

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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SAVE ON WINTER HEATING BILLS WITH THESE HELPFUL TIPS FROM NIPSCO

MERRILLVILLE, Ind. – With Jan., Feb. and Mar. accounting for the largest natural gas bills throughout the year for Northern Indiana Public Service (NIPSCO) customers – primarily due to increased usage from colder temperatures – it is a great opportunity to take advantage of available energy efficiency programs and simple do-it-yourself tips to help manage bills.

“While we are proud to offer the lowest gas costs in Indiana, and much of the Midwest, we recognize that winter heating bills can be a challenging expense to manage,” said Karl Stanley, vice president of commercial operations for NIPSCO. “It is important, particularly during this time of year, for customers to know how to be more energy-efficient at home. We offer several programs and incentives designed to help customers save energy and there are a number of steps customers can take that will have an immediate impact on savings.”

The cost of natural gas represents the largest portion of customer bills during the winter months, typically making up three-fourths of an overall bill. Outdoor temperatures can have a significant effect on energy usage, especially for inefficient homes.

The average temperature across the NIPSCO service territory during Dec. was four degrees – or 14 percent – colder than last Dec., based on data supplied by the National Weather Service. As a result, customers used 20 percent more natural gas this Dec. compared to last Dec.

LOWEST GAS COSTS IN INDIANA

NIPSCO offers the lowest gas bills in Indiana for the last 12 months, according to the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission’s (IURC) monthly Natural Gas Residential Bill Survey.

Even with the difference in temperatures, gas bills this winter are still projected to be the second lowest in the last 10 years.

NIPSCO has no mark-up and makes no profit on the cost of natural gas billed to its customers – also known as the “gas supply” line item on customer bills. Before being billed to customers, natural gas costs are filed with the IURC for review.

START SAVING ENERGY WITH THESE PROGRAMS AND TIPS

NIPSCO offers a number of solutions to help customers use energy wisely, make smart energy decisions and manage their monthly bill, including:

- **Assess Your Home’s Energy Usage:** NIPSCO now offers a free online tool to help customers assess their home’s level of energy efficiency and receive instant feedback on ways to better manage energy usage based on their specific home profile. Participants receive many of the same individualized recommendations offered through an actual in-person home inspection.

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- **Install a Programmable Thermostat:** As much as half of a household's energy usage comes from heating and cooling. Installing a programmable thermostat, using pre-programmed settings, can save about \$180 every year in energy costs. NIPSCO offers customers a \$20 rebate for the purchase of a new programmable thermostat.
- **Receive Appliance Rebates:** NIPSCO offers rebates to all residential natural gas customers who purchase new, energy-efficient natural gas furnaces, water heaters, or boilers. Rebate amounts range from \$100-\$750.
- **Recycle Old Appliances:** Electric customers with old, inefficient refrigerators or freezers can receive a \$35 rebate from NIPSCO and free pick-up service. Removing these appliances can save \$100 on average in annual electricity charges.
- **Shorten Your Showers:** Simply reducing shower time by a few minutes can save hundreds of gallons of hot water per month and greatly reduce water-heating costs.
- **Enroll in BudgetPlan:** A free service to all NIPSCO customers to help manage their monthly bills by spreading out energy costs over an entire year.
- **NIPSCO Choice Program:** Gives customers an opportunity to choose an alternative natural gas supplier for their home. Customers purchase gas from an alternative supplier, but NIPSCO is responsible for delivering the gas.
- **DependaBill and Price Protection Service:** DependaBill provides a fixed monthly bill with no annual reconciliation, while the PPS option allows customers to fix or cap their per-unit cost of natural gas.
- **Seal Up Leaks:** Caulk leaks around windows and doors. Look for places where you have pipes, vents or electrical conduits that go through the wall, ceiling or floor. If you find a small gap, seal it up.

AVAILABLE ENERGY ASSISTANCE FUNDS

A number of options for receiving energy assistance funds exist when it comes to meeting the needs of low-income, elderly and disabled customers, as well as those hit hardest by the economy.

- **Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP):** Customers falling within 150 percent of federal poverty guidelines may be eligible to receive state and federal utility assistance dollars by visiting their local community action agency.
- **NIPSCO CARE Discount Program:** Provides bill reductions in addition to LIHEAP for customers falling within 150 percent of federal poverty guidelines. Once they are qualified for LIHEAP, customers are automatically enrolled in the program and reductions range anywhere from 11 to 26 percent, depending on the same criteria used by the state in determining the level of assistance through LIHEAP.

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- **NIPSCO Hardship Funds:** NIPSCO provides energy assistance funds for those customers who fall between 151-200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. Hardship funds are available through the same local community action agencies where LIHEAP funds are distributed.
- **Reduced Deposits:** NIPSCO has reduced the deposit requirement amount for customers who are enrolled in the state's LIHEAP program. Deposits are capped at \$50 for each NIPSCO gas and electric meter.

For more information on these available programs and other ways to save energy and money, visit www.NIPSCO.com/SaveEnergy.

NIPSCO, with headquarters in Merrillville, Ind., is one of the nine energy distribution companies of NiSource Inc. (NYSE: NI). With over 712,000 natural gas customers and 457,000 electric customers across the northern third of Indiana, NIPSCO is the largest natural gas distribution company, and the second largest electric distribution company, in the state. NiSource distribution companies serve 3.8 million natural gas and electric customers primarily in seven states. More information about NIPSCO is available at www.NIPSCO.com.

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