



# Winter Protection Plan

Contact UPPCO (906) 449-2013 / (800) 562-7680

The Winter Protection Plan (WPP) protects enrolled seniors (age 65 and older) and low-income customers whose annual household income is at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty level, from service shutoffs and high utility bill payments during the heating season (November 1 - March 31). You may also enroll if you receive any of the following services:

- Michigan Department of Health and Human Services cash assistance
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Food Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Medicaid

If you are low-income, you must pay at least seven percent of your estimated annual bill each month during the protection period. If an arrearage exists at the time you apply for shutoff protection, you must pay the arrearage in equal monthly installments be-

tween the date you apply and the start of the next heating season.

If you are low-income and your service was shutoff before you applied for shutoff protection, UPPCO cannot require a fee, a security deposit nor an amount greater than one-twelfth of your arrearage in order to restore service or participate in the program.

All customers 65 or older are eligible regardless of income. However, you are responsible for all service used. At the end of the protection period, all customers must arrange to pay the outstanding bills before the next heating season. If you are a senior citizen whose electric service may have been shutoff before applying for the WPP, UPPCO must restore your service during

the heating season without any payments.

Although no specific payments are required during the heating season, you are encouraged to pay what you can to avoid large payments when the protection period ends.

Participation does not relieve you from the responsibility for paying for electricity and natural gas usage but does prevent a shutoff during the winter months. At the end of the protection period, both low-income and seniors participating in the plan must arrange with UPPCO to pay any money owed before the start of the next protection period.

NOTE: Winter shutoff protections do not apply to customers that are shutoff, or who had a pending shutoff for unauthorized utility service within the past two years at the customer's current address, until all charges are paid or the customer makes satisfactory payment arrangements with UPPCO.

## Income Guidelines (2020-2021) for Winter Protection Plan

Number of Household Members	150% of Poverty Guidelines Maximum Income
1	\$19,140
2	\$25,860
3	\$32,580
4	\$39,300
5	\$46,020
6	\$52,740
7	\$59,460
8	\$66,180

Add \$6,720 for each additional household member.

### Senior Citizens - Winter Protection Plan

Contact: UPPCO (906)449-2013 / (800) 562-7680

The account holder who is an eligible senior citizen, age 65 and older, is protected from disconnection of service during the heating season (Nov 1 thru Mar 31) at the customer's documented personal residence. UPPCO will restore service for the customer during the heating season without payment of the amount due, deposits, reconnection fees, or other charges. At the end of the heating season, the account will be placed on a payment plan and payment must begin immediately.

## LOCAL SPOTLIGHT

### Ontonagon Village Housing

As part of a phased energy efficiency improvement project, UPPCO and the Ontonagon Village Housing Commission (OVHC) have worked together to get 36 cold climate mini-split heat pumps installed in the last year. These heat pumps are saving energy and money, and residents are enjoying the quiet, reliable heating and cooling. Since the heat pumps started being installed in 2019, OVHC has been saving around \$1000 per month. Learn more about this project and how heat pumps might be a benefit to your wallet at [www.uppco.com/energy\\_efficiency](http://www.uppco.com/energy_efficiency)



**"I am 78 years old and it is the best heating system I have ever had! The air circulates more with this system and seems to be cleaner - I find it easier to breath."**

- Carlene M. Ontonagon Village Housing Resident.



## Connect with Us

### CUSTOMER SERVICE

Residential: (906)449-2013 / (800)562-7680

Business: (906)449-2014 / (800)337-8445

Email: [customerservice@uppco.com](mailto:customerservice@uppco.com)

### 24-HOUR EMERGENCIES/OUTAGES

(906)449-2011 / (800)562-7809

### OUTAGE INFORMATION/UPDATES

@uppco and [www.uppco.com](http://www.uppco.com)

