



**City of Willow Springs**  
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**PRESS RELEASE**  
**WINTER ENERGY CONCERNS**

The City of Willow Springs is predicting that utility costs will be higher for the 2022 winter season. The utility wholesale markets are based upon supply and demand – with limited supplies, prices go up.

Demand for natural gas has been high both domestically and internationally. Additionally, gas supplies are down from last year. The market price of natural gas last winter was roughly \$2.82 per million British Thermal Unit (BTU). Current forecasts show winter prices around \$4.80 per million BTU. This gas cost increase means an average customer's monthly bill might double.

Electricity could also have supply and demand issues resulting in high prices and pleas for conservation. Less natural gas could be available to generate electricity. Extreme, prolonged winter weather could make the situation even worse. To maintain grid reliability, alerts for reducing electric consumption could occur if demand outpaces supply.

Heating has the biggest impact on winter utility bills for residential customers and small businesses, so try reducing this part of your consumption first. The Missouri Public Utility Alliance (MPUA) has been kind to provide some home energy efficiency tips, which will be available on the City's website and at City Hall.

The Missouri Department of Social Services is administering the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) and Low-Income Household Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) for eligible customers. To apply, contact Ozark Action, Inc. in West Plains by calling 417-256-6147.

## Winter Home Energy Efficiency Tips

### free ways to save in the winter

- Set thermostat settings at 68 degrees or as low as possible while you are home.
- Set thermostats to 60 degrees when you're away from home or install a programmable thermostat to do that automatically. If you have a heat pump, make sure you install a programmable thermostat so that you can gradually warm the house back up before you return home.
  - If you have a heat pump, do not make a lot of changes in the thermostat temperature during heating season unless you are going to be away for several days. Otherwise, the auxiliary heat will come on which makes the system costlier.
- Wear layers of clothing and use extra blankets.
- Close fireplace damper when not in use.
- Don't block vents and radiators with furniture, curtains, or rugs.
- For windows that receive direct sunlight, keep shades open during the day and close them at night.
- Reduce the temperature setting on your water heater to 120 degrees or less.
- Clean the coils on the bottom or the back of your refrigerator regularly.
- Recommended temperature for your refrigerator is 37 to 40 degrees and 5 degrees for the freezer.
- Inspect and clean your dryer vent tube on your dryer periodically. Built up lint can lead to longer drying times and can be a fire hazard.
- Take 5-minute showers instead of baths.
- Run washer, dryer, and dishwasher only when you have full loads.
- Wash clothes in cool or cold water whenever possible.
- Since some appliances use electricity all the time, plug them into a power saving electric strip or turn a regular strip off when the appliances are not in use.
- Scrape your dishes rather than rinsing them before putting them in the dishwasher. Air dry dishes instead of using the drying cycle feature on your dishwasher.

## low-cost ways to save

### Heating

- Replace the system's filter every three months or more often if it gets clogged with items like pet hair.
- Schedule regular tune-ups for the heating and cooling system for optimum efficiency.

### Windows/Doors

- Replace missing window putty or glazing as needed.
- Caulk window and door frames on the exterior side.
- Replace weatherstripping on exterior doors.
- Check door bottoms and thresholds to make sure air is not escaping. Replace when necessary.

### Air Sealing

**TIP:** On a windy day, place a lit stick of incense to check for air leaks. A horizontal flow of the smoke means you have a leak. Dirt and spider webs can also indicate an air loss.

- Install foam gaskets behind light switches or outlets located on exterior walls.
- Magnetic kitchen exhaust fan covers can keep air from leaking when fan is not running.
- Seal holes in the exterior walls, crawl space or basement where air conditioning and plumbing pipes penetrate the building.
- Close off openings between a masonry chimney and surrounding wood framing in the attic with sheet metal or foil-faced foam board insulation.
- Install weatherstripping around the perimeter of attic access hatches and pull-down stairs.

### Ductwork and Air Distribution

- Seal leaky duct connections with duct sealing mastic. Do not use duct tape, as it will dry out and come loose.

# Winter Home Energy Efficiency Tips



## low-cost ways to save continued...

### Water Heating

- Install an insulation blanket around your water heater.
- Install low-flow showerheads in your bathrooms.

