

EnergyCentral



HEAP extended again through August 31

The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), a federally funded program that provides regular and emergency financial assistance to help pay heating bills, has been extended once again, now through August 31, 2021 to assist households, renters and families with the economic challenges brought forth by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The grants are available through local Department of Social Services (DSS) offices and Offices for the Aging. Customers of Central Hudson who receive a HEAP benefit toward their account will also be issued a monthly credit on their utility bill for a maximum of 12 months based on service type and amount of HEAP benefit.

Qualified families using electricity or natural gas as their primary heating source may receive a regular HEAP benefit of \$350 or more, depending on family income and size guidelines, applied toward their Central Hudson account.

Eligible customers will also receive a credit on their Central Hudson bills that provide further assistance in lowering their energy costs, based

SEE HEAP ON BACK PAGE



MAY IS NATIONAL ELECTRIC SAFETY MONTH

During National Electric Safety Month and all year round, Central Hudson reminds its customers to use electricity safely.

"We all depend upon and use electricity every day for lighting, heating, powering household appliances, electronics and even telecommunications," said Ryan Hawthorne, Vice President of Electric Engineering and Operations at Central Hudson. "National Electric Safety Month reminds us that we should not take electricity for granted, as misuse can cause injury or even death. That is why it's so important to take proper precautions, and to help our families learn about electric safety."

According to Electric Safety Foundation International, 51,000

home fires in the United States are caused by electrical malfunctions each year. Steps to avoid overloaded electric circuits include:

- Ensuring all major appliances are plugged directly into a wall receptacle outlet. Only plug one heat-producing appliance into a receptacle outlet at a time.
- Understanding that power strips only add additional outlets; they do not change the amount of power being received from the outlet, so the receptacle may become overloaded.

SEE SAFETY ON BACK PAGE

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Safety: Electrical fires cause 51,000 home fires per year

Before starting any outdoor project, such as working on the roof, trimming trees or painting a home or building, know where power lines are located. If work activities are within 10 feet of overhead power lines, contact Central Hudson at (845) 452-2700 so that a safe work plan can be determined. Outdoor project safety measures include:

- Locating all overhead power lines before beginning work;
- Staying at least 10 feet away from all overhead power lines, and contacting Central Hudson if work activities may be closer;
- Calling 811 before digging or excavating to identify the location of underground utilities, including electrical lines, to avoid potential injury and interruption of electric service;
- Not touching anything in contact with power lines; and
- Carrying ladders and equipment horizontally.

For more on National Electric Safety Month, visit the Electric Safety Foundation International website at www.ESFI.org/program/national-electrical-safety-month-314, or the Safety section of Central Hudson's website at www.CentralHudson.com/Safety. To view a video on safety precautions for outdoor projects, [click here](#). *

During storms and other emergencies:

- Call 911 to report downed power lines and stay at least 30 feet away;
- Follow the manufacturer's safety instructions on the use of emergency generators, and be sure to shut off the main breaker when in use and operate the units outdoors; and
- Beware of downed power lines entangled in fallen trees and limbs.

Other safety tips include:

- Never mixing electricity and water, and keeping devices such as hair dryers and radios away from filled tubs, sinks, swimming pools and other sources of water;
- Never running extension cords or wiring under carpets and rugs, and using properly rated extension cords for the devices being used;
- Installing Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) outlets located near sources of water such as in the kitchen, bathrooms, laundry areas and outdoors, and using tamper-proof outlets to keep young children safe;
- Having licensed professionals perform electrical work on homes and businesses, and having older wiring inspected for worn insulation or overloading; and
- Knowing where wiring is located behind walls before installing wall hangers or performing remodeling and shutting off circuit breakers before beginning work.



HEAP: Program extended to assist during pandemic

on the type of heating source and income level. As an example: A Central Hudson customer who qualifies for a Tier 1 HEAP grant and uses natural gas for heating is eligible for bill credits of up to \$49 per month; while a Tier 1 customer who has electric heating can receive a credit of up to \$22 each month. Customers who qualify for higher tiers could be eligible for larger bill credits.

Qualified 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. To receive the bill credit, customers should email their HEAP Notice

of Decision Letter to Central Hudson at CareUnit@cenhud.com to be enrolled.

An additional benefit, the Heating Equipment Repair or Replacement (HERR) program, is available to assist income qualified homeowners in repairing or replacing their primary heating equipment when the systems are inoperable or unsafe. Cooling Assistance benefits are also available for HEAP eligible households containing at least one individual with a documented medical condition that is exacerbated by extreme heat. Applications for HERR are accepted through Sept. 30, 2021, or until the funding is exhausted.

To apply for these benefits, customers may contact their local DSS office, call

(800) 342-3009, or visit www.mybenefits.ny.gov. Individuals who are 60 and older and do not receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits may contact their local Office for the Aging to learn of the eligibility requirements, by calling (800) 342-9871 or by visiting www.aging.ny.gov.

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." *