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# THE UPPCO CONNECTION

Powering U.P. Communities Since 1884



### Inside this Issue:

2020/2021 Assistance and Protection Programs

Ontonagon Housing Sees Savings with Mini-split Heat Pump Installations

OCTOBER 2020



## Medical Emergency Protection

Contact UPPCO (906) 449-2013 / (800) 562-7680

You can receive a medical hold preventing service from being shutoff for nonpayment on your electric bill for up to 21 days if you or a member of your household, has an existing medical condition that would be aggravated by the lack of utility service. Your condition must be certified by a physician or public health office on a Michigan Public Service Commission approved Medical Certification Form. The form must state the medical condition, medical equipment, and specific time period a shutoff of utility service would make the medical condition worse. If the shutoff of service occurred before a medical emergency is approved, UPPCO will restore service at no cost to you for 21 days. You can obtain an extension of the medical hold and a postponement of shutoff of service for a total of 63 days (three separate medical holds) in any 12-month period per household member. Annually, UPPCO is not required to grant shutoff extensions totaling more than 126 days per household. Customers would be granted a three-business day grace period from shutoff of utility service for time to have the Medical Certification Form completed. UPPCO shall not require payment for an after-hours reconnect fee or a deposit as a condition of restoring service. The Medical Certification Form is available from by contacting UPPCO and on the website at [www.uppco.com](http://www.uppco.com). It is also available at [www.michigan.gov/mpsc](http://www.michigan.gov/mpsc).

## Critical Care Protection

Contact: UPPCO (906) 449-2013 / (800) 562-7680

A customer or household can receive protection from disconnection or have services restored due to inability to pay if there is an identified critical care customer in the home and interruption of service would be immediately life threatening. A critical care customer is somebody who requires home medical equipment or a life support system that must be certified by a physician or public health office on a Michigan Public Service Commission approved Medical Certification Form. Customers would be granted a three-business day grace period from shutoff of electric service for time to have the Medical Certification Form completed. You will be contacted by UPPCO when any scheduled service interruptions occur. UPPCO will also notify you before any remote shutoff of utility services. If critical care status changes, you, or a person in your household, must let UPPCO know of the status change. However, if a person's status does not change you must submit an updated Medical Certification Form to UPPCO on an annual basis. The Medical Certification Form is available

from UPPCO and on the website at [www.uppco.com](http://www.uppco.com). It is also available at [www.michigan.gov/mpsc](http://www.michigan.gov/mpsc).

## State Emergency Relief Program

Contact: MI Department of Health & Human Services at [www.michigan.gov/mdhhs](http://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs)

State Emergency Relief (SER) is a crisis intervention program that provides assistance for energy-related expenses such as heating fuel, electricity and home repairs. SER is supported by the Federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

Eligibility is based on one of the following:

- Demonstration of immediate need (past due/shutoff notice)
- Declared need for a deliverable fuel
- Verified need for energy-related home repair
- 150% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL)
- Up to \$15,000 in cash assets and \$15,000 in material assets

Apply online using MI Bridges: <http://michigan.gov/mibridges>  
Need help applying? <https://newmibridges.michigan.gov/s/isd-find-community-partners>

## Michigan Energy Assistance Program (MEAP)

Administering Agency: MI Public Service Commission

Once a State Emergency Relief application has been submitted, additional assistance can be sought through agencies that provide MEAP energy assistance programs that include services that will enable participants to become or move toward becoming self-sufficient, including assisting participants in paying their energy bills on time, budgeting for and contributing to their ability to provide for energy expenses, and assisting participants in being energy efficient. Need help applying for State Emergency Relief? Find a MI Bridges Navigator near you: <https://newmibridges.michigan.gov/s/isd-find-community-partners>, or contact 2-1-1.

The MEAP is supported by the state's Low-Income Energy Assistance Fund (LIEAF). An electric utility that chooses not to collect for the LIEAF shall not shut off service to customers for non-payment between November 1 and April 15. For a list of electric providers that opt-out of collecting the LIEAF go to [www.michigan.gov/energygrants](http://www.michigan.gov/energygrants).

## Home Heating Credit

Administering Agency: MI Department of Treasury

Apply for a Home Heating Credit (HHC) for the 2021 tax year to help pay winter heating bills if you meet the listed household income guidelines and exemptions. You may claim an exemption for yourself, your spouse, and other dependents. Additional exemptions may also be available. HHC is supported by the Federal LIHEAP.

