



Winter Heating Guide

Resources for Maine people to save money, stay warm, and access energy assistance

The [Maine Department of Energy Resources](#) (DOER) is the cabinet-level agency responsible for leading the state's energy policy, planning, programs, and development. DOER tracks [delivered fuel prices weekly](#) during the heating season and updates this Winter Heating Guide each year to share information, tips, and resources with Maine people to help them save money and stay warm all winter.

Scan to find this
sheet online:



STAY INFORMED AND SAVE MONEY

Track Heating Fuel Prices

DOER maintains a [heating fuel prices webpage](#) to help consumers make informed energy decisions. The page features an interactive dashboard that compares the operating costs of different heating systems and fuels. Prices are updated each week during the heating season.

Review Electricity Rates

View Maine electricity rates on the [DOER website](#). Higher-usage households may qualify for alternative rates. Contact your utility to inquire about available options. Many customers may also save by switching to time-of-use rates. The Central Maine Power (CMP) [online energy manager tool](#) can help you understand specific alternative rates and estimated savings based on historical usage.

Know Your Rights

Maine law protects consumers when it comes to winter heating fuel delivery. Specifically, oil dealers cannot refuse deliveries during the heating season for customers who owe them money, provided certain conditions are met. For details, review the Office of the Maine Attorney General's [Consumer Home Heating Rights](#).

Stay Safe During Emergencies

During a power outage, or when fuel such as propane or heating oil is in short supply, people may turn to alternative heating sources, such as generators and space heaters. Learn more about alternative heat source safety by visiting the [Maine Emergency Management Agency webpage](#).

Emergency Fuel Assistance

If you are very low on fuel and cannot 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 211 or contact your local [Community Action Agency](#) for more information.

PREPARE FOR THE HEATING SEASON



Inspect Your Home and Heating System

Check your heating system for worn parts before it gets cold to prevent breakdowns and maximize system efficiency.



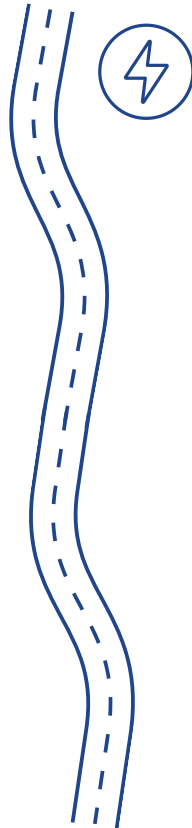
Schedule and Complete Maintenance and Tune-ups

Service your heating system each year to ensure safe and efficient operation. Schedule a routine cleaning for boilers and furnaces, or a chimney cleaning for wood, pellet, and fuel-burning systems. Keep any heat pumps cleaned and maintained for optimal performance.



Finalize Your Fuel Plan

If you get your fuel delivered, ask your heating fuel provider about automatic delivery where they can monitor your fuel levels so you do not accidentally run out. You may choose to enter into a fixed-price contract, which can ensure predictability and guard against rising prices. Be sure to read the contract carefully and understand all terms, as deals are binding once signed.



Make Your Home More Energy Efficient

Various incentives and low-cost financing options can help Maine residents and businesses reduce energy costs and improve indoor comfort through weatherization. Learn more about available weatherization incentives by visiting [Efficiency Maine](#) and [MaineHousing](#).

Heat pumps are the most efficient way to heat and cool a building. Multiple incentives exist to reduce the cost of installing a heat pump for households in Maine at all income levels. Learn more about heat pump incentives from [Efficiency Maine](#).

OTHER HELPFUL RESOURCES

Heat Pumps: Modern heat pumps are designed to run continuously and efficiently all winter long, even in sub-zero temperatures. If you have a heat pump, set it and forget it for maximum savings. Review Efficiency Maine's [Heat Pump User Tips](#) for more information.

Propane: Read DOER's [Propane Consumer Guide \(PDF\)](#), which includes information on propane pricing, changing suppliers, and potential start-up and closing fees.

Firewood: Review the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry's (DACF) [Firewood Guide](#). DACF hosts an online [directory of Maine wood banks](#). Wood banks provide free access to firewood to those who need assistance heating their home with wood.

ACCESS ENERGY ASSISTANCE

Step 1: See if you qualify for the Home Energy Assistance Program

The **Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)**, provides funds to qualified homeowners and renters to help offset heating costs. To check eligibility or enroll, visit [MaineHousing's HEAP page](#). HEAP-eligible Maine residents automatically qualify for a variety of other assistance programs detailed below.