### Lighting and Appliances

- Test your refrigerator gaskets by closing the door over a piece of paper. If you can easily remove it with the door closed, consider replacing either the gaskets or the appliance.
- Install timers, photocells, or motion switches on exterior lighting fixtures.

## investments for larger savings

### Insulation

Here are the minimum recommendations:

- Attic Insulation: R-38 (12 to 15 inches)
- Floor: R-19 above unheated areas (6 inches)
- Crawl Space Wall Insulation: R-10 with a vapor barrier (foam board)
- Duct Insulation: R-13 in unheated areas
- Rim Joist Insulation: R-13 (4 inches)

### Windows

- Install storm windows to provide additional insulation and to reduce air leakage.
- Replace your old, leaky windows with new, energy-efficient double pane windows.

### Ductwork and Air Distribution

- Insulate all uninsulated ductwork in unconditioned spaces (attics and crawl spaces).

### Air Conditioning

- Replace your air conditioning unit with a new unit with a SEER rating of 14 or higher.

### Heating

- Replace your furnace with a new unit with an AFUE rating of 95 percent or higher.

### Water

- If your water heater is over 7 years old, consider replacing it with an energy-efficient model.

### Appliances

- When replacing appliances, purchase Energy Star qualified models.



*Your Potential. Our Story*

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The Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) is administered by the Department of Social Services (DSS) and is funded by the Administration of Children and Families. The program will provide up to \$750 for water and wastewater (sewer) disconnection fees, customers who are in threat of disconnection, arrearages (past due bills), and reconnection fees. LIHWAP is expected to begin in Missouri on October 1, 2021 for elderly and disabled households, and November 1, 2021 for other households.

How the Program Works:

- DSS and Contracted Agencies will notify potentially eligible clients about the availability of the LIHWAP program.
- The client will apply for benefits through DSS Contracted Agencies.
- DSS will send a letter to clients stating they are or are not eligible for the program.
- If the client is eligible, DSS will send a Customer Eligibility Listing (CEL) to the utility company to make a pledge on the clients account.
- If the utility company agrees to accept payment (pledge), DSS will send the payment electronically or with a paper check.
- Applications will be processed in the order they are received. The program will continue until the funding is spent, or through September 30, 2023.

AUXILIARY AIDS AND SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES  
TDD / TTY: 800-735-2966  
RELAY MISSOURI: 711

*Missouri Department of Social Services is an Equal Opportunity Employer Program.*

For clients to be eligible, they must:

- Be responsible for paying the water and/or wastewater (sewer) bill
- Be a United States citizen (or have been legally admitted for permanent residence)
- Have \$3,000 or less in bank accounts, retirement accounts, or investments
- Meet specific income guidelines based on household size

Client's Income Guidelines Requirements

Household Size	Household Must be Under the Below Monthly Income Amounts to Receive the Benefit
1	\$0 - \$2,211
2	\$0 - \$2,891
3	\$0 - \$3,571
4	\$0 - \$4,252
5	\$0 - \$4,932
6	\$0 - \$5,612
7	\$0 - \$5,740

Utility companies can participate in the program by:

1. Signing the attached "Supplier Agreement" and returning it to DSS at:

- Email: [fsd.lihwap@dss.mo.gov](mailto:fsd.lihwap@dss.mo.gov), OR
- Fax: (573) 522-9557, OR
- Mail to:

Department of Social Services/LIHWAP  
P. O. Box 2320  
Jefferson City, MO 65101

2. Register in MissouriBuys. Please see the attached "Missouri Buys Vendor Registration Checklist" for more information.

## **Contracted Agency Contacts**

**Audrain, Boone, Callaway, Cole, Cooper, Howard, Moniteau, and Osage:**  
Central Missouri Community Action Agency - (573) 443-1100

**St. Louis County:** Community Action Agency of St. Louis County - (314) 446-4420

**Andrew, Buchanan, Clinton, and DeKalb:**  
Community Action Partnership of Greater St. Joseph - (816) 233-8281

**Atchison, Gentry, Holt, Nodaway, and Worth:**  
Community Services, Inc. of Northwest Missouri - (660) 582-3113

**Barton, Jasper, Newton, and McDonald:**  
Economic Security Corporation of Southwest Area - (417) 781-0352

**Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, Iron, Madison, Perry, St. Francois, St. Genevieve, and Washington:**  
East Missouri Action Agency - (800) 392-8663