Forms are generally available in mid to late January where tax

forms can be found. Call Treasury at (517) 636-4486, or visit its website at [www.michigan.gov/treasury](http://www.michigan.gov/treasury). Some local agencies may provide assistance in completing the form due no later than September 30 each year; contact 2-1-1.

Customers of utilities regulated by the Michigan Public Service Commission receive protection from shutoff of their heating fuel service from the time of filing of HHC form with Treasury until the time Treasury issues the credit. However, you must contact your utility company to let it know you filed for the HHC. Keep a copy of the HHC form you file with the number of exemptions claimed and the amount of the credit to use when requesting the status of your application. You will still be required to pay for the electric and natural gas services used during the shutoff protection period.

### Home Heating Credit Income Guideline 2020/2021

Number of Exemptions	110% of Federal Poverty Guidelines Maximum Annual Income
0-1	\$14,036
2	\$18,964
3	\$23,892
4	\$28,820
5	\$33,748
6	\$38,676
7	\$43,604
8	\$48,532

Add \$4,928 for each additional exemption

Source: <https://www.waacf.hhs.gov/resources/lineap-im-2020-01-hhs-poverty-guidelines-for-optional-use-in-fy-2020-and-mandatory-use-in-fy-2021>

## Active Duty in the Military

Contact: UPPCO (906) 449-2013 / (800) 562-7680

If you or your spouse is UPPCO's customer of record and either of you are called to full-time active military service, by the President of the United States or the Governor of Michigan, during a national or state emergency or war, you may apply for shutoff protection of your electric or natural gas service for up to 90 days. You may also reapply for extensions of this protection. Your utility company may request verification of active duty status. In addition, you must notify UPPCO when your status changes. Contact UPPCO to set up a payment plan for all past due amounts to be paid within twelve months. You will still be required to pay for services used while in the program.

## Michigan Veterans Trust Fund Emergency Grant Program

Contact: Michigan Veterans Trust Fund at (517) 284-5299 or [www.michiganveterans.com](http://www.michiganveterans.com)

The Trust Fund provides temporary assistance to veterans and their families facing a financial emergency or hardship including the need for energy assistance.

## Upper Peninsula 2-1-1

2-1-1 is a one-stop, around-the-clock free phone and online service that links people with information or agencies that can help with utility assistance and other needs such as rent payment help, child and elder care, emergency shelters, job training, counseling, etc. Simply dial 2-1-1 on your phone or visit [m211.org](http://m211.org) to get started.

## Low-Income Weatherization Assistance

Administering Agency: Bureau of Community Action and Economic Opportunity

Michigan's Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) is a federally funded, low-income residential energy conservation program providing free home energy conservation services to eligible homeowners and renters with a household income at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. You are also eligible if you participate in the Department of Health and Human Services Family Independence Program or receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI). These weatherization services can help reduce energy use and lower utility bills.

If you qualify, a trained inspector will assess your home and determine which measures will be the most beneficial for you. Measures may include adding caulking and weather stripping; wall, basement, and attic insulation and ventilation; and smoke detectors. Contact your local Community Action Agency or go to [mcac.memberclicks.net/agency-locator-map](http://mcac.memberclicks.net/agency-locator-map) for more information or to find the community action agency in your area. For additional information on saving energy and money, visit [www.energy.gov/energysaver](http://www.energy.gov/energysaver).

## Lifeline

Contact: Your Local Wire Line Telephone Co

The Lifeline program makes basic local telephone service more affordable for income-eligible individuals and families in Michigan with an annual household income at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty level. You may also qualify if you receive:

- Medicaid
- Food Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
- Tribal Eligibility Programs (and living on federally recognized Tribal lands)
- Veterans Pension or Survivors Pension Program

Eligible customers under age 65 may receive a discount up to \$10.25 off of the basic local service rate offered by the local telephone service provider. Eligible customers 65 years of age and older can receive a discount of \$12.35 off of the basic local service rate offered by their local telephone provider.