



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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STATEWIDE WINTER MORATORIUM EXPIRES MARCH 15
NIPSCO Reminds Customers of Available Energy Assistance Options

MERRILLVILLE, Ind. – With the state’s winter moratorium ending March 15, Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO) reminds customers enrolled in the state’s Energy Assistance Program (EAP) with outstanding balances that a number of assistance programs and payment arrangements are available to help customers with their utility bills.

Between Dec. 1 and March 15, natural gas utilities in Indiana do not disconnect service to EAP customers who are delinquent on their home heating bills.

“Working together with our customers to get them the assistance they need is our main focus, especially during this time of year,” said Cindy Jackson, manager of energy efficiency and energy assistance programs for NIPSCO. “We offer a number of programs designed to help provide those customers who may be experiencing financial challenges or falling behind on their energy bills through a variety of payment options and other available resources.”

Although the number of customers receiving state energy assistance dollars is expected to remain similar to last year, the number of NIPSCO households who have applied for heating energy assistance – some for the first time – has increased since 2008.

In addition to state funds available to EAP customers, NIPSCO’s Customer Assistance for Residential Energy (CARE) program provides an additional \$6 million in energy assistance to NIPSCO customers. NIPSCO contributes 25 percent of the total program costs.

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.

- **Indiana Energy Assistance Program (EAP):** 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.

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- **NIPSCO CARE Discount Program:** Provides bill reductions in addition to EAP for customers falling within 150 percent of federal poverty guidelines. Once they are qualified for EAP, customers are automatically enrolled in the program and reductions range from 11 to 26 percent, depending on the same criteria used by the state in determining the level of assistance through EAP.
- **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 EAP funds are distributed.
- **Reduced Deposits:** NIPSCO has reduced the deposit requirement amount for customers who are enrolled in the state's EAP program. Deposits are capped at \$50 for each NIPSCO gas meter and \$50 for each electric meter.
- **Township Trustees:** Provides customers with home heating bill assistance. Customers are encouraged to contact their local Township Trustee to see what help is available.
- **Credit Agreements:** Allows customers to make an initial payment within four days of the agreement, then spread the remaining unpaid balance over three months, plus current bills as they are due.

START SAVING ENERGY WITH THESE PROGRAMS AND TIPS

NIPSCO also offers a number of free and low-cost energy solutions to help all customers use energy wisely, make smart energy decisions and manage their monthly bill throughout the year.

- **Assess Your Home's Energy Usage:** Free online tool at NIPSCO.com 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.
- **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 and NIPSCO provides a \$20 rebate.
- **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.
- **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.

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- **Enroll in BudgetPlan:** A free service to all NIPSCO customers to help manage their monthly bills by spreading 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.

To learn more about available assistance, customers are encouraged to visit NIPSCO.com or call 1-800-4-NIPSCO (1-800-464-7726).

NIPSCO, with headquarters in Merrillville, Ind., is one of the nine energy distribution companies of NiSource Inc. (NYSE: NI). With more than 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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