

SEPTEMBER 2021

Energy Assistance Program Communication TOOLKIT

NOTE: Communication toolkits are also available in Spanish, Somali, Hmong

Content includes:

- Most recent news release to share
- Flyers for printed posters
- Social media post draft text plus video links and images
- Article for newsletter

Communications provided below are also posted on [the Energy Assistance Program](#) drop-down page labeled “Energy Assistance Program Materials”

Primary link: Please share this link to the Energy Assistance Program home page.

mn.gov/energyassistance

Latest news release to share:

<http://mn.gov/commerce/media/news/index.jsp?id=17-500590>

Flyers: for printed posters

<https://mn.gov/commerce-stat/other/20210927-eap-flyer.jpg>

Please consider posting in public/high-traffic areas, such as grocery and convenience stores, lobby or laundry rooms for multifamily housing, public events such as farmers' markets. If you need support for printing/ mailing posters, contact Commerce Communications Director Mo Schriener at mo.schriner@state.mn.us.

Social media posts: Three options...

- 1) Share posts about the Energy Assistance Program from the Department of Commerce accounts:
 - a. @MNCommerce [Facebook account](#)
 - b. @MNCommerce [Twitter account](#)
- 2) Copy and paste the posts below, using IMAGES as noted.
- 3) Tailor your own posts: Please use this hashtag #MNEnergyAssistance
The hashtag will allow Commerce and our partners to help track and amplify posts.

Social media posts

Energy Assistance covers WATER BILLS

WATER #1:

Need help to pay your water bill?

Minnesota's Energy Assistance Program now covers water bills.

And more Minnesotans are eligible than ever before.

See @MNCommerce for more info. Apply at mn.gov/energyassistance

#MNEnergyAssistance

WATER #2:

What do you do when you can't afford your water bill?

Apply for Minnesota's Energy Assistance Program.

NEW in 2021: The program can help pay energy AND water bills.

See @MNCommerce for more info. Apply at mn.gov/energyassistance

#MNEnergyAssistance

Energy Assistance EXPANDS

EXPAND #1:

Need help to keep the lights on?

Get up to \$1,600 to help pay your energy bills.

More Minnesotans are eligible for energy assistance than ever before.

Apply at mn.gov/energyassistance

#MNEnergyAssistance

EXPAND #2:

Wondering how to keep the heat on in your home this winter?

Apply for Minnesota's energy assistance program today.

Get up to \$1,600 to help pay energy bills.

You could get \$1,200 more to cover past-due bills.

Apply at mn.gov/energyassistance

#MNEnergyAssistance

Article for newsletter/ website

More Minnesotans than ever before can get help to pay energy and water bills

This year, Minnesotans can access greater financial assistance and newly expanded protections to keep their homes warm and lights on through Minnesota's Energy Assistance Program and Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule.

NEW IN 2021:

More Minnesotans than ever qualify for the Energy Assistance Program: Over 600,000 Minnesota households are income-eligible for Energy Assistance, significantly expanding who can receive this essential help. Homeowners *and renters* can qualify for energy assistance. You could **receive up to \$1,600 for energy bills** and may qualify for an **additional \$1,200** to cover past-due bills.

The Cold Weather Rule goes into effect earlier (October 1) and lasts later (April 30). Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule (CWR), which is administered by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, protects residential utility customers from having electric or natural gas service shut off.

Water bill assistance is newly available and households can also qualify for weatherization. By submitting one application through the Energy Assistance Program, households could qualify for payments to cover both water and energy bills, and qualify them for the Minnesota Weatherization Program, which helps households with home improvements to conserve energy and lower their energy costs permanently.

How do you apply for the Energy Assistance Program? Request an application or find your local service provider with one of these options: 1). Search online for "Minnesota energy assistance" 2). Go online: mn.gov/energyassistance 3). Call 800-657-3710 and press 1

How do you sign up for Cold Weather Rule protection? Contact your natural gas or electric company and request a Cold Weather Rule (CWR) payment plan. Payment plans can be established at any time during the CWR season. If you are unable to agree on a

payment amount, you have the right to appeal with your natural gas or electric company. The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission Consumer Affairs Office is available to assist.