

Preparing for Winter Heating Bills

Oil, gasoline and natural gas prices recently have reached record highs. Unfortunately, prices are not expected to come down anytime soon. With winter right around the corner, it's time to think about your heating bills which will be higher than last year's

The best way to manage your heating bill is to use less gas. For example:

- **Set your thermostat at 68 degrees during the day and 60 degrees at night.** Each degree above these settings can result in a 3% increase in energy costs.
- **Seal holes and cracks around windows, doors, light fixtures and walls.** You can save 10% or more on your energy bill by reducing air leaks with caulking and weather stripping.
- **Keep warm air inside.** If you have storm windows, make sure they are down and in place. Raise shades and open curtains during the day. Close shades and curtains at night.

For more energy saving tips:

- Go to pseg.com/njenergysmart; or
- Call 1-800-854-4444 to request a free *Energy Savers* brochure or visit the [Energy Savers website](#).

Payment Assistance Programs

Program Name	NJ Universal Service Fund (USF)
Description	The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities created the Universal Service Fund (USF), which helps make energy bills more affordable for low income customers. If you're eligible, USF can lower the amount you have to pay for your gas and electric bills.
How to apply	USF accepts applications all year.* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Call 1-800-792-9745 ▪ Pick up an application at one of PSE&G's 16 walk-in Customer Service Centers.

Program Name	LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program)
Description	LIHEAP helps low-income people pay their winter heating bills. You may qualify even if your heat is included in the rent. To be eligible, your household income does not exceed the amounts allowed in the following household income table.
How to apply	You must apply from November 1, 2005 to March 31, 2006.* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Call 1-800-510-3102

*You can apply for both LIHEAP and USF with one application. You may be eligible for both programs.

Program Name	NJ Lifeline Credit Program
Description	NJ Lifeline is a \$225 yearly credit for your electric or gas bill. You must be 65 years old, or a disabled adult at least 18 years old who is receiving Social Security Disability benefits. Your income must be under \$20,989 for a single person or \$25,735 for a married couple. If you receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) you do not need to apply, your Lifeline benefit is in your monthly SSI check. Call the toll free number to receive an application.
How to apply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Call 1-800-510-3102 ▪ Download an application from the NJ Lifeline website ▪ Pick up an application from one of PSE&G's 16 walk-in Customer Service Centers.

Program Name	NJ SHARES
Description	NJ SHARES helps people going through short-term financial problems. To qualify, you must show a history of paying your bills on time and that something has happened that keeps you from paying now. If you receive LIHEAP and USF, you are not eligible. Once approved, you can get up to \$500 to pay your gas and/or electric bills. NJSHARES accepts applications all year.
How to apply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Call 1-866-NJSHARES (657-4273) ▪ Visit the NJSHARES website for more information. ▪ Contact a community based agency near you that participates in NJ Shares

Program Name	New Jersey Comfort Partners
Description	New Jersey electric and gas utilities have joined together to develop and sponsor New Jersey Comfort Partners – a special partnership program to help customers save energy and money by making your home more energy efficient.
More Information	For more information or to receive a Comfort Partners application, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Call 1-888-773-8326 ▪ Visit New Jersey Comfort Partners website

Program Name	Weatherization Program
Description	There are many homes and apartments that have high heating costs because their home loses heat due to poor insulation or inefficient heating systems. If you meet the annual income guidelines below, help may be available to make your home more comfortable and also lower your heating costs.
Sponsor	State of New Jersey Department of Community Affairs 1-800-510-3102
How to apply	Apply at one of the State's designated Weatherization Agencies

To apply, you must:

- Be a renter or a homeowner
- Not have received the service in the past 10 years
- Meet the following annual income guidelines

Family Size	Annual Income
1	\$16,748
2	\$22,453
3	\$28,158
4	\$33,863
5	\$39,568
6	\$45,273
7	\$50,978
8	\$56,683

* For family units of more than 8 members, add \$5,705 for each Member. Published in the Federal Register February 18, 2005.

After an Energy Audit is completed, you may be eligible to receive one or more of the following:

- Insulation
- Caulking and Weather stripping
- Compact Fluorescent Lighting
- Refrigerator
- Heating System Repair, Retrofit, or Replacement
- Hot Water Heater Repair or Replacement
- Window and/or Door Repair or Replacement

Programs from PSE&G

Program Name	PSE&G Equal Payment Plan (EDP)
Description	PSE&G calculates your Equal Payment amount by dividing your previous year's energy usage into 12 equal monthly payments. Your account will be reviewed every 6 months. If your energy use changes and your payment amount needs to be revised up or down, you will be notified.
More Information	To sign up for EPP, or for more information, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Call 1-800-436-PSEG (7734) ▪ Visit the Equal Payment Plan website

Program Name	Other Programs from PSE&G
Description	<p>Third-Party Notification Program PSE&G's Third Party Notification Program will let you know when your older, ill or disabled loved one's bill is late</p> <p>Life-Sustaining Program Do you or a loved one use a respirator, dialysis machine or other type of life-sustaining equipment at home? If so, you can receive <u>priority power restoration</u> if the power goes out.</p>
More Information	<p>For more information on these and other PSE&G programs,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Call 1-800-436-7734

Mercer County Affordable Housing Program
Housing and Community Development
Phone: (609) 989-6858
Fax: (609) 989-0306

Program Element	Program Description	Assistance	Telephone
Home Energy Assistance	Provide low income families with financial assistance to pay residential heating and cooling bills.	Grants Technical Assistance	609-989-6878
Residential Weatherization Assistance	Provides grants and technical assistance to income eligible families requiring energy conversation improvements. Improvements may include: new heating system, windows, doors, attic insulation, etc.	Grants Technical Assistance	609-989-6878

New Jersey Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
Universal Service Fund (USF)

County	Application Agency	Contact Person & Phone Number	Fax Number & Hours of Operation
Mercer	County of Mercer Mercer County Administration 640 S. Broad St., Room 429 Trenton, NJ 08650	Cathy Paoline, LIHEAP Coordinator (609)- 989-6739 989-6959 989-6065 989-6544	(609)278-2758 Monday – Friday 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM