



## GOVERNOR'S Energy Office

### 2022-2023 Winter Heating Season Tips and Resources

Energy prices are expected to remain high this winter due to continued world market volatility from the Russian invasion of Ukraine. This guide contains resources for Maine people to help stay warm this winter and find heating assistance if needed.



#### Track Prices

The Governor's Energy Office tracks heating fuel prices weekly and compares costs of heating sources to help you make informed energy decisions.

[TRACK PRICES](#)



#### Energy Efficiency

Weatherizing your home can help you stay comfortable and save money this winter.

Learn more about incentives and get energy saving tips from [Efficiency Maine](#) and [MaineHousing](#).



#### Tune Up

Schedule your annual heating system maintenance as soon as possible to ensure it is operating most efficiently. Schedule a chimney cleaning for wood and oil burning systems to ensure safe operation during winter. Stay comfortable and save money by keeping your heat pump tuned up. Learn more from [Efficiency Maine](#)



#### Heat Pumps

Electric heat pumps are the most cost-efficient heating source available and are proven to work in cold weather. Multiple incentive programs exist to reduce the cost of installing a heat pump for low-and-moderate-income Maine households. Learn more from [Efficiency Maine](#) and [MaineHousing](#).

[maine.gov/energy](https://maine.gov/energy)



### **Propane Customers**

If you heat with propane, read our [Propane Consumer Guide \(PDF\)](#), which includes information on obtaining a good price, changing suppliers and potential start-up fees and closing account fees.



### **Wood Heating**

If you use wood to heat your home, read this [firewood guide](#) prepared by the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, and remember to schedule a chimney cleaning to ensure safe heating during winter.



### **Automatic Delivery**

Ask your heating fuel provider about automatic delivery. Your provider will monitor your fuel usage, so you won't accidentally run out of fuel. Automatic delivery also offers added security in the unlikely event of supply disruptions or very cold/inclement weather.



### **Fixed Price Contracts**

Some consumers may elect to lock a heating fuel price to have price predictability and guard against rising prices. If your dealer offers a contract, and you decide to lock in a price, please read the contract terms carefully and understand all parts of the contract before signing. Fixed-price contracts between a customer and dealer are binding once signed.



## **Emergency Fuel Assistance**

If you are very low on fuel, and can't afford to fill your tank, you may qualify for an emergency delivery. Emergency funds are available at non-profits, churches, municipalities, and other organizations. Call 2-1-1, or contact the [Community Action Agency](#) in your area for more information.

# WINTER ENERGY RESOURCES

**Programs are available to help income eligible households with energy costs.  
To learn more, call (207) 626-4600**

## **Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)**

MaineHousing's Home Energy Assistance Program (commonly called LIHEAP or HEAP Fuel Assistance) provides benefits for low-moderate income homeowners and renters to help pay heating costs. The funds are distributed throughout Maine by nine (9) Community Action Agencies, in most cases directly to the fuel vendors. The program is not intended to pay for all heating costs, but to assist in paying the heating bills. **Phone: (207) 626-4600**

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## **Weatherization Assistance Program**

MaineHousing's Weatherization Assistance Program provides grants to income eligible homeowners and renters to reduce energy costs by improving home energy efficiency. MaineHousing offers this program to consumers through Community Action Agencies, who screen people for eligibility as part of the HEAP application process. **Phone: (207) 626-4600**

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## **Low Income Assistance Program**

LIAP helps HEAP eligible households and renters with their electric utility bills and has been expanded this year by the Public Utilities Commission. Community Action Agencies accept customer applications for LIAP as part of the HEAP application process. **Phone: (207) 626-4600**

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## **Natural Gas Customer Discounts**

If you are a customer of Unitil, Bangor Gas, or Maine Natural Gas receiving service under the residential heating and non-heating rates, you may be eligible to receive a 30% discount on your delivery and gas supply rates.

The discount applies to any customer identified by the Maine State Housing Authority (MaineHousing) as eligible for LIHEAP. Once enrolled, customers will receive the discount for 12 consecutive months. You should call your gas utility to enroll.

## **Energy Efficiency Investments**

Numerous financial incentives and low-cost financing options exist to help consumers and businesses update heating systems and improve energy efficiency to reduce energy usage. Most programs are administered by Efficiency Maine and MaineHousing. Eligibility for MaineHousing programs is based on your income. Many Efficiency Maine programs allow you to first arrange improvements with a contractor, then apply for a rebate.

