

## **Emergency Housing and Utility Assistance**

**GRACE (Grand Rapids Area Center for Ecumenism)** - This agency is an independent, non-profit organization in the Grand Rapids area. Financial assistance programs, and other aid from GRACE, include offering assistance to working poor, low-income AIDS patients, and GRACE is also involved in raising money to fight hunger locally and globally, and promote social services in Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503-3210. Dial (616) 774-2042

**ACSET, or Area Community Services**, will provide rent support to migrant workers only that meet all qualifications in place. Grants may be used as a form of financial aid, and the funds can be used to pay for rent, utilities, electric, housing, or other bills and expenses. In addition, as part of this outreach effort and financial aid that is offered, volunteers are assigned as mentors to the low income individuals who offer support and encouragement to those seeking financial assistance with rent and housing expenses. Location 121 Franklin Street SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49507, call (616) 336-4004.

**Hispanic Center of Western Michigan:** The non-profit helps Hispanics in the broader community with housing and other needs. The Hispanic Center of Western Michigan provides employment services, housing assistance, information on rent assistance, as well as information and referrals to local charities and also federal and Michigan government assistance programs. Address - 730 Grandville Ave. SW, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503, telephone (616) 742-0200

**Inner City Christian Federation:** Helps develop stable communities and families. The three main programs and services focus on offering emergency housing, rent assistance, long-term affordable rental housing and home ownership opportunities education services. This may also include funds for a security deposit. ICCF strives to meet families where they are in their housing needs and help them avoid evictions. Location - 816 Madison Ave. SE Grand Rapids, MI 49507. Phone - (616) 336-9333

**North Kent Community Services** - The non-profit provides limited amounts of financial assistance for individuals who are having difficulties paying their rent, housing or utility bills. Location is 10075 Northland Drive, Rockford, Michigan 49341, phone (616) 866-3478

**Kent County and Grand Rapids Salvation Army** - The non-profit offers programs and services that can assist families and individuals in need of emergency rent help, temporary housing, can provide support to families in trouble with paying bills or facing eviction, and ensure that the children of the community are provided for.

Resources offered by the Salvation Army include job counseling, mortgage assistance, family development and parenting classes. As resources allow, there are a variety of other shelter and emergency rent and housing programs. Address is 1215 East Fulton, Grand Rapids, MI 49503, phone (616) 459-3433

**Grand Rapids Urban League** - Call 616-245-2007. If you have an eviction notice, the agency may be able to provide some forms of funding to help with up to one month's worth of rent. There is also on-site shelter and other aid offered too.

**All County Churches Emergency Support System** - Over 300 churches across Kent County Michigan partner together to provide assistance, including rent, housing, and other aid, whether monetary or non-financial. Some low-income families will be issued a loan as a form of emergency rental assistance from the churches. Grand Rapids, Michigan based.

**The Magi** is the name of an agency that can help deal with housing and other financial issues. They help in the distribution of money or goods to help the poor pay for food, rent, and help people find jobs, among other things. They can also direct individuals to state of Michigan and federal government assistance, such as Michigan section 8 housing. Byron Center, MI, dial (616) 272-4209

**Kent County Coalition to End Homelessness**, which is based in Grand Rapids, MI and can be reached at (616) 632-7400, runs the federal government-funded Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program. It can pay rent up to 18 months in certain cases.

**Community Rebuilders** - Runs a housing/rent assistance program, that is funded by HUD. The primary goal is to help low-income families and individuals who are homeless or on the verge of being evicted retain existing homes, or move directly into low-income housing if no other options. Any rental assistance paid is only on a short-term basis with emphasis placed on supportive services to promote participant's increase in income and self-sufficiency over the long term. Referrals to the Community Rebuilders program come from the Salvation Army Housing Assessment Program. Office is located at 1120 Monroe Avenue NW Suite 220, Grand Rapids, MI 49503. Dial (616) 454-5840

**Kent County Department Of Veterans' Affairs** - Apply for limited amounts of financial assistance for expenses, including rent and housing. Assistance is offered for honorably discharged wartime veterans and their widows/widowers or dependents. Get up to one month's rent payment to prevent a court-ordered eviction, and clients can apply for grants and other support. Address 82 Ionia Avenue NW Suite 380, Grand Rapids, MI 49503, (616) 632-5722

**Cedar Springs CAP** - Programs include assistance in prevention an eviction and mortgage/foreclosure assistance. Funds can pay for up to one month of rent or even a security deposit. Clients either must be facing eviction, on the verge of it, or behind on their housing payments. 4388 14 Mile Road, Rockford, MI 49341. Call (616) 863-9166.

