



## CONNECTING WITH US

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# customer connection

Ideas, Advice and News from Wisconsin Public Service



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[www.wisconsinpublicservice.com](http://www.wisconsinpublicservice.com)



## OCTOBER IS ENERGY AWARENESS MONTH

### LET'S GET READY FOR WINTER TOGETHER

Days are getting shorter and temperatures cooler — two sure signs that winter's on its way. But that doesn't have to mean out-of-control energy costs. By working together, we'll keep costs in line the right way.

Wisconsin Public Service continues to develop efficient new ways to produce and deliver the energy you count on, working toward our goal of keeping your costs as low as possible. At the same time, people like you are putting the energy-saving tips, products and programs found at [wisconsinpublicservice.com](http://www.wisconsinpublicservice.com) to work, putting the power to save energy and money in their own hands. Between your commitment and ours, it's paying off in savings.

### 5 WINTER WARM-UPS

Use these ideas to get ready for energy- and money-savings, all winter long.

- **Lower your thermostat.** Every 1° you lower you thermostat can reduce your heating bill up to 3%.
- **Tune up your heating system.** Losses from a poorly maintained system accumulate over time - sometimes at a rate of 1 to 2% each year.
- **Insulate.** Stop cold air from coming in by insulating walls, attic and outlet covers.

- **Buy ENERGY STAR®.** When purchasing everything from appliances to light bulbs, look for the ENERGY STAR® label and save energy, money, and the environment.
- **Turn off lights.** Shutting off unused lights is still one of the simplest, most effective ideas in energy savings. Try motion sensors that turn lights off automatically when everyone leaves a room.

Find more ways to use less energy and save, including **Energy-Saving Tools & Ideas**, at [wisconsinpublicservice.com](http://www.wisconsinpublicservice.com).

## recipe corner

### Mushroom Meatloaf

*Servings: 6-8*  
*Prep time: 10 minutes*  
*Baking temperature: 350°*  
*Baking time: 1 hour*

- ½ can (10- ¾ oz. size) cream of mushroom soup
- 1 ½ lbs. ground beef
- ½ cup dry bread crumbs
- ¼ cup chopped onions
- 2 tablespoons chopped parsley
- 1 beaten egg
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Dash of pepper
- ½ cup milk
- 1 can (4 oz.) mushrooms

Combine ¼ can soup, ground beef, bread crumbs, onions, parsley, egg, salt and pepper. Pack lightly into a greased pan. Combine the other ¼ can of soup with milk and heat. Pour the soup mixture over the loaf and top with mushrooms. Then bake.



*By using a glass or ceramic pan in the oven, instead of metal, you can lower the temperature approximately 25° F and cook in the same time.*

# Wisconsin Announces Changes in Energy Assistance Programs

## More people may now qualify for WHEAP

The state of Wisconsin has announced changes in income guidelines for the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP), making it possible for more people to qualify for help paying their energy bills. Apply early to make sure you don't miss out on your benefits.

Until recently, the income of households hoping to qualify for WHEAP assistance was based on federal guidelines, with income over a three-month period not to exceed 150% of the poverty income level. Starting with the 2009 heating season, federal guidelines are dropped and income-qualification will now be based on 60% of state median income level over the same three-month period.

For limited-income families in Wisconsin, that means being allowed to claim as much as 35% more income, without jeopardizing the chance to qualify for assistance.

## Who's Eligible

You may qualify for assistance if your gross income for the last **three months** is **less** than the amount shown below for your family size.

| Household Size | 60% of State Median Income |
|----------------|----------------------------|
| 1              | \$5,859.00                 |
| 2              | 7,661.00                   |
| 3              | 9,464.00                   |
| 4              | 11,267.00                  |
| 5              | 13,069.00                  |
| 6              | 14,872.00                  |
| 7              | 15,210.00                  |
| 8              | 15,548.00                  |

For each additional person, add \$1,350.

