

# Dept. of Administration: DOA, PSC recognize National Energy Assistance Day

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**Madison, Wis.** - Home energy bills are rising as temperatures are plummeting. While inflation is the topic of many news stories this winter due to the strong economic recovery, many Wisconsinites are spending more to heat their homes.

In honor of National Energy Assistance Day on February 1, the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) and the Public Service Commission (PSC or Commission) are sharing a reminder that the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) is here to help. Each year, more than 250,000 households across the state turn to WHEAP for help with their heating and electric bills.

"If you are struggling to pay your bills, WHEAP can help," said DOA Secretary-designee Kathy Blumenfeld. "Together, we're working to make sure Wisconsinites can keep the heat on this winter."

So far this heating season, 122,683 Wisconsin homes have received more than \$68 million in financial assistance. WHEAP is part of the state's comprehensive Home Energy Plus program, which provides assistance with emergency energy needs, emergency furnace repairs, conservation service, and weatherization for Wisconsinites with low incomes.

In 2020, Governor Tony Evers provided an additional \$15 million in Energy Assistance Program funds, that were made available from the state's federal CARES Act allocation to qualifying households, to help manage energy costs and, in the case of crisis funds, decrease customers' overdue energy costs. The Governor also directed an additional \$1 million to the Keep Wisconsin Warm/Cool Fund, available

for customers whose incomes are slightly above the Energy Assistance income guidelines.

“Families should not have to choose between paying their utility bills and other necessities, such as food, medicine, or childcare,” said PSC Chairperson Rebecca Cameron Valcq. “I am grateful to Governor Evers for his continued commitment to providing support for working families, and I thank our state utility providers for providing flexible payment plans and additional assistance.”

According to initial data from state utility providers, the State of Wisconsin has seen a steady decrease in utility disconnections for a third consecutive year. The positive trend results from state and federal resources allocated by Governor Evers and flexible payment plans with local utility providers. As of November 1, 2021, approximately 3,804 residential locations were disconnected, compared to 4,717 in 2019, and 8,035 in 2018.

Households can apply for WHEAP online at [energybenefit.wi.gov](https://energybenefit.wi.gov), by phone at 1-800-506-5596, or by visiting [homeenergyplus.wi.gov](https://homeenergyplus.wi.gov) to find out how to apply in person or via mail. Eligibility is based on household income, household size, and energy costs. Residents may be eligible if the gross household income is 60% of the state median income level or less.

### **60 Percent of State Median Income Guidelines**

#### **Household Size    One Month    Annual Income**

1	\$2,591.92	\$31,103
2	\$3,389.42	\$40,673
3	\$4,186.92	\$50,243
4	\$4,984.42	\$59,813
5	\$5,781.92	\$69,383
6	\$6,579.42	\$78,953
7	\$6,729.00	\$80,748
8	\$6,878.50	\$82,542

If customers cannot reach an agreement with their utility, they may contact the PSC by calling 608-266-2001 or 1-800-225-7729 or submitting a PSC complaint online.