



Low-income customers that meet income guidelines are eligible for home heating financial assistance through LIHEAP. Applications are accepted annually on a first-come, first-serve basis between October and mid-April. Utilities may not disconnect electric and gas services of LIHEAP-certified customers from November 1 through April 1. To apply for LIHEAP, contact your local CAP Agency.

Customer contribution funds required of energy utilities in Iowa are another potential source of winter heating assistance for low-income customers. Voluntary contributions are collected from utility customers and funds are provided to local social assistance agencies to help low-income customers in their area pay their winter heating bills. Contact your local CAP Agency or utility to find out more about customer contribution funds that may be available in your area.

Price factors

Very high summer temperatures and very cold winter temperatures can cause natural gas and/or electric rates to rise from increased energy usage and demand. Hot weather during the nation's cooling season increases demand for



both electricity and natural gas as many electric generating plants used in times of peak demand are fueled by natural gas. The commodity price of natural gas is competitive and fluctuates as dictated by the competitive market. Local natural gas distribution companies charge customers the same price they pay for natural gas supplies. The IUB works with these utilities to minimize price volatility for customers. Electricity can cost more in times of high usage when utilities have to use more expensive generators or purchase additional power to meet demand. Iowa electric utilities implement summer rates, which are higher, during the peak summer cooling months when electric use and demand soars. Electric utilities have to build and maintain generation facilities to meet occasional summer peak demand. The costs to build, maintain, and operate these facilities are included in rates paid by customers even though the plants are only used part of the time. Increased customer efficiency can reduce the need for building costly plants.



Iowa Utilities Board

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Local: (515) 725-7321

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Preparing for high energy costs



Following a path to energy savings and assistance

Iowans have many resources available to help them combat high energy costs.

## Energy saving measures

### Low cost or no cost ideas:

- Reset thermostats to a few degrees warmer in the summer, cooler in the winter,
- Turn off unnecessary lights and appliances,
- Replace incandescents with compact fluorescents or LEDs,
- Change furnace and central air filters often,
- Lower hot water heater temperature to a reasonable setting,
- Keep obstructions away from heat and cooling registers,
- Weather seal doors and windows,
- Open or close doors, windows, and drapes effectively.

Many energy-efficiency measures require you to spend some money to achieve energy savings, but those savings will far exceed the cost over the life of the product.

### Energy-efficient investments:

- New more efficient heating and/or cooling



system (utility/manufacturer may offer cash rebates),

- Programmable thermostat,
- New more efficient hot water heater,
- Replacement windows,
- Additional or replacement insulation,
- New high efficiency appliances such as washer or dryer, refrigerator, or stove.

Look for an ENERGY STAR label when purchasing new appliances to assure energy efficiency. More information about the ENERGY STAR program for improving energy efficiency is available at [www.homeenergysaver.lbl.gov](http://www.homeenergysaver.lbl.gov). Another resource for energy efficiency information is the Iowa Energy Center at (515) 294-8819 or [www.energy.iastate.edu](http://www.energy.iastate.edu).

Your local utility should be the first resource for achieving your energy efficiency goals. Some utilities offer cash rebate incentives for energy efficiency purchases. Some utilities also offer free energy assessments.

### Contact your utility for more information:

- Interstate Power and Light Company (Alliant), 1-800-255-4268, [www.alliantenergy.com](http://www.alliantenergy.com).
- MidAmerican Energy, 1-800-894-9599, [www.midamericanenergy.com](http://www.midamericanenergy.com).
- Black Hills Energy, 1-888-890-5554, [www.blackhillsenergy.com](http://www.blackhillsenergy.com).
- Atmos Energy, 1-888-824-3434,



[www.atmosenergy.com](http://www.atmosenergy.com).

- Or contact your local municipal or cooperative energy utility.

## Low-income assistance

Low-income customers can apply for the Weatherization Assistance Program by contacting their local Community Action Program (CAP) Agency. If you don't know the telephone number, ask your utility or call the Iowa Utilities Board at 877-565-4450. A household is eligible for this energy efficiency program if a member of the household receives Supplemental Security Income, participates in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, or is certified for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). A household is also eligible if its income is at or below 150 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Homes in this program typically receive needed insulation upgrades, a safety check with repair or replacement of heating systems or water heaters, installation of carbon monoxide or smoke detectors and energy efficient lighting, and a safety check of all combustion appliances. Health and safety improvements may be made such as mitigation of carbon dioxide problems, appliance back-drafting, and high indoor moisture levels. Windows, doors, and roofs are usually not replaced.