## A few notes about WHEAP energy assistance:

- It's a one-time yearly benefit payment
- Benefits are normally available between October 1 and May 15
- You do not have to pay the money back
- It is not intended to cover the entire cost of heating your home
- Your heating assistance benefit may be sent directly to your fuel supplier

## In addition to energy assistance, WHEAP provides the following assistance programs:

- **Electric Assistance (Non-Heating)** helps eligible households pay a portion of non-heating electric energy costs.
- **Crisis Assistance** provides assistance to households that have no heat, received a disconnect notice from their heating fuel dealer, or are nearly out of heating fuel and do not have any way to pay for their heating needs. Proactive non-emergency assistance is also available through the entire year to avoid future emergencies.

## Winter Weatherization Program

In these difficult economic times, improving your home's energy efficiency can make a big difference. If you meet WHEAP income eligibility guidelines, you may also qualify for assistance in caulking, weather-stripping and insulation.

| For more information on applying for energy or weatherization assistance, please contact the agency in your county. |                                |                              |
|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| COUNTY  | AGENCY                         | TELEPHONE NUMBER             |
| Brown   | Integrated Community Solutions | 920-498-3737                 |
| Calumet   | Dept. of Human Services        | 920-849-1622                 |
| Door  | Door County Job Center         | 920-743-7273                 |
| Florence  | Dept. of Human Services        | 715-528-3475                 |
| Fond du Lac   | Energy Services, Inc.          | 800-506-5596                 |
| Forest  | NEWCAP                         | 715-478-3871                 |
| Kewaunee  | Dept. of Human Services        | 920-388-3777                 |
| Langlade  | Dept. of Human Services        | 715-627-6500                 |
| Lincoln   | Dept. of Human Services        | 715-536-6200                 |
| Manitowoc   | Dept. of Human Services        | 920-683-2888                 |
| Marathon  | Energy Services, Inc.          | 715-842-3111                 |
| Marinette   | Dept. of Human Services        | 715-732-7740                 |
| Oconto  | Dept. of Human Services        | 920-834-7000 or 920-834-7038 |
| Oneida  | Dept. of Human Services        | 715-362-5695                 |
| Outagamie   | Energy Services, Inc.          | 800-506-5596                 |
| Portage   | Energy Services, Inc.          | 715-344-5999                 |
| Shawano   | Dept. of Human Services        | 715-526-4740                 |
| Sheboygan   | Dept. of Human Services        | 920-459-3207 or 800-596-1919 |
| Vilas   | Dept. of Human Services        | 715-479-3668                 |
| Waupaca   | Energy Services, Inc.          | 800-922-2393                 |
| Winnebago   | Energy Services, Inc.          | 800-506-5596                 |
| TRIBAL  |                                |                              |
| Lac du Flambeau Tribal Office   |                                | 715-588-4235                 |
| Potawatomi Tribal Office  |                                | 715-478-7206                 |
| Mole Lake/Sokaogon Chippewa Tribe   |                                | 715-478-7600                 |
| Oneida Nation Social Services   |                                | 920-490-6800 or 888-216-3216 |

## Focus on Energy

If you're interested in finding out about additional assistance programs available to Wisconsin residents, contact Focus on Energy at **800-762-7077** or visit their Web site at [focusonenergy.com](http://focusonenergy.com).

## Contact Us

Wisconsin Public Service wants to help you lower your energy bills — and we can do that by showing you how to use less energy without giving up any of your comfort or conveniences. Before winter sets in, we encourage you to enroll in **Budget Billing**, which spreads your payments out evenly over 12 months. And for more information on energy conservation, visit [wisconsinpublicservice.com](http://wisconsinpublicservice.com) or call **800-450-7260**. If you think you may experience payment difficulties this winter, call us early at **800-450-7260**, so we can help.

# Furnaces Need Check-Ups, Too.

Ensure the health of your heating system by having your furnace inspected yearly by a licensed, qualified technician. And follow these safety steps throughout the heating season:

- Clean or replace your furnace filter regularly.
- Periodically check the flame in the burner to make sure it is blue. A yellow flame may indicate the need for an adjustment.
- Check chimney flues for corrosion and make sure vents are clear of blockages or debris.
- Keep the area around your furnace clean. And do not store flammable liquids or other combustibles near it.

In addition, know the signs of CO poisoning and make sure your home has at least one CO detector per floor. It only takes a moment and could save a life.

Take a second for safety.

