



National Fuel Funds Network

1010 Vermont Ave., NW, #718
Washington, DC 20005
202 824-0638 (fax), 202 824-0660 (phone)

info@nationalfuelfunds.org www.nationalfuelfunds.org

April 25, 2008

Energy Safety Net Bulletin #123

Dear Member: The number of households receiving energy assistance through the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) reached the highest level in 16 years, according to Mark Wolfe, executive director of the National Energy Assistance Directors Association (NEADA).

Wolfe said NEADA's annual survey of households served by LIHEAP revealed that 5.8 million households received assistance in FY 2008, which represented an increase of 3.8 percent over FY 2007.

According to the survey, seventeen states plus the District of Columbia reported increases of more than four percent and eight states had increases of more than nine percent. Among the states showing the largest increases were Nevada 79.8%, Oklahoma 44.1%, Nebraska 19.3%, Mississippi 15.0%, Indiana 11.4%, West Virginia 11.3%, and Alabama 11.1%.

A state by state listing of the results of the NEADA survey is available at the NEADA website – www.neada.org. The New York Times covered the story at http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/25/us/25heating.html?_r=1&th&emc=th&oref=slogin

LIHEAP

- The National Energy Assistance Directors Association (NEADA) has called on President Bush to immediately release remaining LIHEAP emergency funds and the Congress to appropriate at least \$1 billion in additional emergency funds for the remainder of the year.

NEADA executive director Mark Wolfe pointing to what could be record numbers of households facing with high arrearages or facing utility shut offs urged the government to act to ease this problem.

According to data gathered by NEADA members:

In California there are 1.7 million households in arrears totaling \$299 million as compared to 1.6 million households with \$284 million in arrearages last year;

In Iowa there are 218,360 households in arrears totaling \$36.5 million compared to 205,258 with \$314 million in arrearages last year;

In New Mexico 15,629 households are in arrears totaling \$3.9 million compared to 11,451 households with \$2 million in arrearages last year;

In Wisconsin 42,506 households are in arrears totaling \$42.5 million compared to 39,590 households with \$11.6 million in arrearages last year.

Fuel Fund Actions

- The Dollar Energy Fund has distributed over \$600,000 in grants to low income households, who were facing a utility shut off or whose utility service had already been disconnected, since the state closed its LIHEAP program on March 21, according to Cindy Datig, the program's CEO.

In a letter to Pennsylvania Gov. Edward Rendell, Datig urged the governor to reopen the program and distribute the remaining available funds. The state announced in March that it was closing the program although there were \$13 million in funds remaining in order to ensure that funds would be available when the heating season begins this fall.

Utility Actions

- TXU Energy has announced the formation of a Low Income Advisory Committee charged with helping the utility identify challenges faced by low income customers and advising the utility in the development of solutions to those challenges.

Committee members are Mary Lou Almendarez, assistant director, Tarrant County Human Services; Morris Baker, executive director, Community Action Program Inc.; Jane Bavineau, executive director, Care for Elders; Carol Biedrzycki, executive director, Texas ROSE; Randy Chapman, executive director, Texas Legal Services; Ronnie Lowe, executive director, Lancaster Outreach Center; Vicki Mize, manager, 211 Texas, United Way Tarrant County; Stella Rodriguez, executive director, Texas Association of Community Action Agencies; Karen Swenson, executive director, Greater East Texas Community Action Program; and Zach Thompson, director, Dallas County Health and Human Services.

- The Trans-Allegheny Interstate Line (TrAIL) has agreed to contribute \$5 million to fund energy conservation programs and assistance plans for low income customers in West Virginia over a five year period.

The decision to provide the funding by TrAIL, a subsidiary of Allegheny Energy, comes as part of an agreement with the Public Service Commission of West Virginia and other parties regarding the utility's planned 500-kilovolt transmission line project.

State Government Actions

- Nebraska Gov. Dave Heineman has signed legislation establishing the Energy Conservation Improvement Fund, which will provide low income households with grants to weatherize their homes.

Monies for the fund, which will be implemented in 2009, will be generated by allowing public power districts to designate five percent of state sales taxes collected from customers for deposit in the fund. The public power districts must also match the amount collected.

2008 National Energy and Utility Affordability Conference

Denver, CO. June 16 – 18

The NFFN and the NLIEC have set up a website for on-line registration for this exciting conference. Just click on this link to learn more about the conference and to register www.energyandutilityconference.org. The deadline for early bird registration is a week from today, May 2.

NFFN is accepting awards' nominations, scholarship applications and Media Fair entries until April 30, along with your generous donations for the NFFN Silent Auction and conference Raffle until the conference begins.. NFFN members should visit the NFFN website – www.nationalfuelfunds.org – for special members only information about the conference.