Help With Utilities

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The Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) administers a variety of state and federally funded programs designed to build stronger, healthier communities throughout the state and to support families in need.

The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) regulates providers of all kinds of utility services, including electric and natural gas companies, local and long distance telephone companies, water and wastewater companies, and rail and trucking companies. PUCO was created to assure Ohioans adequate, safe, and reliable public utility services at a fair price. PUCO also facilitates competitive utility choices for Ohio consumers.

Frequently Called Phone Numbers

Utility Assistance Hotline 216-518-4014
United Way First Call for Help 211 or 216-436-2000
Dominion East Ohio 1-800-362-7557
First Energy 1-800-589-3101
Cleveland Public Power 216-664-4600

HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
www.energyhelp.ohio.gov
1-800-282-0880

Home Energy Assistance Program is a federally funded program administered by ODOD. Assists eligible low-income residents with their winter home heating costs using natural gas, electric, oil, kerosene or wood.

- Eligibility is based on household size and total income.
- The Program runs from August 1 to May 31. See Eligibility Guidelines on page 13 for income qualifications. Complete application and submit before May 31.
- Call phone number above to request application or access an application by login to www.development.ohio.gov/community/ocs/heap
- Mail the application and be sure to include proof of income, citizenship and most recent heating bill.
Two Community Action Agencies locally administer the Winter Crisis Program, a special component of the HEAP. They assist eligible residents with payment assistance once per heating season. For those who have been disconnected, or who received a disconnection notice, or have less than a 10 day supply of bulk fuel.

- Applications are accepted from November 1 through March 31.
- Bring your most recent gas and electric bills (even if only requesting assistance on one bill), current proof of income, photo ID, and Social Security numbers for all household members.
- Hearing impaired applicants with a Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) can call toll free 1-800-868-1557.

**The Council for Economic Opportunities of Greater Cleveland (CEOGC)**
www.ceogc.org

A nonprofit organization dedicated to serving low-income people by bringing together a broad array of federal, state and local programs and services.

- Individuals who are handicapped, and in need of a home visit, can call 216-263-6266 to schedule an appointment. They are open Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.
- 1849 Prospect Avenue, Suite 120 Cleveland, Ohio 44114

*Open from 6:30 am to 10:00 am or until 65 walk-in capacity reached.*
A nonprofit organization that develops affordable housing for low- to moderate-income Clevelanders, with a special emphasis on generating pathways out of poverty.

CHN operates four HEAP offices. Each Center accepts daily walk-ins by 8:30 a.m. The following is a list of the HEAP offices:

- Fairfax Renaissance Development Corporation
  8111 Quincy Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44104

- Famicos Foundation (only current customers as walk-ins)
  1325 Ansel Road, Cleveland, Ohio 44106

- Stockyard, Clark-Fulton Brooklyn Centre (15 walk-ins per day)
  3167 Fulton Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44109

- Bellaire Puritas Dev. Corp.
  4703 Puritas Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44135 (Provides bi-lingual staff)
The Percentage of Income Payment Program Plus is a special payment plan that helps lower-income households maintain gas and electric service by paying a percentage of their household income instead of their actual energy bills. All gas and electric companies regulated by the PUCO must offer this plan to customers.

To be eligible for PIPP Plus, customers must have a household income at or below 150% of federal poverty guidelines. PIPP protects customers from disconnection of service, as long as they follow the program’s rules.

PIPP Plus makes payments more affordable year round. A PIPP Plus participant’s monthly payment is the greater of:

- Gas: 6% of monthly income or $10
- Electric: 6% of monthly income or $10.
- All-electric: pay 10% of monthly income or $10.

The electric PIPP Plus installment is a year-round installment the same as gas; no more high electric installments in the summer. Reduces PIPP debt for paying customers.

Each time a customer makes the required PIPP-Plus monthly installment on time and in-full, the customer:

- Avoids new utility debt
- Gets rid of old utility debt
Participants must make monthly payments and verify income annually.
If customers miss their PIPP Plus installments, they can be removed from the program, their utilities shut off, and their entire account balance may become due.

