

Utility regulators provide winter forecast

The New York State Public Service Commission (PSC) expects New York's utilities to have an adequate supply of natural gas and electricity for the upcoming winter and recently provided a mixed forecast for energy costs that consumers can expect to see this winter.

The Commission expects the average customer that heats their home with natural gas to an approximate 4 percent decrease in supply costs versus last year. This decrease is due to lower gas supply prices this year versus the winter of 2022-2023, the Commission said.

By contrast, the PSC stated electric prices are expected to increase by approximately 3 percent this winter due to increased capacity costs.

The PSC also stated that actual costs could vary widely by region due to weather and usage. A colder than normal winter could cause usage to increase, which would impact customer bills.

Central Hudson hedges energy purchases to dampen market volatility on energy supply prices, however market forces continuously drive changes in energy prices. New York's utilities purchase electricity and natural gas on behalf of full-service customers on the energy market and does not mark up the price of energy supply. ✨

Home heating assistance grants available November 1

Qualified customers can now apply for Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) grants, a federally funded program that provides regular and emergency assistance to help pay heating and utility bills. HEAP grants are available through local Department of Social Services (DSS) offices, at Offices for the Aging and online at mybenefits.ny.gov.

"Inflationary pressures continue to have an impact on residents of the Hudson Valley — especially our most vulnerable neighbors — and we are pleased that additional assistance is available for those families in need," said Anthony Campagiorni, Senior Vice President of Customer Services and Gas Operations. "We encourage all customers who are eligible for these benefits to apply."

The amount of the HEAP grant depends on family income and size guidelines. For example, a family of four with natural gas heating and an annual income of \$70,056 would qualify for a \$400 grant. Central Hudson customers who receive HEAP grants or qualify for other assistance programs will also receive additional bill credits for up to 12 months on their Central Hudson bill.

Campagiorni added, "Households receiving a HEAP benefit for non-utility heating fuels such as oil, propane, wood/wood pellets, kerosene, coal or corn are also eligible for a monthly credit on their electric or non-heating gas bill."

Customers who heat with non-utility heating fuels should email their current Notice of Decision letter to Central Hudson at careunit@cenhud.com to be



enrolled and receive the bill credit.

Regular HEAP grants for the fall and upcoming winter are available between Nov. 1, 2023, and March 14, 2024, or until funding is exhausted. Emergency HEAP grants will be available between Jan. 2, 2024, and Mar. 15, 2024. These benefits are designed to meet an eligible household's immediate energy needs. The Heating Equipment Repair or Replacement (HERR) program is also available to assist customers who have primary heating equipment that is either inoperable or unsafe. HERR grants are currently available and will remain so through Sept. 30, 2024.

For more information on HEAP eligibility requirements and benefits, visit www.CentralHudson.com/HEAP or <http://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/program.asp>; and for more on all of Central Hudson's assistance and billing programs, visit www.CentralHudson.com, and click on "My Account." ✨

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PHONE (845) 486-5840
 EMAIL JJENKINS@CENHUD.COM