

WELCOME

TO THE 2023 BE UTILITY WISE
OF THE TRI REGION ENERGY & HUMAN RESOURCES CONFERENCE



NOVEMBER 17, 2023

“Pathway to Resiliency”



Be UtilityWise

Be Utility Wise provides utility education and networking opportunities to human service providers that partner to promote consumer awareness, utility education and healthy living in Pennsylvania

2023 TRI-REGION BE UTILITY WISE COMMITTEE

Christina Chase-Pettis
Shari Williams

PA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

Kristen Kelly
April Petras

PPL ELECTRIC UTILITIES

Tammy Ravier

COLUMBIA GAS

Gabrielle Watts-Turner

UGI UTILITIES

Shadia Maurtua

FIRSTENERGY

Jessica Rice

PA AMERICAN WATER

Judy McCoy Jordan

VEOLIA WATER

#CallUtilitiesNow



PAST-DUE BALANCES

**Call utilities to
address overdue
bills and
accumulated
balances.**



ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

**Call utilities to
enroll in utility-run
customer assistance
programs &
discuss other aid.**



PAYMENT PLANS

**Call utilities to
review payment
plan options to
stay current
& connected.**

#CallUtilitiesNow

Columbia Gas[®]
of Pennsylvania

A NiSource Company

1-800-537-7431

PAPUC

1-800-692-7380

 **VEOLIA**

1-888-942-8080

AQUASM

1-888-282-6816 (Dollar Energy Fund)

UGI

Energy to do more[®]

1-800-844-9276

Met-Ed

A FirstEnergy Company

1-888-282-6816 (Dollar Energy Fund)

ppl 

PPL Electric Utilities

1-800-358-6623


**PENNSYLVANIA
AMERICAN WATER**

H₂O Help
 **to Others
Program**

1-888-282-6816

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS



THANK YOU!

for joining us today!





**CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE
PROGRAMS**

H2O Help to Others Program™

H2O Help to Others Program™ Grants, bill discounts and water-saving devices and education for qualifying low-income households.

Grants of up to \$500/year

Water Discount: A 40% to 80% discount on the monthly service fee and a 25% to 80% discount on the monthly volumetric charges (saves the average residential customer \$19.93 to \$55.39/month.*

Wastewater Discount: A 30% to 80% discount on the total wastewater charges (saves the average residential customer \$42.00 to \$88.18/month.*


Water-saving devices and education.

For more information or to apply: Visit Dollar Energy Fund online at dollarenergy.org/myapp or call 888-282-6816.

**Discount varies based on income.*




Aqua Assistance Programs





**Need help with your water or wastewater bills?
We're here to help.**


Learn more about CAP, Aqua Pennsylvania's financial assistance program available year-round for eligible customers.



SCAN TO LEARN MORE

 Apply online at
www.hardshiptools.org/MyApp

 Apply over the phone at
1-888-282-6816



An Essential Utility Company

Programs available:

- CAP
- Leak Repair
- Conservation Kits
- Hardship Fund

Questions?

Contact our Programs team at

AquaCAP@Aquaamerica.com

Columbia Gas Customer Programs

- ▶ CAP
- ▶ CARES
- ▶ SDAF
- ▶ ERP
- ▶ LIURP
- ▶ Audits and Rebates
- ▶ Warmwise Residential

Contact Columbia Gas:
Columbiagaspa.com
1-888-460-4332
1-800-537-7431

Tammy Ravier-CARES
Cell: 717-668-9782
travier@nisource.com





Pennsylvania Customer Assistance Program (PCAP)

- PCAP helps customers by billing approximately the same amount each month on the budget plan. They will receive credits on the bill to either reduce the monthly budget bill or help pay a past due balance, or both.
- PCAP is available to active residential customers at or below 150% FPL.
- **Online:** pabillassist.com
- **Phone:** Dollar Energy Fund 888-282-6816

Customer Assistance & Referral Evaluation Services Program (CARES)

- CARES provides assistance on a short-term basis to payment-troubled residential customers who are experiencing a temporary hardship.
- CARES is available to any active residential customer.
- **Online:** firstenergycorp.com/corporate/contact_us.html
- **Phone** - Call 800-545-7741