**[maine.gov/energy](http://maine.gov/energy)**

## Electricity Bill Assistance

Find programs and support for managing your electricity bill through the Maine Public Utilities Commission's online resource guide, [MaineElectricHelp.com](http://MaineElectricHelp.com)

Central Maine Power Co. and Versant Power each operate an Arrearage Management Program that assists eligible low-income residential customers who are in arrears on their electricity bills.

Customers who are eligible for LIHEAP and have an arrearage of \$500 or more that is at least 90 days old are eligible to participate in the program.

Optional electricity rates are available for customers of Central Maine Power and Versant Power that may save you money if you heat with electricity, such as a heat pump. To learn more, contact your electric utility.

Participating customers will have 1/12 of their arrearage amount, up to a maximum of \$300, forgiven every month that they pay their current bill on time. To enroll in an AMP, customers should contact either their local Community Action Agency or their utility.

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## Central Heating Improvement Program

CHIP, offered through MaineHousing, provides grants to repair or replace central heating systems that serve low-income households. **Phone: (207) 626-4600**

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## MaineHousing's Heat Pump Program

MaineHousing's heat pump program pays for the cost and installation of a heat pump for eligible Maine homeowners. Heat pumps are a popular and efficient tool to help heat homes in cold climates. They can help save on heating costs if used in the correct way. **Phone: (207) 626-4600**

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## MEMA's Alternative Heat Source Safety Guide

During a power outage, or when one source of fuel such as propane or heating oil is in short supply, we may turn to another way to heat our homes. There are a number of safety considerations when you are using an alternate heat source.

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## DIY Energy Efficiency Ideas

Leaky windows or ducts, old appliances, or inefficient heating and cooling systems can cost families money during winter heating seasons. The Energy Saver Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Savings Projects from the U.S. Department of Energy offers easy, step-by-step instructions to home energy efficiency improvements that will save you energy and money.

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# ENERGY ASSISTANCE AGENCIES

## Governor's Energy Office (GEO)

The GEO conducts a weekly survey of heating fuel prices, obtained from fuel retailers statewide. This survey provides the current Maine cash prices, in dollars, rounded to the nearest penny. This site also contains to assist consumers in obtaining the best propane price for their household and location, a comparison of heating fuel prices (e.g., cord wood, natural gas, wood pellets, heating oil, etc.), and monthly heating fuel price trends.

### Contacts:

Lisa Smith (Senior Planner), [lisa.j.smith@maine.gov](mailto:lisa.j.smith@maine.gov), (207) 557-4439

Ross Anthony (Buildings and Energy Efficiency Analyst), [ross.anthony@maine.gov](mailto:ross.anthony@maine.gov), (207) 629-8449

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## MaineHousing

The Maine State Housing Authority (MaineHousing) is an independent authority that addresses problems of unsafe, unsuitable, overcrowded, and unaffordable housing. Working with Community Action Agencies around the state, MaineHousing administers home heating assistance and weatherization programs for Maine people to stay warm during the winter. **Phone: (800) 452-4668**

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## Public Utilities Commission (PUC)

The Maine Public Utilities Commission (PUC) is the state's governing body that regulates the rates and services of Maine's utilities. **Phone: (800) 452-4699**

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## Efficiency Maine Trust (EMT)

Efficiency Maine is the independent administrator for programs to improve the efficiency of energy use and reduce greenhouse gases in Maine's homes. It does this primarily by delivering financial incentives on the purchase of high-efficiency equipment that help customers save electricity, natural gas and other fuels throughout the Maine economy. **Phone: (866) 376-2463**

**Residential:** Special incentives for low- and moderate-income households are available for weatherization, heat pumps, and heat pump water heaters.

**Commercial:** Programs exist for businesses of all sizes, municipalities, schools, multi-family buildings with five units or more, and Maine's largest energy consumers.

[LEARN MORE: RESIDENTIAL](#)

[LEARN MORE: COMMERCIAL](#)

## Office of the Public Advocate (OPA)

The Office of the Public Advocate's (OPA) primary responsibility is to represent the interests of Maine utility consumers. The OPA and Staff have been active for many years in proceedings concerning the availability and transmission of energy prices in Maine. **Phone: (207) 624-3687**

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