

recipe corner

Wagon Wheel Casserole

Servings: 8
Prep time: 20 minutes
Baking temperature: 350°
Baking time: 30 + 10 minutes

- 1 lb. lean ground beef
- 1 lb. fresh mushrooms, thinly sliced
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 8 oz. wagon wheel pasta, cooked and drained
- 1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 3/4 cup green pepper, thinly sliced
- 1 jar (26 oz.) meatless spaghetti sauce
- 1 cup (4 oz.) shredded mozzarella cheese

In a large non-stick skillet, cook beef, mushrooms and onion over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain.

In a shallow 3-quart baking dish coated with non-stick cooking spray, layer pasta, Parmesan cheese, green pepper, beef mixture and spaghetti sauce. Cover and bake for 30 minutes.

Uncover; sprinkle with mozzarella cheese. Bake 10 minutes longer or until cheese is melted.

CONNECTING WITH US

Visit us online:
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Ideas, Advice and News from Upper Peninsula Power Company



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GET CASH FOR COLLEGE

SEE IF YOUR CHILD QUALIFIES FOR A SCHOLARSHIP

We believe that through encouragement and financial assistance, students will some day make significant contributions to their communities.

Each year, Wisconsin Public Service Foundation, Inc., offers college money to students whose homes are served by UPPCO.

If you have a high school senior graduating in 2009 with plans to attend a four-year or technical college in Wisconsin or Upper Michigan, he or she may qualify for a Foundation scholarship. Eligibility is generally based upon such factors as academic standing and financial need. If you want to apply for a scholarship, or would like more details, please visit uppco.com/info/scholarships.asp.

Apply for your scholarship today!

Contributions are made by Upper Peninsula Power Company on behalf of Wisconsin Public Service Foundation, a private foundation supported by UPPCO and other affiliates of Wisconsin Public Service Corporation.

Celebrate Energy Awareness This October

- From heating systems to appliances to lighting, there are so many ways to manage your energy costs this month — and all year long.
- Try these 10 energy-saving ideas and save!
- 1 Use your microwave to cook at least one meal a week.
 - 2 Get ready for winter by weatherstripping and caulking.
 - 3 Install a water-saving showerhead.
 - 4 Turn down the thermostat on your water heater if it's set above 120°.
 - 5 Wait until you have a full load of dishes before running the dishwasher.
 - 6 Try using cold water for rinsing laundry.
 - 7 Make sure the lint filter on your dryer is clean.
 - 8 Install a programmable thermostat in your home.
 - 9 Replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescents.
 - 10 If you have a forced-air heating system, clean or replace the filter or filters.

For more energy-saving tips, visit uppco.com.

Michigan Home Heating Assistance Programs for 2008-2009

Winter Protection Plan

Contact: Upper Peninsula Power Company at **800-562-7680**

The Winter Protection Plan protects **eligible senior and low-income customers** from service shutoff and high utility bill payments during the winter months (November 1 through March 31).

If you're an eligible low-income customer who participates in the Winter Protection Plan, you will not have service discontinued during the winter months if you pay at least 7% of your estimated annual bill each month, plus equal monthly payments on any past due bills.

If you're an eligible senior citizen customer who participates in the Winter Protection Plan, you are not required to make specific payments between November 1 and March 31 to ensure that your service will not be shut off. However, seniors are encouraged to pay whatever they can during the winter so they will not have large, unmanageable bills when the protection period ends.

When the protection period ends (March 31), you will need to pay the full monthly bill plus a portion of the amount owed from the winter months.

You qualify for the plan if you meet one of the following requirements:

- Are age 65 or older
- Receive Department of Human Services cash assistance
- Receive food stamps
- Receive Medicaid
- Have a household income at or below 150% of poverty level

(see Annual Income Guidelines)

Winter Protection Plan

Annual Income Guidelines (2008-2009)

Number of Household Members	150% of Poverty Level
1	\$15,600
2	21,000
3	26,400
4	31,800
5	37,200
6	42,600
7	48,000
8	53,400

Add \$5,400 for each additional household member.

2008 Home Heating Credit

Contact: Michigan Department of Treasury at **800-367-6263** or www.michigan.gov/treasury

You can apply for a Home Heating Credit for the 2008 tax year if you meet the income guidelines listed below.

If you qualify, the Home Heating Credit (HHC) provides assistance to help pay for your winter heating bills. Eligible customers must meet the standard credit income guidelines or alternate guidelines based on household income, exemptions and heating costs.

Exemptions	Income Ceiling
1	\$11,443
2	15,415
3	19,386
4	23,329
5	27,301
6	31,242

For each exemption over 6, add \$3,971.

You may claim an exemption for yourself, your spouse and other dependents. Additional exemptions are available for seniors, disabled customers or customers with 50% or more of their income from unemployment compensation.

The Home Heating Credit claim form must be filed with the Michigan Department of Treasury before September 30, 2009. Forms are generally available wherever other tax forms are provided. You can also call the Michigan Dept. of Treasury or visit their Web site at: michigan.gov/treasury.

2008 Earned Income Credit

Contact: U.S. Treasury Department, Internal Revenue Service

The Earned Income Credit (EIC) is a refundable federal income tax credit for low-income working individuals and families who meet certain requirements and file a tax return. Those who qualify will owe less in taxes and may get a refund. Even a person who does not generally owe income tax may qualify for the EIC, however must file a tax return to do so. If you are married, you must file jointly to qualify. To file, fill out Form 1040 or 1040A and attach the EIC.

If you are raising a qualifying child in your home in 2008, you may also be able to receive part of the credit in your paycheck during the year with Advance EIC. Get form W-5 from your employer or call **800-TAX-FORM**.

Crisis Assistance Program

Contact: Michigan's Department of Human Services (DHS)

State Emergency Relief Program (SER)

You do not have to be a client of the DHS to apply for help through the SER. This program is available year-round to low-income households that have received a heat or electric shutoff notice or have a need for deliverable fuel. However, if you receive a DHS cash grant, you may vendor part of that grant towards heat and electric bills. Contact your DHS caseworker for information on the advantages of vendoring a cash grant.

Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program

Contact: Local Community Action Agency

The Weatherization Assistance Program provides free home energy conservation services to eligible low-income homeowners and renters. Weatherization may include caulking, weatherstripping, insulating and smoke detectors.

Medical Emergency Protection

Contact: Upper Peninsula Power Company at **800-562-7680**

You are protected from service shutoff for nonpayment of your natural gas and/or electric bill for up to 21 days if you have a proven medical emergency. You must provide written proof from a doctor that a medical emergency exists.

Shutoff Protection for Customers on Active Duty in the Military

Contact: Upper Peninsula Power Company at **800-562-7680**

If you or your spouse is the UPPCO customer of record and either of you is called to full-time active military service by the President of the United States or the Governor of Michigan during a time of declared national or state emergency or war, you may apply for shut-off protection from your electric or natural gas service for up to 90 days. At the end of the active duty period, you must notify your utility company of your status and make payment arrangements.

Contact Us

UPPCO wants to help you manage your monthly energy bill. We encourage you to enroll in **Budget Billing**, which spreads your energy charges out evenly over 12 months, helping you better manage energy costs. If you are interested in learning more about your energy use and managing your costs, visit **Home Energy Advice** at upcco.com. If you are experiencing payment difficulties, please call us at **800-562-7680**. We're here to help.