

NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services 600 E Boulevard Avenue, Bismarck ND 58505-0250

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Program to help low-income North Dakotans with heating costs is accepting applications beginning October 1

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Human Services is reminding low-income individuals and families concerned about winter heating costs that help is available, and they can apply beginning Monday, October 1.

The federally-funded Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) pays for part of the heating costs of qualifying households, as well as furnace repairs and weatherization services.

To qualify, people must meet program income and asset limits. This ensures that help goes to those most in need. To qualify, a household can earn up to 60 percent of the state median income, which for a family of three equals about \$39,461 per year. Nearly two-thirds of the participating households include people who are elderly, have disabilities, or include children age five and younger.

People can apply at their local county social service office through May 2013. The application is also available online at www.nd.gov/eforms/Doc/sfn00529.pdf and should be completed and returned to county social services.

Last year, the state LIHEAP program paid an average of \$873 in heating energy costs for just over 13,700 North Dakota households. The program pays fuel vendors, such as utility and fuel oil companies, directly.

Because saving money on heating also involves conservation, the North Dakota Department of Human Services contracts with the Commerce Department for weatherization and furnace repair and replacement services. The direct work is often carried out by community action agencies.

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