

*Iowa Utilities Board***NEWS***Elizabeth S. Jacobs, Chair**Nick Wagner, Board Member**Sheila K. Tipton, Board Member***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** October 15, 2014**Contact** | Rob Hillesland, 515.725.7322, rob.hillesland@iub.iowa.gov **Web site** | <http://iub.iowa.gov>

Heating assistance program, winter moratorium disconnection law help protect lowans

Iowa Utilities Board reminds customers to contact their local Community Action Agency; general application period begins Nov. 1

(Des Moines) – As another Iowa winter approaches, the latest energy and winter fuel outlook from the [U.S. Energy Information Administration](#) projects slightly lower average household natural gas and electric heating costs than last year. The Iowa Utilities Board reminds qualified lowans about the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), the Weatherization Assistance Program, and Iowa's winter disconnection moratorium law.

LIHEAP is a federal program which provides limited financial assistance for low-income Iowa consumers to cover a portion of their winter energy bills. The Weatherization Program offers qualified households long-term financial relief by improving energy efficiency, educating consumers about energy use, and providing methods to reduce energy consumption.

Iowa law and Board rules require that the LIHEAP and Weatherization Programs protect qualified households from natural gas or electric service disconnection from November 1 through April 1 during Iowa's annual winter disconnection moratorium. The Board's rules for natural gas service disconnection can be found at [199 IAC 19.4\(15\)d\(9\)](#) and its rules for electric service disconnection are at [199 IAC 20.4\(15\)d\(10\)](#).

However, the Board urges all LIHEAP or Weatherization certified customers to continue paying toward their energy utility bills through the winter to avoid debt accumulation and potential utility service disconnection in the spring

Customers not certified for LIHEAP or Weatherization may receive a 30-day stay from natural gas or electric service disconnection during the moratorium by notifying their utility company that they will be applying for either of the energy assistance programs. However, those customers must then apply and be certified or be subject to disconnection. Other customers not qualified for LIHEAP or Weatherization assistance may be disconnected for failure to pay utility bills during the winter moratorium timeframe.

(MORE)

Heating assistance funds are limited and LIHEAP applications will be accepted from households on a first come/first served basis at their local [Community Action Agency](#) (CAA) from November 1, 2014, through April 30, 2015. Households with disabled or elderly persons 60-plus years of age were allowed to apply for pre-certification starting on October 1, 2014. Consumers without computer access may inquire with their local utility or the Iowa Utilities Board Customer Service Section toll-free at 1-877-565-4450 to locate the nearest CAA.

For eligibility requirements, visit the Web site of the [Iowa Department of Human Rights](#), which administers both programs, or call (515) 281-0859.

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The Iowa Utilities Board regulates utilities to ensure that reasonably priced, reliable, environmentally responsible, and safe utility services are available to all Iowans.

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