

## What to Do If Your Landlord Does Not Pay the Utility Bill



### Do I have to pay the utilities?

It depends.

Some leases say the tenant is responsible for paying the utilities. Some leases say the landlord is responsible for paying the utilities. Some leases have the tenant paying some utilities and the landlord paying some utilities. If you have a written lease, you should check to see what it says.



### My landlord is supposed to pay for a utility but I just got a shut-off notice from the utility company. What should I do?

If you get a shut-off notice from a utility that your landlord was supposed to pay, you need to act **very quickly**. If you are the person responsible for paying the bill, then this information will not help you.

**FIRST:** Contact the landlord and request that he or she pay the bill and avoid further problems.

**NEXT:** If this does not work, call the utility company to see what can be done to have the account transferred into your name. Some utilities have simple steps to transfer the account. For other utilities, you may have to make a deposit, have a separate meter, or get permission from your landlord.



### I think the utility is regulated by the state. Who can I call?

Some utilities are regulated by the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO).

PUCO sets rules some utilities have to follow before shutting off service. If your utility has been threatened to be shut off, you may want to call the following toll-free numbers:

- PUCO, (800) 282-0198
- Ohio Consumers' Counsel, (877) 742-5622



## When should I talk to an attorney?

You should call an attorney right away if:

- You did not get a shut-off notice but the utility was disconnected.
- If you contact your landlord and he or she will not make a payment to stop a shut-off or get the utility turned back on.

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**The information on this flyer is not legal advice.  
If you are seeking representation or legal advice, please contact SEOLS.  
An attorney-client relationship does not exist between you and SEOLS.**

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### How to contact SEOLS:

**Athens Office**      **740.594.3558**  
**800.686.3669**

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