



National Fuel Funds Network

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Dear Member: Funding legislation for LIHEAP for the current fiscal year still awaiting final action in the Congress and the program receiving \$1 billion less than last year under the terms of the Continuing resolution that is currently funding many federal government operations. There is a great deal of uncertainty within the energy assistance community over how to provide adequate assistance during this winter.

If the funding cuts are carried through FY 2007, many people will have to turn to fuel funds or other charitably funded assistance programs for help.

We need to know what plans you have made for your energy assistance programs for this heating season. **Please send us information about your fund raising activities, your anticipated client size, and any new partnerships or coalitions you may have formed.**

This information serves a dual purpose for the NFFN. First we can share it with the other members, who may use your ideas and plans to help their organizations, and second, we can use the information to illustrate our case for increased LIHEAP funding during our discussions with decision makers in Washington.

So please call, write, email, or fax us to tell us what you are doing to better serve your clients.

Utility Actions

- In Huntsville, TX, Mayor J. Walker declared Oct.24 Entergy Texas Low-Income Customer Assistance Day. The mayor's proclamation coincided with the opening of the utility's regional summit, which attracted more than 60 representatives from agencies assisting low-income households.
- In Hot Springs, AK, Entergy and the Community Action Council cosponsored the "2006 Low-Income Advocates' Leadership Summit." The summit explored ways to increase volunteerism, make housing more affordable, end violence in low-income neighborhoods and provide assistance to those in need.

The two-day summit featured Arkansas Baptist College President Dr. Fritz Hill, Entergy Arkansas President and CEO Hugh McDonald, former pro football star and founder of P.A.R.K. Keith Jackson, and Dr. Emma Kelly Rhodes.

- The Florida Power and Light Company (FPL) received the 2006 Public/Private Partnership Award from the Southeastern Association of Area Agencies on Aging in recognition of the utility's leadership and commitment in developing programs and policies of mutual benefit to business and older Americans.

FPL was nominated for its partnership in the Emergency Home Energy Assistance Program, which provides emergency assistance for payment of energy bills for households with an elderly person in the home.

- The Nebraska Energy Assistance Network (NEAN), a statewide coalition of utilities, governmental agencies and community organizations, has begun a series of 21 forums designed to inform residents of available energy conservation methods. NEAN was organized to help Nebraskans better meet their basic energy needs.

The forums will focus on helping people understand and manage their home energy costs, encouraging them to reduce energy consumption and informing them of available energy assistance. More information on NEAN and its members can be found on the internet at www.nebraskaenergyassistance.com.

State Government Actions

- Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels announced that families with incomes up to 150 percent of the federal poverty guidelines would continue to be eligible for the state's LIHEAP program this winter. Gov. Daniels expanded the LIHEAP eligibility guidelines last year from 125 percent of the poverty guidelines.

The governor said nearly 159,000 households received assistance through the program last winter. A 14 percent increase over the previous year. "Last year, we helped more people than ever before and we intend to do it again this year," Daniels said.

Gov. Daniels also announced that the Help Thy Neighbor Heating Fund, which provides emergency assistance to families up to 200 percent of the poverty guidelines, would be funded with \$1 million in contributions from the state's utilities and private donations. Last winter 16,400 households received nearly \$3.4 million in assistance from the fund.

- Oklahoma Governor Brad Henry has proclaimed Oct. 30 as "Weatherization Day 2006." In his proclamation, the governor pointed out that weatherization efforts in Oklahoma have produced energy costs reductions averaging 22 percent during winters in more than 1,400 homes.

Public Service Commission Actions

- The Michigan Public Service Commission has approved \$4.8 million for The Heat and Warmth Fund (THAW) to operate its Low Income/Energy Efficiency Program. THAW was one of 10 organizations or government agencies to receive grants from the Public Service Commission.

The grants are part of the Low Income Energy and Efficiency Fund, which provide energy bill assistance for low-income customers and promote the efficient use of energy by all customer classes.

- The New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission has redesigned the benefit determination structure of its electric assistance program to increase the number of customers eligible for aid. The number of households eligible under the new structure is expected to reach about 30,000 more than double the number of people eligible under the old system.

Fuel Fund Actions

- The Heat and Warmth Fund (THAW) has used the month of October to kick-off its faith based fund raising initiative. The Detroit based organization contacted more than 750 houses of worship in the Wayne County area of Michigan asking them to devote one collection from their church members to THAW.

The “Leap of Faith” initiative will run from October to April and the funds raised during the campaign will be used to provide emergency energy assistance to households with incomes at or above 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines.

Zee Pace of THAW said several local pastors were making public service announcements urging their members to make donations to THAW. In addition, Ms. Pace said DT Energy would match the contributions dollar for dollar.