Dollar Energy Fund

- The Dollar Energy Fund is an emergency hardship fund designed to help residential customers who have suffered a recent financial hardship.
- DEF is available to active residential customers at or below 250% FPL.
- **Online:** dollarenergy.org
- **Phone:** Dollar Energy Fund 888-282-6816

WARM Program - Low Income Usage Reduction Program (LIURP)

- WARM Participants receive an in-home energy evaluation, work with a trained energy educator to create an energy-savings plan and can receive energy-saving items
- WARM is available to active residential customers at or below 200% FPL.
- **Online:** pabillassist.com
- **Phone:** Dollar Energy Fund 888-282-6816

PPL Programs for Income-Eligible Customers



OnTrack – provides a reduced fixed monthly payment, as well as debt forgiveness for customers at or below 150% of FPL.

Operation HELP – provides cash grants for home electric bills for customers at or below 250% of FPL.

WRAP – offers free energy-saving products and services for homeowners and renters at or below 200% of FPL to help reduce electricity use.

CARES – protection from shutoff for customers with a temporary hardship.

To apply, visit ppllectric.com/billhelp or call 1-800-DIAL-PPL

PAPUC Resources

PA Public Utility Commission
Bureau of Consumer Services
400 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Consumer Hotline: 1-800-692-7380
For people with speech or hearing loss,
dial 7-1-1 (Telecommunications Relay Service)

www.puc.pa.gov
www.PAPowerSwitch.com
www.PAGasSwitch.com



Customer Assistance Program (CAP)

CAP is a long-term arrangement with UGI that offers 3 main program benefits.

1. Personalized monthly payment
2. CAP Credits
3. Pre-Program arrearage forgiveness.

Must have an active account and be at or below 150% FPL

Operation Share

A grant available to UGI customers experiencing a temporary hardship (loss of job, death of wage earner, sickness, etc.) to help pay the arrears on their account.

Max grant = \$600

Must have an active account and be at or below 250% FPL.

Low Income Usage Reduction Program (LIURP)

For homes that have higher than average usage. A contractor will install energy saving measures in the home at no cost to the customer.

Must have an active account for at least 12 months, meet the usage requirements and be at or below 200% FPL

Customer Assistance Referrals Evaluation Services (CARES)

Provides short term assistance and referrals of payment-troubled customers to UGI Outreach Programs and local programs in the community.

No income guidelines.

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

Cash grant from the state sent directly to UGI.

Min \$300 Max \$1000

Crisis grant from the state to help stop term notice or reconnect service

Min \$25 Max \$1000

Need an application or have questions?

Call 1-800-UGI-WARM

Visit www.ugi.com/assistance-programs

Applications are processed at the local community-based organization in your area.

UGI LOW INCOME ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS





Veolia Cares may be able to assist you with overdue water bills!

A financial crisis can happen to anyone, regardless of age, income or family situation. These challenges are often due to unforeseen circumstances, such as a job loss or illness. We understand, and we're here to help.

Who is eligible?

The program is available to residential customers who:

- Have established water service with Veolia
- Are experiencing a financial crisis, such as a job loss or illness
- Have made a good faith payment of at least \$20 within 90 days of applying

For additional information

For more information about Pennsylvania Veolia Cares, or to apply for a grant, please visit cares.veolia.org, or contact us toll free at 1-888-942-8080.



**Grants up to \$300 for water and \$150 for Wastewater per year.
Conservation Kits provided to assist with water reduction.**



2023-2024 Program Year

LIHEAP is...
the
Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program

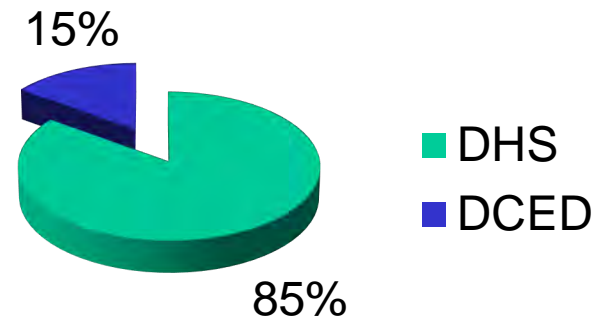
- A federally-funded block grant to help low-income households afford home energy costs
- Pennsylvania offers heating assistance and energy efficiency improvements

