

# Xcel Energy Privacy Policy

## Overview

Xcel Energy Inc., its wholly owned affiliates and subsidiaries (“Xcel Energy”) understand that privacy is important to our customers and respect your privacy concerns. This Privacy Policy describes our privacy practices.

The Policy explains:

- What information we collect from and about you when you use our products and services, communicate with us, visit our websites, or interact with us through social media;
- How we use and share the information we collect;
- The choices we offer you in how we use and disclose information about you, and how to exercise those choices;
- How you can access and request that we correct the information we maintain about you;
- How we safeguard the information we maintain; and
- How you can ask questions about our privacy practices and seek resolution of any concerns you may have regarding our handling of your information.

## Information We Collect

We may obtain information about you through various sources, such as:

- Phone, fax, email social media and other means by which you communicate with us
- The utility meter installed in your home
- Xcel Energy websites, social media pages, mobile applications and other interactive assets
- Surveys, contests, sweepstakes and other promotions
- Our parent, affiliate or subsidiary companies, service providers and other third parties

The types of information we may obtain include:

### *Personal Information*

- Contact information (such as name, postal and email address, or phone number)
- Demographic data (such your date of birth, home ownership status and household income)
- Details about your home (such as dwelling age, size and type, and details about

appliances and other energy-related equipment used in the home)

- User name or ID and password for the account you may establish on our websites
- Payment details (including financial account number, routing number, payment card number, security code, expiration date, cardholder name and billing address)
- Your Social Security number (we use SSNs only for identity verification, to obtain credit reports, to protect against and prevent fraud, unauthorized transactions, claims and other liabilities, including past due accounts, and to comply with legal requirements)
- Credit report information
- Other information you provide to us, including by interacting with us through social media

### ***Customer Energy Usage Data***

- Energy usage data specific to your account. The type of energy usage information collected from utility meters and the frequency with which we collect that information varies depending on the type of meter installed at your home. Please visit our [website](#) for more information about our metering technology.
- Details about your participation in our renewable energy, demand-side management, load management, and energy efficiency programs

### ***Web Browsing Details***

When you visit our websites or social media pages we may collect certain information by automated means, such as cookies and web beacons. A “cookie” is a text file that websites send to a visitor’s computer or other Internet-connected device to uniquely identify the visitor’s browser or to store information or settings in the browser. A “web beacon,” also known as an Internet tag, pixel tag or clear GIF, is used to transmit information back to a web server. We also may use website analytics tools that collect information about visitor traffic on our websites or social media pages. Examples of the information we may collect by automated means include details about the devices our visitors use to access the Internet (such as the Internet service provider, IP address and device, browser and operating system type); URLs that refer visitors to our websites; dates, times, and lengths of visits to our websites; site navigation patterns; a general geographic location from which a visitor accesses our websites; and search terms that visitors use to reach our websites.

## **How We Use the Information We Collect**

We may use the information we obtain about you to:

- Provide, bill and collect for Xcel Energy products and services
- Assist you in establishing your account with Xcel Energy
- Communicate with you, respond to your questions and comments and provide customer support

- Provide you access to your information via the My Account site
- Administer your participation in, events, programs, surveys, and other offers and promotions
- Operate, evaluate and improve our business and the products and services we offer (including developing new products and services, analyzing our products and services, optimizing customer experience on websites, managing our energy distribution system and our communications, reducing costs and improving service accuracy and reliability, and performing accounting, auditing and other internal functions)
- Create aggregate data
- Protect against and prevent fraud, unauthorized transactions, claims and other liabilities, including past due accounts, and manage risk exposure
- Comply with applicable legal requirements

### ***Online Advertising***

You may see ads about our products and services on other sites because we participate in advertising networks. Ad networks allow us to target our advertising to users through demographic, behavioral and contextual means. These networks track your online activities over time by collecting information through automated means, including through the use of cookies, web server logs, web beacons and other methods. The ad network vendors may collect information about your visits to websites that participate in the vendors' advertising networks, such as the pages or advertisements you have viewed, and the actions you take on the sites. The networks use this information to show you advertisements for our products and services. This data collection and ad targeting take place both on our websites and on third-party websites that participate in the ad networks. This process also helps us track the effectiveness of our marketing efforts.

### ***Information We Share***

We do not disclose Personal Information or Customer Energy Usage Data about our customers, except as described in this Privacy Policy. This means that, with the exception of disclosures of the information described in this Policy and any disclosures you specifically authorize, you have an expectation that we will keep confidential and not otherwise disclose the information we maintain about you.

As we explain below, certain disclosures of information about you do not require your consent because they are specifically permitted or required by applicable laws and regulations, while other disclosures will not occur without your explicit authorization.

### ***Customer Authorization Not Required***

- We may disclose Customer Energy Usage Data as required or permitted by law or applicable regulations (for example, in Colorado, we are authorized to disclose information regarding a customer's typical or estimated average monthly energy bill to licensed real estate brokers or other individuals or entities with similar interest in the sale

or purchase of the customer's property).

- We may disclose Personal Information:
  - To a federal, state or local governmental agency with the power to compel such disclosure;
  - If we are required to disclose the information by law; or
  - As otherwise permitted or required by applicable regulations.
- We may disclose aggregated data to third parties. We aggregate the information in accordance with applicable legal requirements, including those designed to prevent the re-identification of the information.
- We may disclose Customer Energy Usage Data or Personal Information about you to service providers who perform services on our behalf, such as companies that assist us in providing products and services to customers, billing customers or processing credit card payments. We prohibit these service providers from using or disclosing the information except as necessary to perform services on our behalf or comply with legal requirements.
- We also reserve the right to transfer any information we have about you in the event we sell, merge or transfer all or a portion of our business or assets. Should such a sale, merger or transfer occur, we will use reasonable efforts to direct the transferee to use information you have provided to us in a manner that is consistent with our Privacy Policy. Following such a sale, merger or transfer, you may contact the entity to which we transferred your information with any inquiries concerning the processing of that information.