Gas PIPP Plus customers have 30 days from their PIPP Plus anniversary date to make up any missed installments, or they will be removed from PIPP Plus.

If customers do not re-verify their gross monthly household income at least one time every 12 months, they will be removed from PIPP Plus.

To keep their energy usage as low as possible, PIPP Plus participants must agree to take advantage of any energy efficiency programs offered.
**ELECTRIC PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM**
www.development.ohio.gov/community/ocs/epp.htm
1-800-282-0880

The Ohio Department of Development’s Universal Service Fund’s (USF) Electric Partnership Program (EPP) is designed to improve the electric efficiency of low-income households who participate in PIPP (Percentage of Income Payment Plan) by performing in-home audits and installing appropriate electric base load and thermal energy efficiency measures. Consumer education that helps PIPP participants get the most benefit from their electricity while learning ways to lower the amount they use is an integral part of the service delivery to every household.

Every resident enrolled in electric PIPP is eligible for the USF EPP. However, the focus will be on helping those PIPP customers that use the most energy.

Customers who are enrolled in electric PIPP and have high energy use compared with other electric PIPP enrollees will be contacted by an authorized provider of USF EPP services.

**The USF EPP is composed of two types of programs:**

- A program which audits lighting, appliances, and all other uses of electricity not related to heating, and installs appropriate measures and 2) a weatherization program for those who heat with electricity and who have moderate to high usage. This program adds insulation, performs heating system inspections, and addresses health and safety measures.
• Each program includes an education component. This component varies in intensity on the PIPP customer’s electric consumption and other factors. Education focuses on how much energy home devices use and actions the customer can take to reduce this usage. Education will be in the form of one of the following: in-home visits, workshops or materials by mail.

USF EPP services will be available only to those residents eligible for PIPP Plus and living in the service territory of specific Ohio electric companies; First Energy is the designated electric company in Northeast Ohio.

WINTER RECONNECT ORDER
www.puco.ohio.gov
1-800-686-7826

• The Winter Reconnect Order (WRO) is issued by the PUCO. The order allows customers who have a pending disconnection the opportunity to pay a maximum of $175 to maintain their utility service once per the winter heating season.

• No income requirement.

• Individuals who have committed an act of fraud (e.g., theft of service, wrote a bad check) may NOT utilize the WRO until they cure the fraudulent amount, plus investigation fees.

• May only use ONCE per utility during WRO period.
• MUST enroll in a payment plan.
• Customer pays no more than $175 to maintain service under WRO:
  • Any amount owed over $175 goes into arrears for Percentage of Income Payment Plan Plus (PIPP) customers. Other customers must enter into a payment plan on the balance.
  • If disconnected, customer must pay a tariffed reconnect fee of no more than $36.00 to restore service.
• Utility may request a security deposit (non-PIPP Plus accounts)
• Any customer who has a confirmed appointment with a community action agency, (CEOGC or CHN) will have their disconnection suspended for at least five days past the date of the appointment.

Can a customer use the WRO for both services?
• Yes, anyone may use a split if both regulated services are off or in danger of being disconnected.
• Customers who do not qualify for assistance may still negotiate a split between the two regulated utility companies.
• Some utilities will require payment of the reconnect fee (up to $36.00) up front and the remaining difference is billed the following month.
• Some utilities will bill the customer for the entire tariffed reconnect amount the following month.
MEDICAL CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Stops a utility shut off for non-payment if it’s life threatening to the health of a household member. A certified medical professional must complete a Certification Form, obtained by calling the utility company.

The customer must return the form to the utility company. A household can utilize three medical certifications within a twelve month period. The certification prevents disconnection for 30 days or restores residential service if off less than 21 days. Contact your local utility company.