*Pennsylvania received **\$338 million** for the 2022-23 program year and projects receiving **~\$220 million** for 2023-24

Administered by the Department of Human Services (**DHS**)

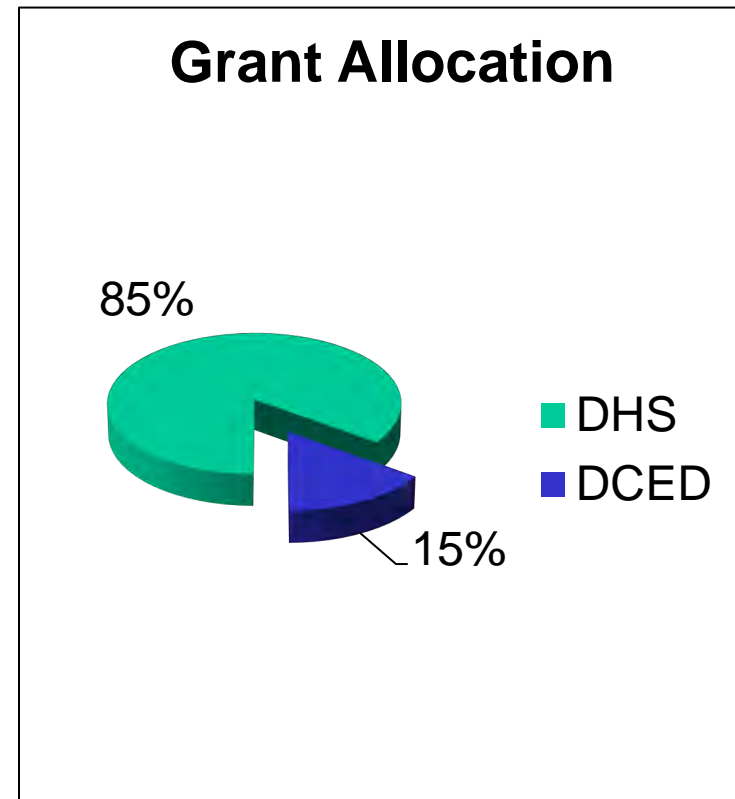
- LIHEAP Cash benefits
- LIHEAP Crisis benefits for fuel supply emergencies
- 67 County Assistance Offices (CAOs)

Grant Allocation



Administered by the
Department of Community
and Economic Development
(**DCED**):

- LIHEAP Weatherization Assistance
- LIHEAP Crisis benefits for inoperative heating systems (Crisis Weatherization)
- 35 Weatherization agencies



Some 2022-2023 stats:

LIHEAP Cash

- **593,024** applications
- **53%** approved
- Average benefit of **\$402**

LIHEAP Crisis

- **193,660** applications
- **76%** approved
- Average benefit of **\$688**



**LIHEAP assisted 312,169
PA households in 22-23**

23-24 Program Dates:

November 1st 2023 through April 5th 2024



LIHEAP Cash & Crisis Income Limits:

<u>Household Size</u>	<u>Limit (150% FPIG)</u>
1 person	\$21,870
2 persons	\$29,580
3 persons	\$37,290
4 persons	\$45,000
5 persons	\$52,710
6 persons	\$60,420
7 persons	\$68,130
8 persons	\$75,840
For each additional person add:	\$7,710

LIHEAP Cash

- A benefit to help offset winter heating costs
- Grants range from \$300 to \$1000
- In most cases the benefit is sent directly to a participating utility or fuel vendor

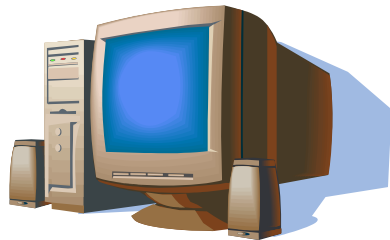


LIHEAP Crisis

- For home-heating emergencies
- Benefits from \$25 to \$1000
- No application needed if the household was already approved for LIHEAP



How to Apply



RESET

2023-24 SOLICITUD PARA EL PROGRAMA PARA ASISTENCIA DE ENERGÍA PARA HOGARES DE BAJOS INGRESOS (LIHEAP)

Para solicitar el beneficio de asistencia para energía, debe completar todos los componentes del formulario y enviarlo donde sea la "X" de color rojo. TAMBIÉN PUEDE SOLICITAR EL BENEFICIO EN LINEA EN WWW.COMPASS.STATE.PA.US, o encuentre la dirección de la Oficina de Asistencia de su condado en WWW.DHS.PA.GOV.

