



Coalition to Keep Indiana Warm



April Letter from the Chair

Spring is upon us and the majority of energy assistance programs have been going full tilt since early fall. This month's issue of the Coalition to Keep Indiana Warm (CKIW) will focus on the various energy programs offered by members of the Coalition and the numbers of Hoosiers assisted throughout the state. Take a look at this month's issue and notice the efforts of utilities; low-income advocates; governmental agencies; and private companies to educate, assist, and inform consumers. As the moratorium for utility disconnection ended March 17, 2008, it has been essential to have so many partners that work with consumers to bridge the gap in assistance and keep the utilities on.

It is truly unique to have all parties that affect low-income energy programs at the same table. I hope that this spirit of cooperation among CKIW members will inspire you to join us. 2008 will be a challenging year for the CKIW, as we move forward with the strategic goals of increased energy efficiency education for consumers, reducing demand for energy resources, increased media awareness around energy efficiency issues, and permanent funding for CKIW.

CKIW engages all that have an interest in working towards collaborative solutions for a more secure energy environment for low-income households. Join us as we work towards our strategic goals and plan for the future of energy efficiency programs in Indiana.

Sincerely,
Erica Burrin, Co-Chair
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Inside this edition:

Page 1

- o *April Letter from Chair*

Page 2

- o *Assistance updates*
- o *Duke Energy Assistance info*
- o *Conservation Corner*

Page 3

- o *Building Bridges out of poverty*

Coalition to Keep Indiana Warm 2008 Meeting Dates

May 15, 2008
July 17, 2008
September 18, 2008
November 20, 2008

Purpose: To increase public awareness of low-income energy issues and develop and implement strategies that address these issues through a collaboration of consumers, utilities, service providers and government agencies.

Conservation Corner

You can save energy and lower your utility bills by reducing your hot water usage. It takes energy to heat water!

-Fix leaky faucets

-Don't let hot water run unnecessarily, turn off the faucet after washing food or hands

-Take short showers; that will also reduce the moisture in the air that can lead to mold or mildew

-Set your water heater no higher than 120 degrees

Tax Rate Changes Affect EAP Program

On April 1, 2008, the Indiana state gross retail tax will increase from 6% to 7%. This will affect EAP clients and utility vendors as transactions involving home energy assistance are currently exempt from the state sales tax. The Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA), the administrative entity for EAP, will update its Daily Transmittal form. This form is sent by the local Community Action Agencies to the various utility vendors to indicate client enrollment in EAP and their monetary benefit. It also calculates the "virtual sales tax" that is exempt from collection by the utility.

To learn more about the legislative act that amended the Indiana Code concerning taxation of "home energy" go to:

<http://www.in.gov/legislative/bills/2007/HE/HE1037.1.html>

ASSISTANCE UPDATE

The Energy Assistance Program (EAP) completed its 25th week of operation on March 28th for the 2007-08 heating season. The program has served 148,089 households statewide to date. This exceeds, by over two thousand, the total number of households served the previous winter. EAP is scheduled to end on May 15, 2008.

Benefits dollars paid for heat and electricity, on behalf of the program's low-income clients, have surpassed \$46 Million. 35% of the eligible households have required additional crisis funds on top of their normal benefit. This increase of 3%, plus the additional dollars available for bulk fuel clients, has bumped the average household award to \$318 from \$308 the previous year.

IHCDA also plans to implement the Summer Cool program beginning on June 1, 2008, funding permitting. This program awards \$50 toward an eligible household's electric bill and in certain medical situations a room air conditioner. Box fans, a staple of the programs past, will not be awarded this summer. However, IHCDA hopes to continue its partnership with the Channel 6 Fan Club in central Indiana. This program does provide a limited number of fans that are distributed through the Community Action network.

Duke Energy Assistance Update

During the 2007-2008 heating season, Duke Energy provided \$500,000 in assistance dollars to low income households. Customers and employees donated an additional \$70,000. As of March 31, 2008, nearly all of the dollars have been distributed.

Eligible Duke Energy customers can also take advantage of a free audit offered by our Home Energy House Call Program. The Home Energy House Call program is a **free** service that will provide customers with personalized energy information unique to their home and energy practices. This service is available to Duke Energy customers that meet the qualifications below.

Call 1-877-388-7676 to sign up.

How do customers qualify?

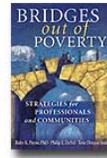
You qualify for a **free** Home Energy House Call if you:

- are a Duke Energy customer
- own your single-family home and have lived there for at least four months
- have an electric water heater and/or electric heat

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Building Bridges Out of Poverty

What is *Bridges out of Poverty*?

Bridges is a unique and powerful tool that reaches out to millions of service providers and businesses whose daily work connects them with the lives of people in poverty. It provides case studies, detailed analysis, helpful charts and exercise, and specific solutions that an organization can implement to improve services, opportunities and outcomes for people in poverty.

Bridges Collaborative Group of Southern Indiana

The Bridges Collaborative Group of Southern Indiana was formed in 2006 by Outreach Ministries, Lampion Center, Legal Aid Society and Aurora. Since then S.I.N.E., Deaconess and Vectren joined the Advisory Group.

What is Vectren's role with the Bridges Collaborative Group of Southern Indiana?

Vectren has committed Beth Pace to be a certified *Bridges* trainer. This commitment will provide internal and external community wide educational blitz about the experience of poverty. Once one has acquired an understanding of poverty, the potential for anger and frustration (and prejudice?), that employees may feel when working with people in poverty, can be lessened.

The group is currently working with local nonprofits and employers in the community who either employ low wage workers and/or are in direct contact with those in poverty in order to offer this training to staff.

For more information:

www.ahaprocess.com

www.destination-home.info/bridges.htm

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