

CHAPTER 62

AN ACT concerning electric public utilities and supplementing Title 48 of the Revised Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

C.48:2-29.44 Findings, declarations relative to electric public utility service.

1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

a. During periods of excessive heat, the health of individuals with disabilities, senior citizens, and others can be severely compromised if those individuals do not have adequate ventilation or air conditioning;

b. Each summer, some at-risk individuals die from dehydration during periods of sustained heat, and others have had their health severely compromised; and

c. In view of the severity of the impact of sustained heat on the physical well-being of at-risk individuals, it is the public policy of this State to ensure that these individuals, their financial circumstances notwithstanding, are not deprived of electrical power during periods when the amelioration of the effects of high heat and humidity is essential to their health and welfare.

The Legislature therefore determines that it is necessary for the Board of Public Utilities to develop and administer a program that ensures that the individuals most at risk will not experience an interruption in their electrical supply as a result of the suspension of service by an electric public utility.

C.48:2-29.45 Provision of continued electrical service during periods of excessive heat.

2. Notwithstanding any law, rule, order or regulation to the contrary, the board shall provide for the continuation of electrical service during periods of excessive heat, as determined by the board, for those residential customers who would be eligible for protection under the Winter Termination Program as pursuant to N.J.A.C.14:3-7.12A, notwithstanding that the individual would otherwise be subject to the suspension of service; provided, however, that nothing in this act shall in any manner relieve the individual of any financial obligation to the electric public utility providing the service.

C.48:2-29.46 Rules, regulations.

3. The board shall promulgate, in accordance with the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), such rules and regulations as may be necessary to effectuate the purposes of this act.

4. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved August 6, 2002.