMY<br/>         SAMMINISTRIES<br/>         SAN ANTONIO FAMILY ENDEAVORS<br/>         SAN ANTONIO THREADS</p> |
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CITY OF SAN ANTONIO NEIGHBORHOOD  
AND HOUSING SERVICES  
COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS  
DAUGHTERS OF CHARITY (DEPAUL FAMILY  
CENTER)  
ELLA AUSTIN  
FAMILY SERVICE ASSOCIATION  
GOOD SAMARITAN COMMUNITY  
SERVICES  
GRANDPARENTS RAISING  
GRANDCHILDREN

SAWS PROJECT UPLIFT  
SOUTH ALAMO REGIONAL ALLIANCE FOR  
THE HOMELESS (SARAH)  
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL  
TEXAS DIAPER BANK  
TEXAS VETERAN SERVICES  
THE ARC OF SAN ANTONIO  
THE NEIGHBORHOOD PLACE  
UNDER ONE ROOF- CITY OF SAN ANTONIO  
WESLEY COMMUNITY CENTER  
WEST AVENUE COMPASSION



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## APPENDIX C – PROGRAMS & PAYMENT ARRANGEMENT OPTIONS

Program	Description
<b>Residential Energy Assistance Partnership (REAP)</b>	<p>We contribute \$1 million per year to this partnership between the City of San Antonio, Bexar County, and us. This program provides a credit on a customer’s energy bills of up to \$400 for customers that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have income at or below 125% of federal poverty guidelines and be experiencing financial hardship.</li> <li>• Are elderly, handicapped, have small children in your home, or require critical-care equipment.</li> <li>• Are a resident of San Antonio or Bexar County.</li> </ul>
<b>Affordability Discount Program (ADP)</b>	<p>This is a discount of about \$148/year for a customer who has income at or below 125% of federal poverty guidelines &amp; meets one of the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be 60 years old or older.</li> <li>• Have a disability.</li> <li>• Use life-sustaining medical equipment.</li> <li>• Have pre-school aged children or school children age 18 &amp; under.</li> <li>• Have extenuating circumstances as determined by CPS Energy or the City of San Antonio.</li> </ul>
<b>Burned Veterans’ Discount</b>	<p>We offer help to those who have sacrificed for our country. This program provides electric bill payment assistance to those who have significantly decreased abilities to regulate their core body temperatures due to severe burns received during combat. Qualified electric customers will receive up to \$94 per month off the electric portion of their CPS Energy bills from April through October.</p>
<b>First Responders with Burn Injuries Discount Program</b>	<p>We provide electric bill payment assistance to those who have significantly decreased abilities to regulate their core body temperatures due to severe burn injuries sustained in providing first responder duties.</p>
<b>Senior Citizen Billing Program</b>	<p>We understand that Senior Citizens in our community live on a fixed income and may rely on specific income sources that don’t always fit the billing cycle. This program provides senior citizens additional time to pay their utility bills. To qualify, applicants must be at least 60 years of age or older, be the person whose name is on the bill, and provide a social security number and/or driver license or Texas ID.</p>
<b>Senior Citizen Late Fee Waiver</b>	<p>We understand that Senior Citizens in our community live on a fixed income and may rely on specific income sources that don’t always fit the billing cycle. To help support this need, qualifying seniors over 60 years old can sign up to have their late charges waived.</p>
<b>Disabled Citizens Billing Program</b>	<p>Residential disabled customers on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) are allowed additional time to pay the net amount of their energy bills. To qualify, the applicant must be the person whose name is on the utility bill, receive SSI, and use their primary address.</p>



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Payment Arrangement Option	Description
<b>Budget Billing Payment Plan (BPP)</b>	We know that some customers prefer a set bill each month, and we can identify a fixed billing amount based on the average usage over the last 12 months, making it easy to budget energy dollars for the year.
<b>Modified Budget Billing Payment Plan</b>	We work with the customer by spreading the past due amount into installment payments and creating a fixed monthly amount based on their average usage from the past year.
<b>Installment Plan</b>	We work with the customer to identify how many months they need to spread the past due amount into installments & add it to the upcoming bills.
<b>Late Fee Waiver</b>	We will work with a customer that contacts us to waive their late fees & set them up on the best program for their circumstances.
<b>Extension</b>	We can assist any customer that needs additional time to pay by providing a due date extension.



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### APPENDIX D – RELATED ARTICLES

Egan, Eric. "AMI Transforms the Business and Benefits Customers." *Utility Analytics Institute*, 26 June 2018:

- [www.utilityanalytics.com/2018/06/ami-transforms-business-and-benefits-customers/](http://www.utilityanalytics.com/2018/06/ami-transforms-business-and-benefits-customers/)

Howland, Ethan. "Utilities Using AMI Infrastructure, Data in Multiple Ways." *Utilities Using AMI Infrastructure, Data in Multiple Ways | American Public Power Association*, 16 May 2019:

- [www.publicpower.org/periodical/article/utilities-using-ami-infrastructure-data-multiple-ways](http://www.publicpower.org/periodical/article/utilities-using-ami-infrastructure-data-multiple-ways).

AMEREN ILLINOIS. "Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Cost / Benefit Analysis." *Smart Energy Consumer Collaborative*, June 2012:

- [www.smartenergycc.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Ameren-Ex.-3.1-AIC-AMI-Cost-Benefit-Analysis-Revised.pdf](http://www.smartenergycc.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Ameren-Ex.-3.1-AIC-AMI-Cost-Benefit-Analysis-Revised.pdf)