

TRIM YOUR GROWING UTILITY BILLS.

Apply for Energy Assistance Programs.



How to Manage Spring and Summer Utility Costs

As natural gas, propane, and electricity bills increase along with the temperature, it is sometimes difficult to pay utility bills on time and in full. Although this situation may be upsetting, the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) suggests trying the following steps to cover utility bills and stay cool:

Check SER Eligibility

The State Emergency Relief Program (SER) provides a wide range of energy-related emergency services. Eligibility for SER is based on a household's demonstration of immediate need for assistance with home heating fuel, electricity, or energy-related home repairs. Applications are available at:

- Your local DHS office or (517) 373-2035
- michigan.gov/dhs (Click *Doing Business with DHS*, then *Forms and Applications*)
- Community organizations

Use Energy Wisely

Reducing your utility usage will result in lower bills. The resources below offer excellent energy efficiency suggestions:

- Energy Saver Booklets (Get the PDF online at: www1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips or call (800)292-9555).
- energysavers.gov
- eei.org/ourissues/EnergyEfficiency/Documents/100Ways.pdf
- The MPSC's *Don't Be an Energy Hog* card
- warmtraining.org/medc
- energystar.gov





Weatherize Your Home

The Weatherization Assistance Program enables low-income families to permanently reduce energy bills by making their homes more energy efficient. For help with insulation, air leakage, smoke detectors, dryer venting, and more call (517) 321-7500 or visit mcaaa.org.

Contact these Agencies

- Information: 211, uwmich.org/2-1-1/2-1-1-call-centers
- Employment and Training Council: (616) 336-4100
- MI Community Action Agency Association: (517) 321-7500, mcaaa.org
- MI League for Human Services (Public Policy Advocacy): (517) 487-5436, milhs.org
- Salvation Army: (616) 459-3433, salvationarmyusa.org
- MI Energy Options (MEO): (517) 337-0422 (MEO Main), (906) 226-1136 (MEO North)
- WARM Training Center: (313) 894-1030
- Great Lakes Energy Service: (517) 669-5389
- MI Department of Human Services: (517) 373-2035
- MI Office of Services to the Aging: (517) 373-8230
- MI State Housing Development Authority: (517) 373-8370

Apply for Military Assistance

A customer or the spouse of an individual on active duty may apply for shut-off protection for electric and natural gas service for up to 90 days. Providers may extend shut-off protection if the customer requests it. For more information or to learn if you qualify, contact:

- Your electric or gas company
- michigan.gov/mpsc (Click *Consumer Info., Energy Assistance, then Military/Veteran Assistance.*)

Contact Your Utility Companies

Contacting your utility provider when you're struggling to pay bills can be very helpful. For example, seasonal ups and downs can be taken out of energy bills with budget plans and holds can be placed on accounts to avoid shut-offs. An energy bill subject to shut-off due to nonpayment may be postponed up to 21 days because of medical emergencies. Contact your utility company as soon as you know you will be unable to pay a bill on time. Do not wait for a shut-off notice.

Review the Energy Assistance Directory

The Energy Assistance Directory provides information on programs that offer energy assistance, listings of utilities, and other resources. Visit dleg.state.mi.us/mpsc/winterwise/energy_assistance.htm for a copy.

Avoid Heat Related Illness

Drink plenty of fluids, wear appropriate clothing and sunscreen, schedule outdoor activities carefully, and monitor individuals at high risk. For more ideas, visit: bt.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/heat_guide.asp

Contact the MPSC

MI Public Service Commission
P.O. Box 30221
Lansing, MI 48909
michigan.gov/mpsc
(800) 292-9555

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