THIRD PARTY NOTIFICATION PROGRAM

Provides a copy of a utility shut off notice to another person, like a friend or relative, when an individual has difficulty handling their own affairs. Contact your local utility company. (Not available to Cleveland Public Power customers).
Utilities Assistance Programs - Unregulated

CLEVELAND PUBLIC POWER WINTER PROGRAM
www.cpp.org
216-664-4600

CPP is a municipally owned public utility company. It is not regulated by the PUCO or Ohio Department of Development. Customers who are experiencing some difficulty paying their electric bill by are offered a one-time winter payment option of $175 to prevent disconnection of services or restoration. The assistance must be paired by a payment arrangement for the remaining balance.

- CPP “All Electric” customers can pay 15% of their gross monthly income to maintain service.
- The program is available from November through April.

SUMMER CRISIS PROGRAM
www.puco.ohio.gov/puco/consumer/information
1-800-686-7826

The Summer Crisis Program (SCP) assists low-income residents with summer cooling costs.

- Eligibility is based on household size and income
- Assists households once per summer season
- Program runs from July 1st through August 31st
- Income guidelines are at or below 200% of the federal poverty level
- Your household must include a member with an illness verified by physician documentation that would benefit from assistance or with a member who is sixty (60) or older
- For appointments call 216-518-4014
Agencies with Limited Funds for Utilities Assistance

THE SALVATION ARMY
www.salvationarmycleveland.org
216-861-8185

The Salvation Army in Cleveland works every day to assist families and individuals in need with assistance through programs that work.

Energy Share Program is an emergency fund designed to help customers who have suffered a recent financial hardship and need temporary help in paying their utility bills. The Energy Share program runs each year from December 1 to May 31. Call The Salvation Army after December 1, for more information.

The Salvation Army also provides the Columbia Gas Heatshare program throughout the year and the First Energy CO-OP program throughout the year.
Utility Conservation Programs

HOME WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
www.development.ohio.gov/community/ocs/hwap
1-800-282-0880

A residential energy conservation program for homeowners and renters. The assistance provides grants for weatherization repairs including insulation, furnace tune-ups, and weather-stripping.

- Eligibility is based on the household number and total household income (see 2010-2011 Income Eligibility Guidelines).

Apply by checking the box for ‘Weatherization Services’ on the HEAP application.

- If living in the City of Cleveland, call the Cleveland Department of Community Development at 216-664-2000 for more information. www.city.cleveland.oh.us

- If living outside the City of Cleveland, call the County Department of Development at 216-443-2137 for more information. www.development.cuyahogacounty.us

ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

2012-2013 INCOME GUIDELINES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of household</th>
<th>PIPP Total Annual Income (150%)</th>
<th>HEAP/WCP/HWAP Total Annual Income (200%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$16,755</td>
<td>$22,340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$22,695</td>
<td>$30,260</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>$34,575</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$40,515</td>
<td>$54,020</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>$46,455</td>
<td>$61,940</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For households with more than 8 members, add $5940 for 150% and $7920 for 200% per member.
Dominion East Ohio Gas customers who qualify for HEAP also qualify for this program. It provides heating unit inspection and repair if necessary, attic and sidewall insulation, furnace replacement for health or safety reasons, and energy education to reduce usage.

CLEVELAND HOUSING NETWORK
HOUSEWARMING PROGRAM
www.chnnet.com/housewarming
1-888-377-3774

CLEVELAND HOUSING NETWORK
WATER AND SEWER DISCOUNTS
www.chnnet.com
216-774-2386

Cleveland residents can receive a 40% discount on their water and sewer bills if they meet the income guidelines which are 200% of poverty. They must be the primary homeowner and occupy the home for which they are applying.

- The Water Affordability Program assists income eligible homeowners with a 40% discount on their water bills. Qualifying homeowners also will have a water conservation kit installed in their home to further reduce water bills.
- The Waste Water Affordability Program (Sewer Program) is a rate reduction of 40% for customers who receive their sewer service from the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District.

Please note: Customers must receive their bill from the City of Cleveland, Division of Water, the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, or both to be eligible.

