



National Fuel Funds Network

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Dear Member: As you know by now, President Bush has requested a 22 percent cut in LIHEAP funding for FY 2009. A cut of this size would severely diminish the program's ability to help those most in need during this time of continually rising home energy prices.

Recent news reports graphically demonstrate the urgent need for increased funding for LIHEAP.

- In Kentucky, the Community Action Council, which administers the LIHEAP program that serves Fayette, Bourbon, Harrison, and Nicholas counties, closed its program due to lack of funding. Council Director Jack Burch said "We ran out of money."

Burch said "We really don't like knowing that there are families out there...and we don't have any way to help them." The program provides assistance to more than 2,000 families.

- In Iowa, the state's Bureau of Energy Assistance reported that 248,163 utility customers fell more than \$24 million behind on their bills between October 1 and January 31.

Jerry McKim, director of the Bureau said that through January, 72,000 people sought help in paying energy bills. McKim said he expected the number of rise to as much as 90,000 by April 15, the end of the winter heating season.

Please let us know what is going on in your area. The information you provide to us will be helpful as we work to obtain increased funding for LIHEAP.

Utility Actions

- American Electric Power announced that it will donate \$100,000 to Ohio's Home Energy Assistance Program to provide assistance to households in its service area.

The funds will go to the Corporation for Ohio Appalachian Development which will distribute the funds to HEAP agencies in Ross County and the rest of AEP's Ohio service area.

- In an attempt to settle a dispute over variable-rates, Georgia Natural Gas (GNG) has offered to donate \$1 million for low income energy assistance and to improve communications with its customers. The Georgia Public Service Commission has not yet voted on the offer.

The PSC's consumer affairs staff has been looking into complaints that GNG, Georgia's largest gas marketer, and SCANA, the state's second largest marketer, had overcharged customers. The companies introduced cheaper variable rate plans but didn't notify customers on more expensive plans.

The GNG offer would provide \$1 million to the state's Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

- Citizens Energy and Distrigas have announced plans to continue their combined heat assistance program, which aids Massachusetts residents who do not qualify for federal energy assistance.

The Citizens Energy-Distrigas heat assistance program (CEDHAP) was launched in January 2005 and last year helped 5,500 households. More than 6,000 households are expected to benefit from the program in 2008.

- CPS Energy has contributed \$500,000 to the Residential Energy Assistance Partnership (REAP), which helps disadvantaged elderly, disabled, and low income customers with small children in the San Antonio area pay their gas and electric bills.

This latest donation brings CPS Energy's total contribution to REAP for the year to \$1million. REAP is a partnership created by CPS Energy, Bexar County and the City of San Antonio.

National Energy and Utility Affordability Conference

The National Fuel Funds Network and the National Low Income Energy Consortium are presenting the National Energy and Utility Affordability Conference in Denver, June 16-18, 2008. The conference replaces and builds upon the respective back-to-back annual conferences offered by NLIEC and NFFN for over twenty years. The conference program features several general sessions exploring energy policy, climate change legislation and other topics. Sixty-two workshops and two sessions of hot topics roundtables will be held. The NFFN Media Fair, Annual Business Meeting and Silent Auction and the NLIEC raffle will continue in the new format. Both presenting organizations will present awards, as in the past.

Please visit the National Energy and Utility Affordability Conference website, www.energyandutilityconference.org for updates on the program and information on sponsorship and exhibits.

Online registration for the conference is now open at the conference website and the NFFN website. Visit <http://www.energyandutilityconference.org/Registration.htm> to register for the conference. Please take advantage of our early bird registration.

NFFN sent electronic registration brochures with to all members in mid-February. Look for a printed version in your mail shortly. The brochure contains a summary of the program, hotel and local travel information and forms to register for the conference and for the hotel. The registration brochure is also available online at <http://www.energyandutilityconference.org/2008%20Online%20Brochure.pdf>.

Fuel Fund Actions

- The Operation Help fuel fund, which serves low income families in central and eastern Pennsylvania, celebrates its 25th anniversary this year. The year round assistance program is supported by contributions from PPL Electric Utilities, its customers and employees.

This year the PPL Corporation has donated \$1 million to Operation Help and contributions from its customers and employees are expected to reach about \$450,000. Since its beginning in 1983, the program has raised over \$17 million in contributions and has assistance nearly 64,000 households.

Reports and Studies

- During the first week third week of January this year, over 9,000 households in Oregon were on waiting lists for energy assistance and agencies providing assistance reported receiving over 10,000 telephone calls seeking aid, according to a report produced by the Community Action Partnership of Oregon.

The report entitled 2008 Oregon Low-Income Energy Assistance Snapshot also showed that the number of Oregon households with income levels that would qualify for low-income assistance increased by 2.4 percent (an increase of 10,000 households) in the past year.

The full report is available at www.cado-oregon.org.