SU NOMBRE Y DIRECCIÓN Dirección de la Oficina de Asistencia del Condado **DHS: USE ONLY**

1 Complete esta sección con los datos del cabeza de familia.
*Usar los códigos de la página 2 para ayudar a proporcionar los detalles.

Nombre (incluye apellido, nombre, inicial del segundo nombre) Fecha de nacimiento Sexo Número de Seguro Social
Dirección particular (incluya calle y número, tipo de apartamento, ciudad, estado y código postal*4)
Dirección postal, si es diferente (incluya calle, tipo de apartamento, ciudad, estado y código postal*4)
Condado en el que reside Número de unidades Ciudad/Aldea Zona geográfica (opcional) Municipio (opcional) Código ZIP

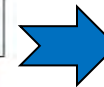
2 What language do you prefer? ¿Qué idioma prefiere usted? English/Inglés Spanish/Español
Other/Otro (specify/especifique)
Do you need an interpreter? ¿Necesita un intérprete? Yes/Sí No
If yes, what language? En caso afirmativo, ¿de qué idioma?

3 Usted:
 alquila y los gastos de calefacción están incluidos alquila una vivienda subsidiada del programa "Section 8" con gastos de calefacción incluidos
 alquila y los gastos de calefacción no están incluidos alquila una vivienda subsidiada del programa "Section 8" con gastos de calefacción no incluidos
 vive con este grupo familiar sin ser pariente es propietario o está comprando su vivienda Otros:
Si el gasto de calefacción está incluido en su alquiler, adjunte una nota del propietario que le alquila la vivienda en la que declara que el gasto de calefacción está incluido, así como el tipo de combustible utilizado.

4 ¿Cuál es su fuente principal de calefacción? Escoja el tipo de energía que calienta su casa o que se está usando en su fuente de calor no funciona. Adjunte una copia de su último recibo o una carta de la compañía de luz o combustible que indique el tipo de combustible y que usted ha sido aceptado como cliente.
 Electricidad Aceite Carbón Gas natural Querosén Gas propano o envasado Combustibles mixtos Madera/Otros

4a ¿Necesita electricidad para el funcionamiento de su fuente de calor principal (calor secundario)? Sí No

5 Marque si algo de lo siguiente se aplica y explique si es necesario:
 Servicio de electricidad suspendido Tiene un aviso de suspensión para la electricidad La fuente de calor principal no funciona
 Servicio de gas suspendido Tiene un aviso de suspensión para el gas Se acabó el combustible Se acabará el combustible en 15 días Explique: _____



Pre-Season Mailings

- Beginning August 28, 2023
- Pre-filled applications and COMPASS postcards



The Pre-season LIHEAP Application

2023-24 APPLICATION FOR THE LOW INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHEAP)

To apply for Energy Assistance, you must complete all questions front and back and sign at the red "X". Be sure your correct and complete name and address is entered below. If incorrect, circle out and PRINT correctly in space provided below.
YOU CAN ALSO APPLY ONLINE AT WWW.COMPASS.STATE.PA.US BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 11, 2023.

YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS | **Your county assistance office address**

Use this COMPASS registration number [] to apply online at www.compass.state.pa.us.

If you do not understand these instructions, contact your local county assistance office.