**Western Michigan Salvation Army** - Various social services are administered, and for the most recent programs the address is [sasocialservices.org](http://sasocialservices.org). That link will indicate whether any rent or other housing assistance may be available.

There are also two centers in the area, including 1215 E. Fulton Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503, phone: 616-459-9468. Another Salvation Army location is at 1120 Monroe NW Grand Rapids, MI 49503. Dial 616-454-5840.

## **Salvation Army (the) -- Western Michigan/northern Indiana Division**

**2 Miles Away**

1120 Monroe Avenue NW Suite 250  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

### **Services:**

Community Shelters for Housing Issues and Homelessness Issues, Home Rental Listings, Housing Search Assistance, Rent Payment Assistance for Housing Issues and Homelessness Issues, Rental Deposit Assistance for Housing Issues and Homelessness Issues, Utility Deposit Assistance for Housing Issues and Homelessness Issues

### **Hours:**

8:30am-4:30pm Mon-Fri (Thursday only until 3:30pm); closed 12noon-1pm for lunch

### **Eligibility:**

HAP assists individuals and households who are homeless, as well as individuals and households who are renting and may be at risk of homelessness.

### **Documents To Bring:**

Basic ID, eviction notice, and any other documents identified at the assessment.

## **Kent County Department Of Veterans' Affairs**

**2 Miles Away**

82 Ionia Avenue NW Suite 380  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
(616) 632-5722

### **Services:**

Electric Service Payment Assistance, Food Vouchers, Gas Service Payment Assistance, Heating Fuel Payment Assistance, Rent Payment Assistance, Water Service Payment Assistance

### **Hours:**

8am-5pm Mon-Fri

### **Eligibility:**

Veterans (and dependents) with honorable discharge and wartime service (some exceptions).

**Documents To Bring:**

DD 214. Must also have shut-off or eviction notice, and proof of income.

## **Grand Rapids Urban League**

**2 Miles Away**

745 Eastern Avenue SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
(616) 245-2207

[Visit Website](#)

**Services:**

Mortgage Payment Assistance, Rent Payment Assistance

**Hours:**

9am-4:30pm Mon-Thu

**Eligibility:**

Be in arrears on rent or mortgage, or homeless, or in danger of becoming so.

**Documents To Bring:**

Call for details

The finest eloquence is that which gets things done.  
-- David Lloyd George

## **Community Rebuilders**

**2 Miles Away**

1120 Monroe Avenue NW Suite 220  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
(616) 454-5840

[Visit Website](#)

**Services:**

Mortgage Payment Assistance, Rent Payment Assistance

**Landlord/tenant dispute resolution and homeless assistance program** is available for all people who are at risk of an eviction, or for those who are currently without a home or apartment. A referral service functions as the centralized intake in the community for all persons behind on their rent or utilities or those who are at the verge of eviction.

**Work with a a counselor, for free, to create a plan to prevent homelessness or a plan for rapid re-housing. Learn about eviction prevention, rent assistance programs that may be available, shelters, and other emergency housing services and aid. They may be able to help with first months rent, security deposits, and rent arrearags. Telephone(616) 336-4001**

**Referral hotline** provides **homeless prevention** to struggling families. A coalition in Kent County coordinates short term rent or energy bill help using HUD grants, they operate shelters, and other housing solutions. The HAP line can provide more information on where to apply at for money for rent and other expenses. More on eviction prevention in Kent County.

**DHS in Kent County**, which can be called at (616) 248-1000, can be contacted in a crisis. The government agency can direct families to rent programs, loans, and other assistance. They can help residents such as the disabled or seniors with accessing low income apartments as well.

