

## EMERGENCY FINANCIAL HELP

If you are facing a shutoff and need help making a payment, call **211** to access referrals to agencies in your community that may be able to provide financial assistance. Local churches or your own faith community may also be able to help.

## FREE LEGAL ASSISTANCE

The agencies below may be able to assist you in appealing a disconnection, negotiating a payment plan, or learning more about your rights.

Legal Aid of Nebraska: 877-250-2016

UNL Civil Clinic: 402-472-3271

Creighton Legal Clinic: 402-280-3068

Nebraska Appleseed is a nonprofit organization that fights for justice and opportunity for all Nebraskans. We take a systemic approach to complex issues - such as child welfare, immigration policy, affordable healthcare, and poverty - and we take our work wherever we believe we can do the most good, whether that's at the courthouse, in the statehouse, or in the community.



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# Utility Shut-Offs & Weatherization Assistance



## DISCONNECT NOTICES

### What notice is required before I am shut off?

You must receive written notice seven business days before your water, electricity, or natural gas is disconnected for nonpayment. If you receive ADC cash assistance, this notice must come to you by certified mail and DHHS will also be sent a copy.

### What if I disagree with the amount of my bill?

You have a right to a meeting to challenge your bill before you are shut off. You must let your utility company know, *in writing*, that you are requesting a meeting and the reasons you are challenging your bill before you are shut off.

The utility company must hold this meeting within 14 days and cannot shut you off before making a decision at that hearing. You can bring documents, witnesses, or an advocate with you to the meeting.

## THE COLD WEATHER RULE

If you are low-income and rely on a private gas company to heat your home, you cannot be shut off **between November 1 and March 31**.

You must inform your gas company that you are **certified low-income**, which means you have been determined eligible for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) through the Department of Health and Human Services.

You may be eligible for LIHEAP if your income is below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). You can apply for LIHEAP at [accessnebraska.ne.gov](http://accessnebraska.ne.gov).

## 2018 MONTHLY INCOME LIMITS

Household Size	150% FPL (LIHEAP)	200% FPL (Weatherization)
1	\$1,517	\$2,023
2	\$2,057	\$2,743
3	\$2,597	\$3,463
4	\$3,137	\$4,183
5	\$3,667	\$4,903
6	\$4,217	\$5,623

## PERSONS WITH HEALTH ISSUES

You may be able to delay a disconnection for 30 days if you or someone else in your household has a medical condition that would present a serious health hazard if a shutoff were to occur.

In order to delay a shutoff, you will need a note from a doctor explaining the health problems that would be caused by a shutoff. This note must be given to the utility company within five days of receiving your shutoff notice.

## WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE

**Weatherization** is the process of making improvements to a home that make it more energy-efficient.

The **Weatherization Assistance Program** is a state and federal program that provides free weatherization services. The only time there may be costs is if there is an unsafe condition in the house that must be fixed first.

### Who can get weatherization assistance?

Preference for weatherization is given to:

- People over age 60
- Individuals with disabilities
- Families with children under age six
- Households with high energy costs

If you get ADC or SSI, you are *automatically eligible* for weatherization help. Otherwise, your household must have an income below 200% FPL.

### How much assistance can I get?

The amount depends on your situation. The average value of weatherization services is \$6,500.

### What sorts of things are included?

Among other things, services may include repairs to doors and windows; replacement of air conditioners or furnaces; and insulation of attics, and ducts.

### What types of homes can be weatherized?

All sorts of homes can be weatherized, including single-family homes, apartment units, and mobile homes. Both homeowners and renters (with their landlord's permission) may apply for assistance.

### How do I apply for weatherization assistance?

There are nine Community Action agencies located across Nebraska which can determine if you are eligible, inspect your home, and schedule the weatherization work. To find the agency near you, visit [www.neo.ne.gov/wx/localcontacts.htm](http://www.neo.ne.gov/wx/localcontacts.htm).