

## Getting Help with the Heating Bill

Contact your heating company (electric, natural gas or heating fuel company) as soon as possible with your most recent bill in hand and explain that you are having difficulty paying the bill. The utility company will either send you an application form for their assistance program or decide if you're eligible over the telephone.

### Telephone Numbers for Utility Companies for Information on Assistance Programs

<b>UTILITY COMPANY</b>	<b>UTILITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TELEPHONE NUMBER</b>
West Penn Power - formerly Allegheny Power	1-800-207-1250
Duquesne Light	1-888- 393-7600
PECO	1-800 - 774-7040
Penelec	1-800 - 962-4848
Penn Power	1-800 - 720-3600
PPL	1-800 - 358-6623
UGI – Electric	1-800 - 844-9276
Columbia	1-800 - 537-7431
Peoples Natural Gas	1-800 - 400-9276
Equitable Gas	1-800-924-2840
National Fuels	1-800 - 365-3234
Phil Gas Works	1-215 - 235-1000
UGI Utilities	1-800 – 276-2722
Peoples TWP Universal Services	1-866 - 276-4055
UGI - Gas	1-800- 844-9276

## Descriptions of Assistance Programs for which you may qualify...

**Customer Assistance Programs (CAP):** This program is set up between the utility company and a low-income, payment troubled customer to pay utility bills that are based on household size and gross household income. CAP customers agree to make regular monthly payments, which are usually less than the current bill, in exchange for continued utility service.

**Customer Assistance and Referral Evaluation Services (CARES):** CARES offers help to customers with special needs. Special needs customers are consumers who are experiencing family emergencies, divorce, unemployment, or medical emergencies. The program's goal is to provide support and direction to help customers pay their utility bill.

**Hardship Funds:** Hardship Funds are emergency funds to help customers who have suffered a recent financial hardship and need temporary help in paying their utility bill. It can help pay for past bills or restore service if your utilities have been terminated. Hardship Funds are designed to help customers that have exhausted all other available energy assistance programs. Income limits vary by company. For further information, contact your local utility company.

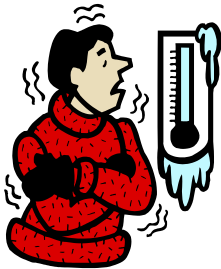
**Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP):** LIHEAP helps low-income families pay their heating bills. LIHEAP is a grant. You do not have to repay it. To receive help you don't have to be on public assistance, you don't need to have an unpaid heating bill and you can either rent or own your home. Income eligibility and assistance for a family of four is \$36,375. LIHEAP is open for applications beginning November 2, 2015 ending April 1, 2016. It consists of three components:

***Cash grants*** help families pay their heating bills. The grant payment is sent directly to your utility company or fuel provider, and it will be credited on your bill. The minimum cash grant is \$100.

***Crisis grants*** help families with an emergency that are in danger of being without heat. Emergencies include: broken heating equipment (like a furnace) or leaking lines; a fuel shortage that may leave you without heat; having utility service shut off. Residents in need of crisis assistance may receive up to \$500. Crisis Program will open November 2, 2015 and close April 1, 2016.

***Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)*** provides qualified low-income customers free weatherization and education programs to help customers save energy and money. The main activities are installing energy saving devices and educating family members on their energy use. Call 1-866-466-3972 for details.

**Low Income Usage Reduction Program (LIURP) also known as Smart Comfort, WARM Program, WRAP, or WARM Choice:** LIURPs help you reduce the amount of energy you use, thereby reducing your overall energy bills. If you qualify, you will receive an energy audit and, based on the audit, you may receive the installation of free energy conservation measures to help reduce your household's energy consumption.



## Keeping Warm This Winter

Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency wants to help you save money by saving energy – and still stay warm this winter!

### No-cost ways to save Energy & Money

**Let the sun shine in:** Close all of your window shades at night. Open window shades during the day at windows that receive direct sunlight to take advantage of free heat from the sun. (Cost: \$0)

**Appliances:** Turn off everything not in use. Unplug appliances (TV's, computers, chargers for phones and portable devices, kitchen appliances, etc.) that are not being used or control them with a power strip that can easily be switched on and off. (Cost: \$0- \$20)

**Washing:** Run the dishwasher, clothes washer and dryer with full loads. On the dishwasher use the air dry cycle. Use cold water for laundry. Save both water and energy by limiting shower time to less than 7 minutes. Turn off water while brushing teeth. (Cost: \$0)

**Lighting:** Turn off lights when leaving the room. Dust your light bulbs. Dirt can absorb as much as 25% of the light. Use a dry cloth and be sure bulb is turned off. Use task lighting instead of turning on all of the light fixtures in a room. Replace burned out bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs. They cost more than regular bulbs initially, but last much longer and use 75% less electricity. (Cost: \$0- \$4)

**Lower your thermostat:** Set your thermostat at the lowest comfortable temperature in winter. For every degree lowered, you can save 3% on your heating bill. LIHEAP consumers are urged to keep their thermostats at 65° in winter, unless you have young children or older adults living in your home. In winter, wear sweaters and shoes or slippers around the apartment. (Cost: \$0)

**Furniture Placement:** Make sure drapes and furniture do not interfere with the flow of heat or are blocking heating vents. (Cost: \$0)

**Shop around:** Do your research and shop around to get the best price for electric service. Questions, contact PA Office of Consumer Advocate **1-800-684-6560** email [consumer@paoca.org](mailto:consumer@paoca.org). Shopping Guides available in English and Spanish at <http://www.oca.state.pa.us/Industry/Electric/elecomp/ElectricGuides.htm>