**Legal Aid of Kent County** can address housing issues. They can provide advice on discrimination or help tenants with a pay or quit notice from their landlord. Other disputes over unpaid rent or the collection of deposits can be handled as well as part of free legal assistance provided. Telephone - (616) 774-0672.

**Senior Neighbors** - FEMA funds can be used to pay rent and mortgage expenses. Assistance is offered for first month's rent for older adults who are homeless or in the process of being evicted from their home or apartment. Address is 820 Monroe Avenue NW Suite 460, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503-1442. Call (616) 459-6019

## **Low Income Housing Help**

**1 Miles Away**

Grand Rapids , MI

### **Services:**

Low Income Housing Help is used to help find affordable housing to people in need. LIHH by FindFamilyResources helped families in need receive over 2 billion dollars last year through Section 8.

### **Additional Services:**

Rental assistance.

## **Steepletown Neighborhood Services**

**2 Miles Away**

Steepletown Center  
Grand Rapids, MI 49504  
(616) 451-4215

### **Services:**

Adult Mentoring Programs, Electric Service Payment Assistance, Gas Service Payment Assistance, Personal Financial Counseling, Rent Payment Assistance, Water Service Payment Assistance

### **Hours:**

8am-5pm Mon-Thu

### **Eligibility:**

Residents of the lower northwest side of Grand Rapids:

### **Documents To Bring:**

Eviction notice, utility shut-off notice, utility bill, proof of income, decision from DHS

## **Senior Neighbors**

**2 Miles Away**

820 Monroe Avenue NW Suite 460  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
(616) 233-0281

### **Services:**

Homeless Financial Assistance Programs for Older Adults, Rent Payment Assistance for Older Adults, Rental Deposit Assistance for Older Adults

### **Hours:**

8:30am-5pm Mon-Fri

### **Eligibility:**

Older adults 60 or older

### **Documents To Bring:**

Letters from landlords that must include amount of first month's rent.

**Hours:**

9am-12noon, 1pm-4pm Mon-Thu

**Eligibility:**

Low income, living with HIV/AIDS, contact with medical services

**Documents To Bring:**

Proof of HIV/AIDS, proof of income

There's no scarcity of opportunity to make a living at what you love. There is only a scarcity of resolve to make it happen.

-- Wayne Dyer

## **Acset -- Latin American Services**

**2 Miles Away**

121 Franklin Street SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49507  
(616) 336-4000

[Visit Website](#)

**Services:**

Electric Service Payment Assistance, Food Vouchers, Gas Service Payment Assistance, General Clothing Provision, Heating Fuel Payment Assistance, Language Interpretation, Rent Payment Assistance, Specialized Information and Referral, Water Service Payment Assistance

**Hours:**

8am-6pm Mon-Fri

**Eligibility:**

Migrant worker

**Documents To Bring:**

Identification, Social Security Card, proof of income

There is no way to prosperity, prosperity is the way.

-- Wayne Dyer

## **Michigan Department Of Human Services -- Kent County District Office**

**2 Miles Away**

121 Franklin Street SE Suite 200  
Grand Rapids, MI 49507  
(855) 275-6424

[Visit Website](#)

### **Services:**

Electric Service Payment Assistance, Gas Service Payment Assistance, Heating Fuel Payment Assistance, Specialized Information and Referral

### **Hours:**

7:30am-5pm Mon-Fri

### **Eligibility:**

Anyone may call for information

### **Documents To Bring:**

Call for details.

Men do not die from overwork. They die from dissipation and worry.  
-- Charles Evans Hughes

## **Cherry Street Health Services**

**2 Miles Away**

100 Cherry Southeast  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
(616) 965-8200

[Visit Website](#)

### **Services:**

Electric Service Payment Assistance for Breast Cancer, Gas Money for Breast Cancer, Gas Service Payment Assistance for Breast Cancer, Heating Fuel Payment Assistance for Breast Cancer, Mortgage Payment Assistance for Breast Cancer, Rent Payment Assistance for Breast Cancer

### **Eligibility:**

Resident of Montcalm County or Northern Kent County currently undergoing treatment such as surgery, radiation or chemotherapy for breast cancer.



