



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

October 9, 2008

Energy Safety Net Bulletin #130

Dear Member: On September 30, President Bush's signed the recently continuing resolution for FY 2009, increasing funding for LIHEAP to \$5.1 billion, its authorized level. This level is the highest ever for LIHEAP and the first time the appropriation has matched authorized level since the latter was raised in 2005.

While the dramatic increase in LIHEAP funding for FY 2009 is good news for the energy assistance community and the millions of households that will seek aid this heating season, the increase also places added importance on the NFFN's Washington Action Day for LIHEAP in February.

On February 11th, when NFFN members and LIHEAP advocates take to Capitol Hill in support of continued full funding for the program in FY 2010, we will need to demonstrate how maintaining this funding level for LIHEAP is vital for millions of Americans.

To help us make our case, we ask, that has the heating season progresses, you send us information on the numbers of clients you serve and the level of demand for aid your program is experiencing.

There will be many new members in Congress when we conduct our Action Day activities and for many of them this will be their first time learning about LIHEAP. We need to make the best case we can for the program. Any information you can provide to us will be helpful.

Fuel Fund Actions

- Connecticut's Operation Fuel has launched a \$100,000 advertising campaign designed to increase contributions to the state-wide fuel fund. The campaign is funded through a grant from the state Office of Policy and Management.

Operation Fuel has begun airing a series of three televised public service announcements across the state. The campaign will also include print ads and brochures.

Utility Actions

- The FPL Group Foundation, Inc. has announced that it will contribute \$1 million for emergency assistance to Florida Power & Light Company's most vulnerable customers.

The funds will be administered by The Salvation Army and used to help customers with emergency assistance for food, clothing, housing and other basic needs. A portion of the funds will also be used help customers learn how to manage monthly energy consumption.

- Rochester Gas & Electric Corp. and the American Red Cross of Greater Rochester announced that it is expanding its heating fund into a year round program.

The expansion of the assistance program was made possible because the utility increased its annual corporate donation to the program from \$200,000 to \$500,000.

- First Wind, an independent wind power company, has donated a total of \$30,000 to four county based community programs in Maine for use as energy assistance.

The contributions of \$7,500 each were made to the Aroostook Community Action Program, Inc; Community Concepts; the Penquis Keep ME Warm Fund; and the Washington Hancock Community Agency THAW Fund.

State Government Actions

- Maryland earned nearly \$16.4 million in September through the first mandatory auction of carbon dioxide allowances as part of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. According the state officials, 17 percent of the funds will be used for energy assistance, 25 percent will go to rate relief for customers, half will be used to promote energy efficiency and the rest will be used for public education, environmental regulation and oversight.

Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Vermont are the other members of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. A total of \$38.5 million was raised by the auction with Maryland putting up the largest share of allowances up for bid.

Forecasts and Reports

- A new paper published in October issue of *Pediatrics* by Dr. John Cook and the C-SNAP team found that the odds of infants and toddlers suffering poor health increase as problems paying home energy costs increase. The complete article is available at <http://www.pediatrics.org/cgi/content/full/122/4/e867>.

In 2007, Dr. Cook and the C-SNAP team authored “Fuel for Our Future: Impacts of Energy Insecurity on Children’s Health, Nutrition and Learning,” available at www.nationalfuelfunds.org. C-SNAP is the Children’s Sentinel Nutrition Assessment Program.

- The Energy Information Agency projects that home heating oil prices during the upcoming heating season will average \$4.13 per gallon, an increase of about 25 percent over last winter. Heating fuel expenditures for the average household using oil as its primary heating fuel are expected to increase by \$585 (30 percent) over last winter.

Residential natural gas prices for the winter are projected to increase about 17 percent. With the average expenditure for households heating with natural gas expected to rise \$162 (19 percent) and propane to increase \$217 (13 percent).

- Nearly half (48 percent) of the households surveyed by the National Fire Protection Association and the American Red Cross reported that they would use an alternative method of heating their home to reduce energy costs this winter. According to the survey, respondents said they would use portable space heaters, stoves, ovens and fireplaces to save on energy costs.

This week is Fire Prevention Week and the NFPA is focusing on preventing home fires. For more information visit the NFPA website at www.firepreventionweek.org.

Hurricane Relief

- Entergy Corporation and the Foundation for the Mid South have created the Entergy Hurricane Relief Fund for the victims of Hurricanes Gustav and Ike. The utility has committed \$700,000 to the fund.

The relief fund will provide grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$25,000 to nonprofit groups serving disaster victims who reside within Entergy’s service area. The program will not provide direct grants to individuals.

- Reliant Energy has made a series of programs available to help people who are financially burdened as a result of Hurricane Ike. Bill payment assistance

through extensions, payment plans and average billing as well as suspension of late fees and disconnections for nonpayment are available to people living in areas with extended power outages through November 1.