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HEAP Winter Crisis Program Starts November 1

The Ohio Development Services Agency and Ohio Heartland Community Action Commission (OHCAC) want to let Ohioans know that assistance is available to help with their heating bills this winter. The Home Energy Assistance Winter Crisis Program starts November 1 and helps income-eligible Ohioans pay their heating bills and can assist with fuel tank placement, fuel tank testing, and furnace repair. The program will be open until March 31, 2021.

“As the pandemic continues into the winter, it is important that Ohioans are able to stay safe and warm in their homes,” said Lydia Mihalik, director of the Ohio Development Services Agency. “The Winter Crisis Program can ease the burdens of families. Ohioans who need help with their energy bills should visit energyhelp.ohio.gov to learn more about the program.”

More than 2,200 families in Marion, Crawford and Morrow Counties were assisted through the Home Energy Assistance Winter Crisis Program from November 1, 2019, to March 31, 2020.

Ohio Heartland CAC will be conducting phone interviews for the 2020-2021 Winter Crisis Program in place of the face-to-face interviews. Intake staff will contact clients at their scheduled appointment times. For those who are already shut off, call your local CAC for more information or 740-387-1039.

The Winter Crisis Program assists low-income households that have been disconnected (or have a pending disconnection notice), need to establish new service, need to pay to transfer service, have 25% (or less) of bulk fuel supply remaining, or have a household member who was diagnosed with COVID-19 in 2020 to help stay warm this winter.

Ohioans can visit www.energyhelp.ohio.gov to start their application prior to their required agency interview with OHCAC. To schedule an appointment call, **419-718-0047** or online at <https://app.capappointments.com>

Eligible households can receive a payment for their main heating source and/or their secondary heating source (electric). The program can also assist with fuel tank placement, fuel tank testing, and furnace repair. Ohioans must have a gross income at or below 175% of the federal poverty guidelines to qualify for assistance. For a family of four, the annual income must be at or below \$45,850.

For more information about the features of the Winter Crisis Program locally and what is needed to apply, contact OHCAC at 740-387-1039. Additional information can also be found at www.energyhelp.ohio.gov.