

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 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 Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) with outstanding balances that a number of assistance programs, payment arrangements and energy efficiency programs 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 LIHEAP customers who are delinquent on their home heating bills.

“This winter, mild temperatures in combination with low natural gas prices have helped keep bills lower than past years,” said Cindy Jackson, manager of energy efficiency and energy assistance programs for NIPSCO. “Despite these favorable conditions, there are still people struggling with their bills, so these programs are very important to our communities.”

There are several options available to offer winter utility bill assistance for households that are experiencing financial challenges, including:

- **Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Program:** LIHEAP support is available to households falling within 150 percent of federal poverty guidelines, and is fully funded by a federal block grant offered through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).
- **NIPSCO Customer Assistance for Residential Energy (CARE) Discount Program:** In addition to the assistance available through LIHEAP, the NIPSCO CARE Discount Program is designed to provide further bill reductions to LIHEAP-eligible customers. Once enrolled in LIHEAP, 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.
- **NIPSCO Hardship Program:** For customers just outside the federal poverty guidelines for LIHEAP, the NIPSCO Hardship Program offers up to \$200 in gas bill assistance to households between 151-200 percent of the federal poverty level. Hardship funds are available through many of the same local Community Action Agencies where LIHEAP funds are distributed.
- **Gift of Warmth Program:** Funded by churches, individuals and other human service-focused organizations and matched dollar-for-dollar by NIPSCO, Gift of Warmth offers assistance towards one bill each heating season.

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- **Township Trustees:** A limited amount of energy assistance funds are available through local Township Trustee offices. Last year, approximately \$1.2 million was distributed to help nearly 7,000 customers. NIPSCO customers are encouraged to contact their local Township Trustee to see what help is available.
- **Payment Arrangements:** A NIPSCO credit agreement allows you 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.

Through NIPSCO's energy efficiency programs, customers can pinpoint ways to manage their energy usage, and in turn their bills, including:

- **Appliance Recycling Program:** We'll pick up and recycle your old refrigerator or freezer for free and give you a \$35 reward.
- **Appliance Rebate Program:** NIPSCO's appliance rebate program offers ways to help manage your energy usage while helping the environment at the same time.
- **Air Conditioner (AC) Cycling Program:** By enrolling, you can help reduce energy demand on the hottest days of the year, help the environment and earn bill credits during the summer.
- **Instant Savings on CFL Bulbs:** Take advantage of instant, in-store discounts when purchasing CFL bulbs at participating retail locations. No coupons or forms needed.
- **Free In-Home Energy Audit:** Limited availability for a free, in-home energy audit conducted by a certified professional.
- **Income-Qualified Weatherization:** An energy advisor will come to your home to perform a complete assessment and install multiple energy-saving measures.
- **Free Online Home Energy Audit:** Analyze your home energy usage and learn more ways to save in your household.

For more information on billing options and payment assistance, visit NIPSCO.com/BillingPayment. For more information on available energy-saving programs and other ways to save, visit NIPSCO.com/SaveEnergy.

NIPSCO, with headquarters in Merrillville, Ind., is one of the seven energy distribution companies of NiSource Inc. (NYSE: NI). With more than 786,000 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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