Step 2: Review Other Assistance Programs

- The **Low-Income Assistance Program (LIAP)**, also referred to as the Electricity Lifeline Program (ELP), helps offset electric utility bills for low-income homeowners and renters. Electric utility customers who already participate in a Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) program (ex. SNAP, TANF, MaineCare) will be automatically enrolled. Residents who do not participate in a DHHS program can apply for the LIAP through their local [Community Action Agency](#).
- MaineHousing's **Weatherization Program** provides grants to low-income homeowners and renters to reduce energy costs by improving home energy efficiency through insulation and air sealing. This program is available through Community Action Agencies. For more information, visit [MaineHousing](#).
- MaineHousing's **Central Heating Improvement Program (CHIP)** provides grants to repair or replace central heating systems that serve low-income households. Limited benefits may also be available for rental properties occupied by HEAP-eligible tenants.
- The **Energy Crisis Intervention Program (ECIP)** provides emergency fuel assistance to HEAP-eligible households. A household may be eligible for up to \$500 in emergency funds to avert an energy crisis beginning after November 1. Contact your local [Community Action Agency](#) to learn more, check eligibility, and apply.
- If you are a HEAP-eligible natural gas customer receiving service under residential heating and non-heating rates, you may be eligible to receive a **30% discount on your delivery and gas supply rates**. Once enrolled, the discount is available for 12 consecutive months. Call your gas utility to enroll.
- If you have past due electricity bills, CMP and Versant Power each operate an **Arrearage Management Program (AMP)** for eligible low-income residential customers. Customers who are eligible for HEAP and have a past-due balance of \$500 or more that is at least 90 days old are eligible to participate in the program. Participating customers will have 1/12 of their past-due amount, up to \$300, forgiven each month that they pay their current bill on time. To enroll in an AMP, contact either your local [Community Action Agency](#) or your utility.
- Find other programs and support for managing your electricity bill through the Maine Public Utilities Commission's [online resource guide](#), available at [MaineElectricHelp.com](#).

EFFICIENCY MAINE PROGRAMS

Efficiency Maine offers a variety of incentives and rebates for home efficiency upgrades, as well as loans to help income-eligible Maine homeowners pay for incentive-eligible upgrades.

Call **866-376-2463** or visit [Efficiency Maine](https://www.efficiencymaine.org) to learn more.

Residential Home Energy Loans

Efficiency Maine offers home energy loans to help income-eligible Maine homeowners pay for qualifying energy upgrades, including equipment and upgrades associated with heat pumps, insulation, and air sealing. Learn more and calculate estimated monthly payments by visiting [Efficiency Maine Home Energy Loans](https://www.efficiencymaine.org/home-energy-loans).

Residential Rebates and Incentives

[Financial incentives](#) for households are available for [insulation](#), [heat pumps](#), [heat pump water heaters](#), and more. Enhanced incentives are available for income-eligible households. For low- and moderate-income people living in single-wide mobile homes, incentives for new ducted heat pump systems are available through Efficiency Maine's [Mobile Home Initiative](#).

Non-Residential Programs

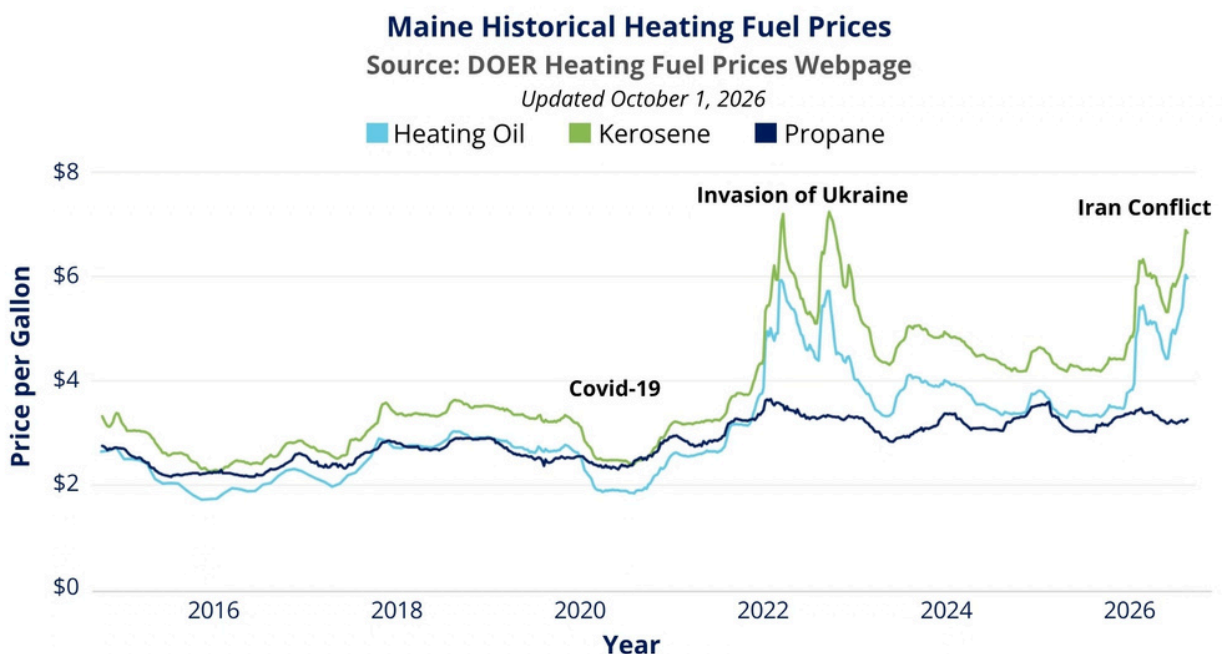
Efficiency Maine also offers [non-residential energy efficiency initiatives](#) for commercial, industrial, municipal, educational, or multifamily (i.e., three or more units) customers.

Find a Registered Vendor

If you are looking to make home efficiency upgrades utilizing a program through Efficiency Maine, use their [registered vendor list](#) to contact installers and get quotes.

MAINE HEATING FUEL PRICES

Maine is the most heating oil reliant state in the country, with approximately half of all households using oil as their primary heat source. Most of that fuel is imported and subject to price swings driven by global events. Conflicts abroad have led to significant volatility in heating fuel prices, directly impacting Maine people.



MAINE DEPARTMENT OF
Energy Resources

maine.gov/energy