#### ***Customer Authorization Required***

- We disclose Personal Information only as described in the “Customer Authorization Not Required” section above. We do not provide an option for customers to authorize other disclosures of their Personal Information to third parties.
- We may share your Customer Energy Usage Data with third parties if you have previously authorized the disclosure. If a third party requests access to your Customer Energy Usage Data, the entity must first ask you to authorize the disclosure by completing the appropriate consent form.

Prior to authorizing the disclosure of your Customer Energy Usage Data to a third party, you should consider the third party's proposed scope, purpose, and use of the information. Note that depending on metering technology and infrastructure, it may be possible to obtain insight into your activities within the premises receiving service, including the way you use energy at your premises through analysis of Customer Energy Usage Data.

Declining a request from a third party to authorize access to your Customer Energy Usage Data will not affect the provision of any service, including utility service that you receive from Xcel Energy.

You may authorize us to disclose your Customer Energy Usage Data to a third party by completing the applicable consent form:

- Colorado Customers - [Electric Energy Usage Data Release Form](#)
- Colorado Customers - [Natural Gas or Steam Energy Usage Data Release](#)
- Customers Outside Colorado – [Electric and Natural Gas Usage Data Release Form](#)

Get [additional information](#) on release of Customer Energy Usage Data in Colorado

## **Your Choices**

We offer you certain choices about what information we collect from you, how we use and disclose the information, and how we communicate with you. Here are the choices we offer:

### ***Disclosures to Third Parties***

With respect to disclosures of information that require your authorization, as described in the “Information We Share” section of this Policy, you may at any time terminate or limit any consent you previously provided authorizing a third party to access or use your Customer Energy Usage Data by sending your request to [datarequest@xcelenergy.com](mailto:datarequest@xcelenergy.com) or P.O. Box 8, Eau Claire, Wisconsin 554702.

### ***Marketing Emails***

You may choose not to receive marketing email communications from us by clicking on the “unsubscribe” link in any email from Xcel Energy marketing a product or service. We will discontinue this type of contact with you within ten days after we receive your email. Please note that even if you opt out, you will continue to receive non-marketing emails related to your account transactions.

### ***Cookies***

Most browsers will tell you how to stop accepting new cookies, how to be notified when you receive a new cookie, and how to disable existing cookies. Please note, however, that without cookies you may not be able to take full advantage of all of our websites’ features.

### ***Online Advertising***

To opt out of receiving marketing communications through the advertising networks of our ad network vendors, please click the link “[Online Advertising Opt-Out](#)” link and then click “Select all” on the linked site and push the “Submit” button.

## **Access and Correction**

You may obtain the Personal Information or Customer Energy Usage Data we maintain about you in the ordinary course of business, or update or correct inaccuracies in that information, free of charge via the My Account site or by contacting us as specified below. In addition, if you believe other information we maintain about you is inaccurate, untimely or incomplete you may request that we correct or amend the information by contacting us as indicated below. If we deny a customer's request for access to Personal Information or Customer Energy Usage Data, we will notify you of the reasons for the denial.

- [My Account site](#)

## **Links to Other Websites**

Our websites may contain links to other sites for your convenience and information. These sites may be operated by companies not affiliated with Xcel Energy. Linked sites may have their own privacy policies or notices, which you should review if you visit those websites. We are not responsible for the content of any websites not affiliated with Xcel Energy, any use of those sites, or those sites' privacy practices.

## **How We Protect Your Information**

We maintain administrative, technical and physical safeguards designed to protect the privacy and security of the information we maintain about you. Please note that no electronic transmission of information can be entirely secure. We cannot guarantee that the security measures we have in place to safeguard information will never fail, or that those measures will always be sufficient or effective.

To further protect yourself, we request that you protect the confidentiality of any user name or ID and password you use to access any online services. You are responsible for all activity on the website accessed by your user name or ID and password. You should also sign off your accounts and close your browser window when you have finished your visit to our websites. We will never ask for your Xcel Energy My Account site password via email or phone.

## **Children's Privacy**

Our websites are general audience websites, and we do not knowingly collect any personal information from children younger than the age of thirteen (13). If we later discover that we have collected personal information from an individual younger than the age of thirteen (13), we will delete the personal information.

## **Updates to Our Privacy Policy**

This Privacy Policy may be updated periodically and without prior notice to you to reflect changes in our information practices. Please review the contents of this Privacy Policy frequently. We will post a prominent notice on our websites to notify you of material changes to our Privacy Policy. We also have indicated at the bottom of the Policy when it was most recently updated. Amendments to this Privacy Policy will become effective when posted on our websites. Your continued use of our websites, products and services provided by Xcel Energy after such posting will be deemed your acceptance of any changes to our Privacy Policy.

## **How to Contact Us**

For more information regarding our privacy practices, if you have any questions or comments about this Privacy Policy, or if you would like us to update information we have about you or your preferences, please contact us by email at [privacy@xcelenergy.com](mailto:privacy@xcelenergy.com) or call 1-800-895-4999.

**Effective Date: April 19, 2012**