**Documents To Bring:**

Proof of residence

He who knows he has enough is rich.

-- Lao-Tzu

## **American Red Cross Of Greater Grand Rapids**

**2 Miles Away**

1050 Northeast Fuller Avenue

Grand Rapids, MI 49503

(616) 456-8661

[Visit Website](#)

**Services:**

Automobile Payment Assistance for Active Military, Automotive Repair for Active Military, Electric Service Payment Assistance for Active Military, Gas Service Payment Assistance for Active Military, Heating Fuel Payment Assistance for Active Military, Mortgage Payment Assistance for Active Military, Rent Payment Assistance for Active Military, Water Service Payment Assistance for Active Military

**Hours:**

Monday through Friday

**Eligibility:**

Active Duty or Retired (20+ years of service), veterans and dependents of Veterans.

**Documents To Bring:**

Varies based on need, Due to the types of documentation required for each service, it is not recommended that clients walk-in to receive services, but should call ahead to make an appointment and receive guidance on the documentation required.

## **North Kent Community Services**

**13 Miles Away**

10075 Northland Drive NE

Rockford, MI 49341

(616) 866-3478

[Visit Website](#)

**Services:**

Electric Service Payment Assistance, Gas Service Payment Assistance, Heating Fuel Payment Assistance, Rent Payment Assistance

**Hours:**

8am-6pm Mon-Thu

**Eligibility:**

Must be a registered client of NKCS.

**Documents To Bring:**

Utility bill: shut off notice; Shelter eviction notice: decision from DHS on this matter is needed in most cases.

If you commit a crime, you're guilty.

-- Rush Limbaugh

**Area Community Service  
Employment And Training Council --  
Acset**

**13 Miles Away**

4388 14 Mile Road  
Rockford, MI 49341  
(616) 863-9166

[Visit Website](#)

**Services:**

Electric Service Payment Assistance, Gas Service Payment Assistance, Heating Fuel Payment Assistance, Mortgage Payment Assistance, Rent Payment Assistance, Rental Deposit Assistance, Water Service Payment Assistance

**Hours:**

Varies according to availability of funds. Call the centers for screening appointment.

**Eligibility:**

Client Requirements:

Two rules to follow: 1) Don't sweat the small stuff. 2) It's all small stuff.

-- Robert Elliot

**Michigan Department Of Human  
Services -- Kent County District  
Officemichigan Department Of Human  
Services -- Sparta Center**

**13 Miles Away**

536 South State  
Sparta, MI 49345  
(616) 887-5700

[Visit Website](#)

**Services:**

Burial/Cremation Expense Assistance, Electric Service Payment Assistance, Gas Service Payment Assistance, Heating Fuel Payment Assistance, Home Rehabilitation Grants, Mortgage Payment Assistance, Moving Expense Assistance, Property Tax Payment Assistance, Rent Payment Assistance, Water Service Payment Assistance

**Hours:**

7:30am-11am Mon Tue Thu Fri - must apply in person

**Eligibility:**

Persons with urgent need, projected income and assets within next 30 days must not exceed standard. Court ordered eviction is required for rent assistance.

**Documents To Bring:**

See eligibility

Fear is that little darkroom where negatives are developed.  
-- Michael Pritchard

**Eightcap Inc**

**26 Miles Away**

904 Oak Drive  
Greenville, MI 48838  
(616) 754-9315

[Visit Website](#)

**Services:**

Electric Service Payment Assistance, Gas Service Payment Assistance, Heating Fuel Payment Assistance

**Hours:**

Tue Wed Thu 8am-4:30pm.

**Eligibility:**

Gratiot County resident.

**Documents To Bring:**

Proof of Income.

Consciously or unconsciously, every one of us does render some service or other. If we cultivate the habit of doing this service deliberately, our desire for service will steadily grow stronger and we will make not only our own happiness, but that of the world at large.

