

Xcel Energy

Website Privacy Policy

At Xcel Energy, we stress the importance of privacy and are committed to maintaining high standards for the protection of personal information, which includes information on your interactions with us in the course of transacting business with Xcel Energy via our websites, electronic communications, including email, facsimile, social networking, and other electronic communications channels (“Electronic Communications”).

This policy addresses:

- Your visit to the xcelenergy.com website,
- The information that we collect from visitors and the personal information that you submit to Xcel Energy Inc., its wholly owned subsidiaries and affiliates (“Xcel Energy”), through Electronic Communications and to access services through this website,
- How collected and personal information is used,
- When personal information may be shared with third parties, and
- Security of information.

Your Web Site Visits and Information We Collect

You do not need to provide any personal information to visit public sections of this website. In order to ensure that we provide the best possible service to our customers, our web servers automatically collect usage data such as Internet provider addresses, browser types and access times. We then evaluate these website statistics, so that we can improve our service to our customers.

A Special Note for Parents

For the safety and privacy of the children who visit our website, no personally identifiable information such as last name, age, school or location will be collected or published on Xcel Energy’s website or through Electronic Communications. Xcel Energy adheres to the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 and the guidelines of the Children's Advertising Review Unit (CARU) of the Council of Better Business Bureaus, Inc.

Usage of Collected Information

We use industry standard software to create summary statistics of the website usage data we collect, which may then be used to highlight what our visitors find interesting, to improve the website design specifications, to identify system performance issues and for other internal purposes.

We may use information we collect to assist in diagnoses of problems with our servers and to administer the website and Communications Channels. Data gathered from logging this information is not tied to your personal information and is not used to identify you. The information we use for this purpose may include browser type, IP address, pages viewed and other non-personally identifiable information.

Cookies are small text files placed on your computer’s hard drive by web page servers. When you visit the website, our server may create cookies, making it more convenient for you to use the website by verifying when you travel from page to page. Data on the website usage we collect using cookies is not tied to your personal information and is only used in aggregate form.

Information You Submit

If you register to access various services related to your residential account or other applications involving your business account on the website, you may be asked to complete online registration forms and submit personal information such as your Xcel Energy account number, name, address, partial or full Social Security Number, phone number, e-mail address, residential or business customer, type of business, payment method, energy usage data and personal preference information. You may be asked to confirm enrollment or your identity by entering a User ID and password, clicking on “acceptance buttons,” or other methods to verify your identity. You also may be asked to submit, or you may elect to submit, additional personal information or financial information in order to use certain specific services offered in these customer account transaction areas.

How We Use Your Information

The personal information you provide not only enables you to access various customer services offered on the website and through other Electronic Communications, but it also enables us to provide you with better service generally. We may use this information to contact you to respond to an inquiry that you send to Xcel Energy or to keep you informed about Xcel Energy and its services. If you choose to communicate with Xcel Energy by e-mail, then e-mail from Xcel Energy to you will be considered to be sent with your consent and will be accessible to anyone who has access to your e-mail. Online service commitments may require follow-up contacts such as telephone call-backs and response regarding the services to be utilized, including billings and payments.

We collect e-mail addresses to improve our service to our customers. In some cases, we may contact you to let you know about new products or services. If you do not wish to be contacted by us for this purpose, or you believe you are receiving our communications in error or no longer want to receive them, you may provide this request by clicking on the “unsubscribe” link in any e-mail from Xcel Energy marketing a product or service. We will discontinue this type of contact with you within 10 days after we receive your e-mail.

We request that you protect the confidentiality of any User ID and password you use to access any of your services online. You are responsible for all activity on the website accessed by your User ID and password. Access by the company’s employees or consultants to any personal information you provide is limited only to information necessary to provide the business service offered and to allow employees or consultants to perform their duties to Xcel Energy.

To provide you with services offered on the website, or to complete transactions or requests you initiated on the website or other Electronic Communication, we may transfer you to outside services provided by third-party operators. In certain instances, the third-party content may be “framed” in such a way that it appears you are still on Xcel Energy’s website. In such cases, we will have agreements with those third parties whose websites you may be transferred to, under which the third parties agree to maintain the confidentiality of your personal information and to use it only to help us serve you.

Links

While browsing the website, you may encounter hypertext links to other third-party operated websites. These other third-party websites may send their own cookies to you, log your IP address, and otherwise collect data or solicit personal information. XCEL ENERGY DOES NOT CONTROL AND IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT THIRD PARTIES DO IN CONNECTION WITH THEIR WEBSITES, OR HOW THEY HANDLE YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION. PLEASE EXERCISE CAUTION AND CONSULT THE PRIVACY POLICIES POSTED ON EACH THIRD-PARTY WEBSITE FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

Sharing Information with Third Parties

Other than as set forth herein, we will not disclose your personal information to third parties without your written consent (which consent may be obtained electronically, such as by e-mail), unless we reasonably believe the disclosure is essential to the conduct of the company's business or to provide services to you. Situations where these disclosures may become necessary include, but are not limited to (i) compliance with the law, legal process or our regulators; (ii) collection of unpaid bills; (iii) enabling the company's employees or consultants to provide service to you and to otherwise perform their duties; (iv) compliance with interchange functions; (v) obtaining and providing credit reporting information; or (vi) resolution of customer disputes or inquiries. We do not provide your personal information to third parties for telemarketing, e-mail or direct mail solicitation. When we contract with another company to market or advertise products for Xcel Energy, we require that those companies also protect your personal information.

Other circumstances in which we share your personal information with third parties include the following:

- With your documented consent,
- Pursuant to a valid warrant, subpoena or court order,
- To existing or prospective customers, tenants, property owners or real estate agents requesting average residential energy consumption,
- If you have authorized a third-party agreement in which you designated that a third party will receive your energy usage information, bill or copies of any notice of discontinuance sent regarding your account (for example, sharing information concerning an elderly parent's billing arrangement with an adult caregiver),
- For the business purposes of Xcel Energy (for example, sharing information with third parties who assist us with the provision of services to customers, such as electronic billing, online energy audits, or processing online or credit card payments),
- For purposes of investigating or completing a merger or acquisition, sale of one of our businesses or business units, or in connection with a business reorganization, and
- Where required by applicable law.

Security of Information

Conducting Our Business

Our policies and procedures limit access to personal information to those with a business reason to know such information.

Your Website Transactions

Xcel Energy will encrypt account information and use industry standard security technology to safeguard your account and other personal information during online transactions. However, we cannot guarantee the confidentiality or security of your browser or any communication transmitted or accessible over the Internet. Our server will run detection software to help ensure you are using a secure browser and your personal or financial information is secure when you make a transaction. If the software determines you are not using a secure browser, then a message will appear at checkout. You may then make the decision as to whether to continue or not.

Changes to Policy

Xcel Energy reserves the right to change this policy at any time. Please review the contents of this Privacy Policy frequently, as we may amend it from time to time to reflect changes in our services and our policies relating to data privacy. Amendments will become effective when posted on the website. Xcel

Energy will not provide you with a notice of any change in this website policy. It is your responsibility to monitor and review any updates to this Privacy Policy. Your continued use of the website, or online services provided by Xcel Energy, after such posting will be deemed your acceptance of these changes to our Privacy Policy.

You may direct questions regarding this policy to: privacy@xcelenergy.com

Effective Date of Policy

This policy was revised on December 16, 2010.