CONTACT YOUR UTILITY COMPANY

Your local utility company may have services that can help you manage your utility costs, including:

Level payment plans that even out the highs and lows so your monthly energy cost is more predictable.

Reduced Rate Program, which provides monthly gas/electric bill discounts to low-income households.

Family Electric Rate Assistance (FERA), a rate reduction program for large households of three or more people with low- to middle-income.

Additional discounts if someone in your household has medical needs that make your utility bills high.

Free installation of home energy efficiency measures.

For more information, contact your local utility company:

Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E)
(800) 743-5000

Southern California Gas (SoCalGas)
(800) 427-2200

San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E)
(800) 411-7343

Southwest Gas
(800) 443-8093

CONTACT US

The Department of Community Services and Development (CSD) administers the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), which assists low-income households with their heating needs, while helping protect the health and safety of the household.

Assistance is provided in the form of utility bill payments, energy crisis intervention, and home weatherization.

Priority for assistance is given to those households with the highest energy burden in relationship to household income, while taking into consideration vulnerable populations such as the elderly, disabled, and families with young children.

To learn more about these services or other energy saving tips and information, please visit our website at www.csd.ca.gov or contact CSD at (866) 675-6623.

California Department of
Community Services and Development
P.O. Box 1947
Sacramento, CA 95814-1947
www.csd.ca.gov

(12/05)

WARNING:

Are your heating bills going through the roof?

California Department of
Community Services
and Development

(866) 675-6623
www.csd.ca.gov

WINTER HEATING CRISIS

Winter heating bills across the nation will significantly increase for all fuel types (natural gas, propane, and heating oil) compared to last year. These increases are due in part to high demand, high crude oil prices, and the disruption of much of the nation's overall supply caused by the recent hurricanes.

This means that all Californians should expect increases of 20%-55% in their natural gas and propane bills this winter, depending on weather conditions, local utility companies, size and efficiency of individual homes, heating equipment, and thermostat settings. If it turns out to be a colder winter than last year, costs may be even higher.

The **best** way to combat heating bill increases is by conservation. By using less energy and keeping your home properly sealed, you can help keep your energy bills manageable this winter.

For more information on conservation tips and programs that are available to assist you, please contact your local utility company or the California Department of Community Services and Development at 1-866-675-6623 or www.csd.ca.gov.

NO-COST ENERGY SAVING TIPS

Turn down your thermostat to 68 degrees or lower during the day and evening (health permitting) and to 55 degrees or off at night or when away from home. Wear layers of loose-fitting clothes to trap body heat, such as thermal underwear, sweaters, sweatshirts, sweatpants, and socks.

Set your water heater to the "normal" setting or 120°, unless your dishwasher requires a higher setting.

Open drapes to let the sun heat your home during the day and close them at night to help insulate.

Close off unused rooms and the vents that heat those rooms.

Keep warm-air registers, baseboard heaters, and radiators clean and make sure they're not blocked by furniture, carpeting, or drapes.

Move furniture around so you are sitting near interior walls instead of exterior walls and windows.

Close your fireplace damper tightly when not in use.

Take shorter showers.

Wash only full loads in your dishwasher and clothes washer.

Use cold water when washing clothes.

LOW-COST ENERGY SAVING TIPS

Clean or replace furnace filters once a month.

Install weather-stripping or caulk to leaky doors and windows.

Install gaskets behind outlet covers.

Add plastic sheeting to your windows or purchase plastic window covering kits or interior storm window kits.

Install a programmable thermostat.

Install low flow showerheads and faucets.

Wrap your hot water tank with jacket insulation. Be sure to leave the air intake vent uncovered when insulating a gas water heater.

Insulate the water pipes leading from your hot water heater.

HEALTH & SAFETY TIPS

Adequate home heating is a necessity of life. The inability to heat your home adequately can put household members at risk. Health and safety risks include hypothermia and carbon monoxide poisoning and the increased possibility of fire.

You can prevent the loss of life and property by identifying potential hazards and following these safety tips:

Install smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in your home.

Provide proper venting systems for all heating equipment.

Never use your range or oven to heat your home or use a BBQ in your home or garage.

Place space heaters on level, hard and nonflammable surfaces, not on rugs or carpets.

Keep space heaters at least three feet from bedding, drapes, furniture, and other flammable materials.

Never leave a space heater on when you go to sleep or leave the area.

Watch children and pets closely in rooms with heating equipment.

Always use generators outdoors and away from doors, windows, and vents.