

# Announcement

March 27, 2020

## Statement from AUC Chair Mark Kolesar regarding COVID-19

These are unprecedented times.

We at the AUC are all at work to best respond to the challenges facing Albertans.

First off, I extend my sincere thanks to everyone who is working so hard in the utility sector to keep our essential services available to you.

Utilities, whether power, gas, heat or water are critical to keeping your homes lit and warm and, most importantly, for our healthcare heroes to care for the sick.

To keep these services flowing, maintenance and repairs to the pipes and wire systems will continue. These are essential services, however, rest assured that the maintenance personnel carrying out these projects are following all safe working requirements established by the government.

A key concern is Albertans' safety and health and the government has introduced measures to reduce the spread of coronavirus including having people stay at home. However, the utilities sector has been identified as essential and these services will continue unabated.

This week I have been in discussions with utility companies and the electric system operator to see what activities we must prioritize, how to approach our shared responsibilities and most importantly, to ensure coordination on critical initiatives. The industry is united in our shared goal to do everything we can to effectively address this crisis.

Here at the AUC we are leading the government's billing deferral initiative to ensure help is available for those in need. You can find information about that initiative on our [COVID-19 impacts page](#).

The crisis has reduced the capacity for call centres to respond to your inquiries. I urge you to call your retailer only if you have an emergency or safety issue.

The AUC is also re-evaluating its work efforts in light of the crisis. For example, we have taken the extraordinary step to pause the enforcement of specified penalties of utility billing infractions to allow the utilities to focus on priority work.

This is a very fluid situation and we will post updates on our website and communicate important messages by email through our [subscription service](#) to provide you with relevant advice and

information about our sector. Now more than ever, the AUC is committed to ensuring Albertans continue to receive safe and reliable utility service by working with our utility providers and assisting government.

Stay safe and best wishes,

Mark Kolesar  
AUC Chair