**Dunklin, Mississippi, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Scott, and Stoddard:**  
Delta Area Economic Opportunity Corporation - (573) 379-3851

**Caldwell, Daviess, Grundy, Harrison, Linn, Livingston, Mercer, Putnam, and Sullivan:**  
Community Action Partnership North Central Missouri - (660) 359-3907

**City of St. Louis and Wellston:** Urban League - (314) 615-3632

**Jefferson and Franklin:** Jefferson-Franklin Community Action Corporation - (636) 789-2686

**Camden, Crawford, Gasconade, Laclede, Maries, Miller, Phelps, and Pulaski:**  
Missouri Ozarks Community Action, Inc. - (573) 765-3263

**Carroll, Chariton, Johnson, Lafayette, Pettis, Ray, Saline:**  
Missouri Valley Community Action Agency - (660) 831-5331

**Lewis, Lincoln, Macon, Marion, Monroe, Montgomery, Pike, Ralls, Randolph, Shelby,  
St. Charles, and Warren:**  
North East Community Action Corporation - (573) 324-0120

**Adair, Clark, Knox, Schuyler, and Scotland:**  
Community Action Partnership North East Missouri - (660) 665-9855

**Douglas, Howell, Oregon, Ozark, Texas, and Wright:** Ozark Action, Inc. - (417) 256-6147

**Barry, Christian, Dade, Dallas, Greene, Lawrence, Polk, Stone, Taney, and Webster:**  
Ozarks Area Community Action Corporation - (417) 864-3460

**Butler, Carter, Dent, Reynolds, Ripley, Shannon, and Wayne:**  
South Central Missouri Community Action Agency - (800) 325-4633

**Jackson, Clay, and Platte:** Mid-America Assistance Coalition - (816) 831-1830

**Bates, Benton, Cass, Cedar, Henry, Hickory, Morgan, St. Clair, and Vernon:**  
West Central Missouri Community Action Agency - (660) 476-2185



## Sample Customer Letter: Alert of High Energy Prices for Winter 2021/2022

[Insert Utility Name Here] is predicting that utility costs will be higher for the upcoming winter season. The utility wholesale markets are based upon supply and demand – with limited supplies, prices go up.

Demand for natural gas has been high both domestically and internationally. Additionally, gas supplies are down from last year. The market price of natural gas last winter was roughly \$2.82 per million British Thermal Unit (BTU). Current forecasts show winter prices around \$4.80 per million BTU. This gas cost increase means an average homeowner's monthly bill might double.

Electricity could also have supply and demand issues resulting in high prices and pleas for conservation. Less natural gas could be available to generate electricity. Extreme, prolonged winter weather could make the situation even worse. To maintain grid reliability, alerts for reducing electric consumption could occur if demand outpaces supply.

Heating has the biggest impact on winter utility bills for homeowners and small businesses, so try reducing this part of your consumption first. Here are some ways that homeowners can prepare for the winter season:

### Low-cost ways to save energy year-round:

- Replace the heating system's filter every three months or when dirty.
- Seal air leaks around windows and doors by replacing worn-out materials or by using weatherstripping or caulk.
- Adding insulation is one of the lowest cost energy efficiency improvements with one of the highest returns on an investment. Your attic should have 16-19 inches of insulation.
- If possible, install a smart thermostat to make automatic adjustments when you are gone.

### FREE ways to save on heating bills:

- Wear layers of clothing and use extra blankets.
- Set thermostat settings at 68 degrees or as low as possible while home.
- Limit the use of natural gas fireplaces.
- Lock doors and windows for a better seal. For drafty windows, close storm windows and consider keeping window shades closed at night for extra insulation.
- Don't block heating system air vents with furniture, curtains, or rugs.
- Close fireplace damper when not in use.
- Roll up a towel to put at the bottom of a leaky door to keep drafts at bay.

(consider adding any utility assistance program information at the end of this letter for your customers who are economically challenged.)