-- Mahatma Gandhi

## **Cherry Street Health Services**

**26 Miles Away**

306 Maplewood Drive  
Greenville, MI 48838  
(616) 225-9650

**Services:**

Electric Service Payment Assistance for Breast Cancer, Gas Money for Breast Cancer, Gas Service Payment Assistance for Breast Cancer, Heating Fuel Payment Assistance for Breast Cancer, Mortgage Payment Assistance for Breast Cancer, Rent Payment Assistance for Breast Cancer

**Hours:**

Medical & Behavioral Health Care:

**Eligibility:**

Resident of Montcalm County or Northern Kent County currently undergoing treatment such as surgery, radiation or chemotherapy for breast cancer.

**Documents To Bring:**

Proof of residence

Failure is the condiment that gives success its flavor.

-- Truman Capote

## **Ottawa County Community Action Agencyholland Office**

**26 Miles Away**

12251 James Street Suite 300  
Holland, MI 49424  
(616) 393-4433

[Visit Website](#)

### **Services:**

Electric Service Payment Assistance, Gas Service Payment Assistance, Heating Fuel Payment Assistance, Water Service Payment Assistance

### **Hours:**

Mon-Fri 8am-5pm

### **Eligibility:**

- Must provide a shut-off notice and proof of sustainable income

### **Documents To Bring:**

Shut off notice and proof of income

You can have anything you want-if you want it badly enough. You can be anything you want to be, have anything you desire, accomplish anything you set out to accomplish-if you will hold to that desire with singleness of purpose.

-- Robert Collier

## **Michigan Department Of Human Servicesmichigan Department Of Human Services -- Ottawa County**

**26 Miles Away**

12185 James Street Suite 200  
Holland, MI 49424  
(616) 394-7200

[Visit Website](#)

### **Services:**

Electric Service Payment Assistance, Gas Service Payment Assistance, Heating Fuel Payment Assistance, Utility Deposit Assistance, Water Service Payment Assistance

**Hours:**

Mon-Fri 8am-5pm

**Eligibility:**

- Low income households with limited assets

**Documents To Bring:**

- Proof of residence

Poverty of course is no disgrace, but it is damned annoying.  
-- William Pitt

## Love Inc - Newaygo County

**26 Miles Away**

11 West 96th Street  
Grant, MI 49327  
(231) 652-4099

[Visit Website](#)

**Services:**

Electric Service Payment Assistance, Gas Service Payment Assistance, Heating Fuel Payment Assistance, Water Service Payment Assistance

**Hours:**

Mon-Thu 9am-3pm; Fri 10am-3pm

**Eligibility:**

- Residents of Newaygo County with a verified need

**Area Served:**

Newaygo County

**Documents To Bring:**

Call for information

There are three ingredients in the good life: yearning, learning, and earning.  
-- Christopher Morley

## **Ottawa County Community Action Agencygrand Haven Office**

**29 Miles Away**

1830-G 172nd  
Grand Haven, MI 49417  
(616) 393-4433

[Visit Website](#)

### **Services:**

Electric Service Payment Assistance, Gas Service Payment Assistance, Heating Fuel Payment Assistance, Water Service Payment Assistance

### **Hours:**

No set hours as CAA staff work at the Grand Haven office on an as needed basis. Please contact Holland office to schedule an appointment.

### **Eligibility:**

- Must provide a shut-off notice and proof of sustainable income

### **Documents To Bring:**

Shut off notice and proof of income

He who has put a good finish to his undertaking is said to have placed a golden crown to the whole.  
-- Eustachius

## **Michigan Department Of Human Services**

**30 Miles Away**

430 Barfield  
Hastings, MI 49058  
(269) 948-3200

[Visit Website](#)

### **Services:**

Electric Service Payment Assistance, Gas Service Payment Assistance, Heating Fuel Payment Assistance, Water Service Payment Assistance

### **Hours:**

Mon-Fri 7:30am-5pm

**Eligibility:**

\* Low income households with limited assets

**Documents To Bring:**

Proof of residence, proof of income (earned and unearned) for all permanent household members, proof of assets (cash on hand, checking/savings/credit union accounts, etc) birth certificates, Social Security cards for all permanent household members.