WARM CHOICE PROGRAM
www.columbiagasohio.com
1-800-952-3037

Provides weatherization assistance for Columbia Gas customers. Apply by completing a HEAP application.
Other Utility Assistance Programs

CUYAHOGA JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES
PREVENTION, RETENTION, CONTINGENCY PROGRAM
www.employment.cuyahogacounty.us
216-987-7000

PRC provides utility assistance for customers who have a shut off notice utility assistance for customers who have a shut off notice. Customers must apply for HEAP (when available) before using PRC.

- Households must be at 200% of the Federal Poverty Level with at least one minor child or a pregnant woman.
- Must have a shut-off notice; available 1 time per calendar year per utility; not available during HEAP season.
- Other eligibility requirements apply.
- Call or apply at the closest Neighborhood Family Service Center.
- Call 216-987-7000 to request an application.

DIVISION OF SENIOR AND ADULT SERVICES
www.dsas.cuyahogacounty.us
216-420-6830

Benefits Check Up (BCU) assists seniors and disabled Cuyahoga County residents by providing one-on-one assistance in completing the HEAP application.

BCU also conducts HEAP presentations to community organizations, financial institutions, senior apartment buildings and a variety of groups. An interactive copy of the Home Energy Assistance Programs Application is available on the DSAS website.

To schedule a HEAP presentation call 216-420-6759.
If you are 65 years of age or older, there is a possibility you could receive a reduction in your water bills. If you are any age and totally disabled, you also may be eligible for a Homestead Water Rate. Once a customer applies and is approved for Homestead Water Rate they automatically are approved for the Homestead Sewer Rate and for City of Cleveland residents, the Homestead Waste Collection Rate. All approved applicants must renew their eligibility annually.

Program Requirements:

- Customer of the Cleveland Division of Water
- You must own and live in the property
- Total household income cannot exceed $30,385 for the previous year

For information please contact:

Cleveland Division of Water
Public Utilities Building
1201 Lakeside Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44114
216-664-3130
www.clevelandwater.com

SUMMER SPRINKLING PROGRAM
www.neorsd.org
216-881-8247

Residential water use increases in the summer due to lawn sprinkling, etc. Most of this additional water does not return to the sanitary sewer system, so from May 1 through September 30, residential sewer bills are based upon the lower of average winter water use or actual summer water use.
To qualify you must reside in an owner-occupied one, two, three or four family residence and be billed by NEORSD. The service and mailing addresses must match.

**How do I get into the program?**

Application cards are available by calling Customer Service at (216) 881-8247. Applications are required only once, unless you move.

There is no deadline for applying to the program. Your credit will begin at the application date.

To apply for the Summer Sprinkling Program, residents of Berea, Cleveland Heights, and North Royalton should contact their billing agents:

- **Berea**: 440-891-3308
- **Cleveland Heights**: 216-291-5995
- **North Royalton**: 440-582-6234

**CONSUMER PROTECTION ASSOCIATION**

[www.consumerprotectionassociation.org](http://www.consumerprotectionassociation.org)

**216-881-3434**

Provides payment arrangements for utility services, representative payee programs, budget and foreclosure counseling. They do not provide direct financial assistance.
AT&T OHIO LIFELINE
www.att.com
1-800-335-8721

Assists low-income residents with the connection and maintenance of local telephone service. The program offers a discounted monthly rate, no security deposit and a credit towards installation. To qualify you must be currently enrolled in one of the following: Food Assistance, SSI, Federal Public Housing Assistance, HEAP, WCP, OWF, or Disability Assistance. Offers waivers of service fees.
Contact AT & T to apply.

SAFELINK WIRELESS
www.safelinkwireless.com

A government supported program that provides a free cell phone and airtime each month for income eligible customers.

LEGAL AID SOCIETY
www.lasclev.org
216-687-1900

The Legal Aid Society of Greater Cleveland works to secure justice and resolve fundamental problems for those who are low income and vulnerable by providing high quality legal services and working for systemic solutions.

UNITED WAY 2-1-1 FIRST CALL FOR HELP
www.211cleveland.org
211 or 216-436-2000

Provides free and confidential information and referral to health and human services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.