1 Please complete this section for the head of household.
**Use the codes from page 2 to help provide the details.*

Name (include Last, First Middle Initial)	Date of Birth	Sex	Social Security Number
Home Address (include Street, Apt. Number, City, State & ZIP Code+4)			
Mailing Address if different (include Street, Apt. Number, City, State & ZIP Code+4)			
County You Live In	Phone Number	Citizenship	Place (Optional)
			Ethnicity (Optional)
			Mental Status

If you are currently receiving Cash, Medical Assistance, or SNAP benefits, may we use the income you have on file? Yes No

2 What language do you prefer? ¿Qué idioma prefiere usted?
 English/Inglés Spanish/Español Other/Otro (specify/especifica)
Do you need an interpreter? ¿Necesita un intérprete? Yes/Sí No
If yes, what language? En caso afirmativo, ¿de qué idioma?

3 Are You:

<input type="checkbox"/> Renting with heat included	<input type="checkbox"/> Renting subsidized housing/Section 8 housing with heat included
<input type="checkbox"/> Renting with heat not included	<input type="checkbox"/> Renting subsidized housing/Section 8 housing with heat not included
<input type="checkbox"/> An unrelated roomer	<input type="checkbox"/> An owner or are you buying your home <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

If heat is included in your rent, attach a note from your landlord stating that heat is included and what type of heat is used.

4 What is your main heating source? Choose the type of energy that heats your home or is being used if your main heating source is not working. Attach a copy of your last bill or a statement from a utility or fuel dealer stating the type of fuel and that you are accepted as a customer.

Electric Fuel Oil Coal Natural Gas Kerosene Propane or Bottled Gas Blended Fuel Wood/Other

4a Do you need electricity to run your main heating source (secondary heat)? Yes No

5 Which utility company or fuel dealer do you want to receive your LIHEAP grant? Write their name and address, and your account information.

Name of Utility Company or Fuel Dealer	Account Number
Address (include Street, City, State & ZIP Code+4)	Name on Account

DEHS USE ONLY
 CRISIS CASH
Application Registration Number:
Date:
City:
County:
Phone Number:
Date of Birth:
Sex:
Social Security Number:
Mental Status:
 Report Approval
Date:

Page 1

The COMPASS Postcard



Apply for LIHEAP on your mobile phone or online!

You have the opportunity to apply for LIHEAP earlier than everyone else. You can now use the **myCOMPASS PA** mobile app to complete your application, submit documentation, and track your benefits throughout the year.

How do I apply?

Using the **myCOMPASS PA** mobile app, log in to an existing account or create an account with your LIHEAP registration number and Social Security number.



Or go to www.compass.state.pa.us and select "Use LIHEAP Registration Number." Then enter your registration number and Social Security number.

Where is my registration number?

Your registration number can be found on the reverse side of this postcard. Your LIHEAP application will be pre-filled with most of your information – you'll just need to verify its accuracy.

Need help?

If you have questions about filling out your application, contact the LIHEAP Helpline at 1-866-857-7095. Need access to the internet? Computers are located at your local county assistance office.



HSEA 54 7/18

Welcome to COMPASS

The fast and easy way to access benefits - anytime and anywhere

COMPASS is an online tool for Pennsylvanians to apply for many health and human service programs and manage benefit information. Click on the Apply Now button below to begin.

APPLY NOW

DO I QUALIFY?



Renew Your Benefits

Log in to your My COMPASS Account to renew your benefits. If you do not have a My COMPASS Account, click on the link below.



Finish Your Application

Log in to your My COMPASS Account to finish an application you stopped and saved. If you do not have a My COMPASS Account, click on the link below.



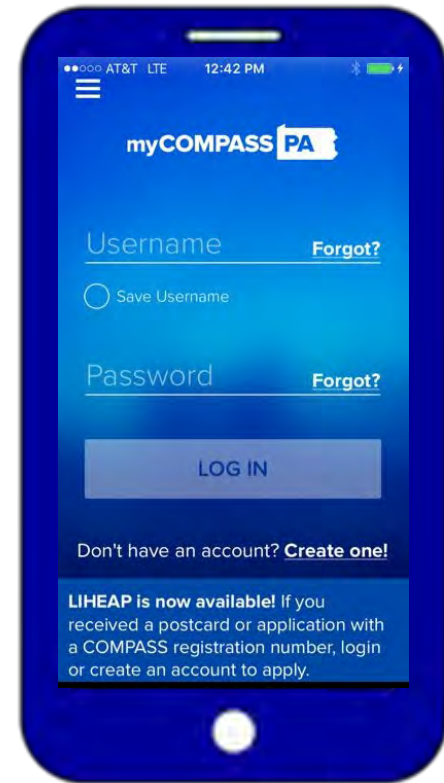
Use LIHEAP Registration Number

Log in to your My COMPASS Account to submit a LIHEAP application with your registration number. If you do not have a My COMPASS Account, click on the link below.



