



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
GARY HEBL
46TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

INFORMATIONAL COLUMN

REPRESENTATIVE GARY HEBL ADDRESSES HOME HEATING COSTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 9, 2007

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Rep. Gary Hebl/608-266-8462

Burr. It's cold out there these days.

So cold that even us Badgers shiver a little bit. But that shivering is nothing compared to the shuddering many families go through each winter when they look at their home heating bills. To avoid singing those winter energy expense blues, there are a few steps you can take to cut back on the costs of heating your home. And, there are also some sources you can turn to for help if you can't afford the cost of your utility bill.

Although the reasons for such high energy costs are out of our hands, what we can control is our energy efficiency. The more measures we take to prepare our home and conserve energy this winter, the lower we can expect our utility bills to be.

Some of the simplest measures you can take to conserve energy are cooking with small appliances, running the dishwasher only when it is full, lowering the thermostat while you are sleeping or away from home and replacing air filters each month. These techniques will help you winterize your home and could save you hundreds each year in heating.

Personalized reports that track your family's energy usage are also available. More information on these items can be requested online at:

www.we-energies.com/residential/ecosts/ecosts.htm or by calling 1-800-242-9137.

But for some Wisconsin families, the cost of their heating bills is just too much for them. For those folks, there's assistance available through the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program.

Charles Warner, program services manager for Energy Services Inc., a non-profit which administers the Home Heating Assistance Program in Dane County, said participation in the program has increased at least 10 percent from this time last year. And with the extremely cold temperatures in recent weeks, Warner said it comes as no surprise.

According to Gary Gorlen, director of the Department of Administration's Energy Assistance Bureau, there is still money available in the program through May

15. At this point, Gorlen said he expects the program will have enough funding to support additional households needing assistance.

So far this year, Gorlen said 102,000 households have received home heating assistance and the final count is expected to be about 150,000. Gorlen said the benefit can be as high as \$1,200 total for the year, which is paid directly to the customer's heating supplier.

To apply for home heating assistance, call or write to:

Energy Services Inc.
608-267-8601
1225 South Park Street
Madison, WI

www.homeenergyplus.wi.gov

As always, if you have any questions about the services Wisconsin State Government provides, feel free to contact my office at (608) 266-7678.

INFORMATION BOX

Applicants must provide:

- Verification of household income for the three-month period before you apply.
- People receiving Social Security or SSI should bring a copy of their most recent check or a letter from Social Security showing your benefits.
- Verification of any interest income received for the previous 12 months.
- Social Security cards and birth dates for all members.
- If your rent includes heat, bring your landlord's name, address and phone.

Source: www.MGE.com

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