



October 9, 2020

Utility bill assistance available for Iowa households financially impacted by COVID-19

Governor Reynolds recently announced a new program designed to provide eligible Iowa households up to \$2,000 towards their electric, natural gas and water bills if they are at risk of disconnection due to an inability to pay because of a COVID-19 related loss of income.

As part of the federal CARES Act funding allocated to Iowa, the Residential Utility Disruption Prevention Program is managed by the Iowa Economic Development Authority and the Iowa Finance Authority. Payments through the program will be made directly to utility providers and applied to the applicants' accounts.

"We're pleased to help spread the word about this state program, which will provide some financial relief to local families in need during the pandemic," said WIPCO General Manager Jeff Bean. "Applicants are welcome to contact our office at 800-253-5189 for assistance with required documentation if needed."

To be eligible to receive assistance, a residential electric, natural gas and/or water utility consumer must have:

- A primary Iowa residence with active residential utility accounts (renters may apply as long as the utility account is in the applicant's name);
- An unpaid utility bill balance or have previously entered into a payment plan with their utility provider;
- An annual income that is 80% of the median family income, based on county and household size;
- Experienced a COVID-19 loss of income (job loss, reduction in hours, reduction in pay) on or after March 17, 2020, that resulted in hardship in paying bills for electric, natural gas, and/or water utility service provided between March 17, 2020, and October 31, 2020.

Applications will be accepted at www.iowahousingrecovery.com through November 20, 2020, or until funding is depleted, whichever comes first. Assistance will be awarded based on application completeness and eligibility in order received until all funds have been exhausted. The website includes answers to frequently asked questions and complete eligibility requirements. You can also call Iowa's Utility Recovery Hotline at 515-348-8976 or 877-463-3269 for more information about this program.

If you receive electricity from Western Iowa Power Cooperative and need assistance with documentation for your application, please contact WIPCO at 800-253-5189 or email wipco@wipco.com.