



Energy Assistance Program

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THE CONSEQUENCES OF UNAFFORDABLE HEATING COSTS

- **Hunger and malnutrition increase when people are forced to choose between heating and eating. Loss of power may cause loss of food.**
- **Personal health suffers as people are not able to fill prescriptions, must skip or reduce their medications, or go without needed medical or dental care.**
- **The elderly, people with disabilities or medical conditions, and small children are put at risk of hypothermia. Mold & mildew may increase, causing respiratory illnesses.**
 - **Health & safety is endangered by using alternative heat or light sources such as kerosene heaters, candles, lanterns, fireplaces or charcoal briquettes .**
 - **Without heat or lights people vacate their homes. Many never regain their housing and their children leave school.**
- **People are forced to move out of the utility service area with no option of returning if they can't pay the arrearage plus deposit and reconnect fees.**
 - **Without utility service people may find their only option is to return to unsafe or unhealthy living situations which they had previously fled.**
 - **Loss of utility service contributes to children going into foster care, as living without utility service can be considered neglect.**
 - **People in subsidized housing risk losing their housing voucher if their power is shut off. Evictions increase in many apartments, which prohibit tenants from having their gas or electricity shut off for any extended period of time.**
 - **The added stress and pressure can increase the risk of depression, domestic violence or criminal activity.**