([http://www.needhelp-payingbills.com/html/heating\\_and\\_utility\\_liheap\\_cri.html](http://www.needhelp-payingbills.com/html/heating_and_utility_liheap_cri.html))

**Government utility bill assistance**

The **Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Block Grant** is funded by the Federal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and provides two basic types of services. Eligible low-income persons, via local governmental and nonprofit organizations, can receive financial assistance to offset the costs of heating and/or cooling dwellings and/or have their dwellings weatherized to make them more energy efficient.

Applications for the program are usually processed by community action agencies. These nonprofits also have information on many other resources that may be able to help with paying utility bills. Find how to get help with heating bills from assistance programs offered by your local utility companies, charities and local government.

**LIHEAP crisis programs** can be an option for low income families that are faced with an emergency such as a disconnection or that are very low on heating oil or fuel. Grants and financial assistance can be paid out directly to your energy company for your unpaid bill. The funds can be expedited to households that are faced with a shut off of their electric or utility service. Learn more.

The **Weatherization Assistance Program** will provide free energy conservation and weatherization services to those in need to help improve the energy efficiency of homes. Some services included are weatherstripping, wall and attic insulation, minor home repairs, and furnace tune ups. There may be other related energy saving measures that will help people lower their electric bills and save money. More on weatherization assistance.

The **Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)** will provide financial help to eligible households who need assistance paying bills. Applications are available for senior citizens and the disabled before others, and they receive priority to any funds. The resources provided will offset the costs of paying for the heating and/or cooling bills of dwellings.



**Regulations on Heating and Utility Disconnections** - Most states have laws that regulate when an utility company can disconnect a customers service. Typically they state that companies can't disconnect your power during the cold winter or hot summer months. Families with children often have additional laws protecting them, as well as if the customer has a medical need. Learn more on utility disconnection laws.

**Telephone and Internet** - Low income families can receive discounts on their monthly phone bills from Lifeline, free cellular phones, or even savings on their high speed cable Internet connection. Some of these services are combined with other electric bill programs as well, such as LIHEAP, so a customer will automatically be eligible for them. [Click here](#) telephone and internet programs.

**State Assistance Programs** - Many states offer additional assistance programs, in addition to LIHEAP, that can help you and your family with paying utility or heating bills. There may also be programs that will help you save energy by reducing your electric bills through energy saving methods, such as the installation of new appliances, free insulation, etc. [More.](#)

**Heating Repair Replacement Program (HARRP)** - This is another federal government funded program that is usually offered by your local community action agency. It may be called slightly different names in each state, but it works the same in most parts of the country. It is often used in conjunction with the Weatherization program. It can provide for the repair or replacement of heating units, appliances, furnaces, and other home upgrades. [Read more.](#)

**Free air conditioning units and window fans** are available during the summer months. The assistance is usually provided as part of LIHEAP or charities such as the Salvation Army provide them to low income families. The free AC units are often combined with emergency utility bill assistance to help keep a struggling family cool. Most of the systems are given to senior citizens, the disabled, or low income single mothers or parents. [Find details on free air conditioners.](#)

**Help to turn on electric** - Once a shut off has occurred, it can be difficult for customers to reconnect their utilities in a timely manner. This is especially true of very low income families with limited or no money available to them. There are assistance programs that households can use to turn on their power, whether it is lights, electric, or heat. [Find how to get help to turn on utilities.](#)

**Heating bill programs**

**Free and Discounted Home Heating Oil.** The Citizens Energy Oil Heat Program has delivered millions of gallons of discounted and free home heating oil to elderly households and those lower income households that are struggling. There is support for those living in poverty or impacted by an emergency, such as a job loss. More.

Another option is to use a **home heating oil buying network**. Companies that offer this service are in effect acting as a wholesale heating fuel oil buying club that provide individuals with lower priced heating oil. Read more.

**Winter Protection Programs and Plans** are seasonal resources that are generally offered during the colder winter months. Some states require that utility and natural gas companies offer these plans to all customers. Households that are facing a disconnection of their utilities or heating service, but that have a senior member, young child, or someone that is sick or disabled, may be protected from a shut off of their account as long as they enter into some sort of payment program. More winter protection plans.

