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PSEG Long Island Encourages Eligible Customers to Take Advantage of Financial Assistance

Electric service provider continues to work to help those struggling with bills amid natural gas price volatility

(UNIONDALE, N.Y. — March 24, 2022) Increased global demand and lagging production are driving up energy prices worldwide and abnormally cold winter temperatures across the United States have increased regional demand for natural gas, a volatile commodity used to generate electricity. PSEG Long Island understands the heightened financial pressures this may place on households, and encourages customers to take advantage of programs that exist to help people struggling with utility bills. There are also many ways customers can lower their bills by using less electricity.

“Like people all over New York State, we know our customers have felt an impact from the unusually high commodity prices of natural gas this winter and that, for some, it compounds financial pressures they are already under due to the pandemic,” said Rick Walden, PSEG Long Island’s vice president of Customer Services. “We have been working hard for many months to reach our customers in arrears and let them know we are here to help. We want our customers to know that financial help is available, and to give them tools to help maintain their household budget while these market conditions persist.”

Like many electricity providers around the nation, electricity for PSEG Long Island’s customers is purchased from a variety of different generation sources, including natural gas-burning power plants. The increase in natural gas prices has driven up the costs to generate electricity.

In accordance with a [policy](#) established by the LIPA Board of Trustees, a hedging program is in place to reduce the volatility of power supply costs for customers. Hedging provides price stability in case of unforeseen commodity market and weather events that drive up prices.

PSEG Long Island also continues to partner with social service agencies and perform outreach to assist customers who have fallen behind on their bills. For the past five months, field representatives have been making customer visits, connecting one-on-one with residential customers who have past-due account balances to discuss payment methods, accept a payment or work out a payment plan to pay down balances over time. PSEG Long Island representatives work with customers to find the best solution for the household. Representatives have visited with more than 20,000 residential customers and 10,000 of those customers have entered into deferred payment agreements.

Assistance available to those struggling with bills

PSEG Long Island wants to work with any customer struggling to pay their bills and help them find a solution. The company encourages anyone in arrears to call 1-800-490-0025 so a representative can help them develop a deferred payment agreement tailored to the needs of their household.

Additionally, PSEG Long Island wants to make customers aware of the financial assistance programs offered by New York State:

- **The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)** can provide up to \$751 to eligible homeowners and renters depending on income, household size and how they heat their home. A family of four may have a maximum gross monthly income of \$5,249, or an annual gross income of \$62,983, and still qualify for benefits. This benefit is open until April 29, 2022 and may be extended if funding remains available. For more information, visit <https://mybenefits.ny.gov/>.
- **The Residential Arrears Supplement (RAS) to HEAP.** New York State is also providing \$250 million in additional federal funding to help low-income households pay heating utility arrears up to \$10,000 per household. So far, almost 115,000 RAS benefits have been issued, and \$183 million in arrears have been paid off for eligible households. At the beginning of March, \$67 million in funding was still available for customers to apply for and, if eligible, secure for their PSEG Long Island and/or their National Grid accounts. More information is available at <https://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/#regular-arrears-supplement-benefit>
- **Emergency HEAP.** \$90 million in federal funding through Emergency HEAP was made available to help low- and middle-income New Yorkers avoid having their home heating disconnected or exhausting their heating source amid fuel price increases. At the beginning of March, \$58 million in funding remained available. There are two Emergency HEAP benefits this year. If you are experiencing an emergency, you can apply for this benefit by reaching out to your local Department of Social Services location, which you can find here: <https://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/contacts/>
- For low-income households facing no-heat situations, the State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance is also accepting applications for its **heating equipment repair or replacement benefit**. Eligible homeowners can now apply for up to \$3,000 for repair or \$6,500 for replacement of a furnace, boiler or other direct heating equipment necessary to keep the household's primary heating source working. Additionally, eligible households can receive energy efficiency services, which includes the cleaning of primary heating equipment to allow for its safe and efficient operation. You can apply for this benefit by reaching out to your local Department of Social Services location, which you can find here: <https://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/contacts/>

Customers who apply for and receive one of these state or federal benefits are automatically placed on PSEG Long Island's Household Assistance rate and the residential energy affordability program providing energy efficiency measures and suggestions to help lower consumption.

How customers can lower their bills

The most effective thing customers can do to lower their bills is to use electricity more efficiently. Here are some helpful tips:

- **Replace inefficient incandescent light bulbs with LED bulbs** since, according to the U.S. Department of Energy, lighting accounts for about 15% of the electricity used in the home, and LEDs use approximately 75% less energy and last up to 25 times longer.
- **Reduce “phantom power”** by using energy efficient power strips or unplugging electronic devices when they’re not in use. Items plugged into outlets use electricity even when they’re turned off.
- **Use a programmable thermostat** to automatically manage your home’s heating and cooling needs. ENERGY STAR estimates that properly used programmable thermostats can save about \$180 a year. In addition, **PSEG Long Island offers rebates on smart thermostats.**
- **Lower your thermostat by just one degree** to potentially reduce your heating bill up to 3%. Lowering it two degrees during the day and five to 10 degrees at night will save even more.
- **Install timers and motion detectors** to automatically manage indoor and outdoor lighting and help ensure lights are not on when they’re not needed.
- **Ceiling fans** can be used to save energy in winter. Setting a fan to rotate clockwise on low pulls cool air toward the ceiling, pushing warm air down into a room.
- **Seal windows and doorframes** with weather stripping or caulk, and remove or cover window air conditioners to help to prevent drafts that waste energy and money.
- **Install a high efficiency air source heat pump** (ASHP) to lower energy usage, save money and provide greater comfort in cold and hot months. **Robust rebates are available** from PSEG Long Island’s Home Comfort Program for ducted ASHP units, ducted geothermal heat pumps and ductless mini split systems. Additionally, PSEG Long Island’s Home Comfort PLUS program offers enhanced rebates for customers who meet certain income qualifications.
- **More money-saving ideas** and rebate information are available at <https://www.pseqliny.com/saveenergyandmoney/energystarrebates>.

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PSEG Long Island

PSEG Long Island operates the Long Island Power Authority’s transmission and distribution system under a long-term contract. PSEG Long Island is a subsidiary of Public Service Enterprise Group Inc. (PSEG) (NYSE:PEG), a publicly traded diversified energy company.

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