

325E.025 LANDLORDS AND TENANTS; UTILITY BILLS.

Subdivision 1. **Definitions.** For purposes of this section, "utility" means persons, corporations, or other legal entities, their lessees, trustees, and receivers, now or hereafter operating, maintaining, or controlling in this state equipment or facilities for furnishing at retail natural, manufactured, or mixed gas or electric service to or for the public or engaged in its production and retail sale. The term "utility" includes municipalities and cooperative electric associations, organized under the provisions of chapter 308A, producing or furnishing natural, manufactured, or mixed gas or electric service. This section is not applicable to the sale of natural, manufactured, or mixed gas or electricity by a public utility to another public utility for resale.

"Customer" means any person, firm, association, or corporation, or any agency of the federal, state, or local government being supplied with service by a utility.

Subd. 2. **Payment responsibility for utility service.** A utility shall not: (1) recover or attempt to recover payment for a tenant's outstanding bill or charge from a landlord, property owner or manager, or manufactured home park owner, as defined in section 327C.01, or manufactured home dealer, as defined in section 327B.01, who has not contracted for the service; (2) condition service on payment of an outstanding bill or other charge for utility service due upon the outstanding account of a previous customer or customers when all of the previous customers have vacated the property; or (3) place a lien on the landlord's or owner's property for a tenant's outstanding bill or charge whether created by local ordinance or otherwise. A utility may recover or attempt to recover payment for a tenant's outstanding bill or charge from a property owner where the manager, acting as the owner's agent, contracted for the utility service.

History: 1985 c 135 s 1; 1986 c 473 s 9; 1989 c 356 s 15