### **Financial resources and weatherization services offered by utility companies**

**Utility Company Assistance Programs.** Most utility companies and energy providers located around the nation provide their customers with a large number of financial assistance programs. The resources range from cash grants to credits on an account for any bills in arrears and weatherization options. Get more information on energy assistance.

**Balanced Payment Plans** - These are offered by many utility companies as a way to help pay as well as manage your bills. These plans provide the customer a way of paying their electric bill that is a flat rate per month. So families can budget for the seasonal spikes in their heating or cooling costs.

It will ensure your utility bill, and the payments you need to make, do not dramatically increase during the winter or summer months. For example, if your annual electric bill is \$960 per year, you may pay a flat fee of \$80 per month, rather than paying a higher amount in the summer or winter.

**Energy Assistance Programs** - In addition to LIHEAP, there are numerous energy assistance programs at the local, state, and federal level. Programs are even offered by utility companies themselves. Continue.

**Air conditioning bills, fans, and summer help** - Many states, in particular those in the south and west, provide financial assistance during the summer for paying cooling and electric bills. Emergency cash assistance, grants, and more may be offered, such as free box fans or AC units. Read summer electric bill assistance.

**Home Energy Audit** - Many utility companies will offer these as a free service, or provide it for a very low fee. These audits will help a homeowner identify where your home needs to be improved or updated in order to help reduce your energy usage. If an audit identifies an area that

you can improve, some utility companies will even contribute towards the expense that is incurred to fix the home, if you meet their income criteria.

**Assistance with water bills** - American Water operates subsidiaries across the country. They offer their customers two different programs that can help them with paying their water bills. They include the H2O - Help to Others and the Low-Income Payment plan. Learn more on the options that you have. They also provide free audits that can reduce your usage.

## **Non-profit organizations that provide help**

**Community Action Agencies** - Almost 1,500 counties across the country have local, non-profit organizations known as Community Action Agencies. These organizations often administer as well as accept applications for various energy assistance programs, including LIHEAP. The agencies can also refer you to additional resources in your local area. Read more on how to get utility bill assistance from community action agencies.

**Dollar Energy Fund** - Several states, including WV, TN, PA, OH, MD, and VA participate in this program. It has been in existence for almost 30 years, and hundreds of thousands of people have received grants for paying their utility and heating bills. Read more.

**Free Legal Assistance**- Most states have non-profit law firms that can advise low to moderate income individuals, the elderly, and disabled on their legal rights when it comes to utility service disconnections. There is priority given to people with a medical condition or that are elderly. Lawyers can provide free legal advice and will do what they can to help the individual keep their power on. Read more.

**Operation Roundup** - An assistance program offered by many utility companies. They will provide cash grants to help pay utility, heating, and other bills. For example, you can even get help with rent, medical expenses, or food aid. More.

**Salvation Family Emergency Services** - Low families in a crisis can always turn to The Salvation Army for financial help or referrals. The Salvation Army Family Emergency Services addresses basic human need by providing a "safety net" for those who need help paying bills and have nowhere else to turn to. They will provide clothing, food, utility bill assistance and also counseling.

Case workers at the Family Emergency Services help prevent homelessness through crisis intervention. Since having your power shut off is one form of homelessness, the agency may be

able to help with this. Contact your local Chapter for more information. Find a listing of Salvation Army, Community Action Agencies and other non-profits in your area. [Click here.](#)

**The National Fuel Funds Network** - This is a nationwide, non-profit organization that is comprised of hundreds of community action agencies, utility companies, fuel banks, and other agencies. They are involved in raising money for charitable causes, advocating on behalf of the poor, and offering other help and guidance. All funds raised go towards helping families pay their electric and heating bills or paying for conservation measures. Read National Fuel Funds Network energy bill programs.

**Union Members Discounted Heating Oil** - If you are the member of a labor union, Union Plus offers a discount program for buying heating oil. It can also help provide natural gas or propane. Through the program provider, HEAT USA, the Union Plus Home Heating Oil Discount provides a discounted or free service contract. [Click here to read more.](#)