LIHEAP on myCOMPASS PA

- The myCOMPASS PA app offers a LIHEAP application.
- The LIHEAP application is ***exclusively for pre-season applicants.***
- The myCOMPASS PA app can also be used to check the status of applications or benefits, complete Semi-Annual Reports, and to upload documents to DHS.



Application Process

1. The application is reviewed to determine if it is complete.
2. Verification is requested from the applicant if needed.
3. The applicant has 15 days to provide the verification.

RECEIVED
NOV 1 2023

Application Process (continued)

4. The application is approved or rejected within 30 days of receipt.

5. The applicant receives a notice explaining the eligibility decision.

ARMSTRONG CAG
120 NORTH WATER STREET
KITTTANNING, PA 15201



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF INCOME MAINTENANCE
Notice ID: 9001241036 | C.2051

Pnkyl Pnkyl
Lheap August Release
Do Not Use
Mechanicsburg, PA 17011

Mail Date: 08/15/2018
Record ID: 037927130

COMPASS: The fast and easy way to apply for benefits
www.compass.state.pa.us

The Department of Human Services (DHS) is writing to you about your Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) benefits.

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

You *qualify* for a LIHEAP Cash Benefit:
- \$788.00 will be sent to TEST UTILITY COMPANY on August 22, 2018.
- This is a one-time only payment for the 2018-2019 heating season.

If you do not agree with this decision, fill out the enclosed Fair Hearing form and mail or give it to your caseworker. It must be postmarked or received on or before September 14, 2018.

We determined your countable annual income, representing 12 months (08/2017 - 07/2018), to be **\$1,920.00**.

The income limit to qualify is **\$30,630.00**.

LIHEAP funds in your account with your fuel dealer and/or utility provider must be used by June 30 of the next LIHEAP program year or they will be returned to DHS.

Income Details

This is the monthly income based on what you told us and/or information we got from other data sources. Allowable deductions and expenses may be different for each program.


Member	Source	07/2018
PNKYI PNKYI	GFHGF	\$200.00
Total Income		\$200.00

Record ID: 037927130

Mail Date: 08/15/2018

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900124103530000107
PA162



Client Contact Information

- LIHEAP Client Hotline
 - 1-866-857-7095
- COMPASS
 - www.compass.state.pa.us
- LIHEAP Website
 - <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Pages/LIHEAP.aspx>

Vendor Contact Information

- LIHEAP Vendor Helpline
 - 1-877-537-9517
- Vendor Mailbox
 - RA-LIHEAPVendors@pa.gov
- LIHEAP Vendor Website
 - <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/providers/Providers/Pages/LIHEAP-Vendors.aspx>



Questions?



GET CONNECTED.
GET HELP.

211

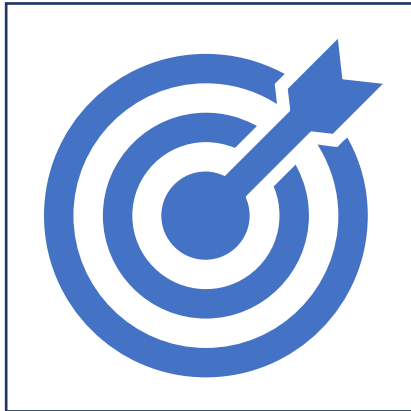
PA 211 – Deep Community Relationships, Statewide Contact Center Capacity, Navigation Support



GET CONNECTED.
GET HELP.

211

PA 211 Mission and Vision



Mission: PA 211 is the first, most essential resource for all Pennsylvanians needing help. We are highly trained, local experts who make finding help easy, 24/7, with compassion and understanding.



Vision: Connecting people with the information and resources they need to build healthy and safe communities.

**GET CONNECTED.
GET HELP.**

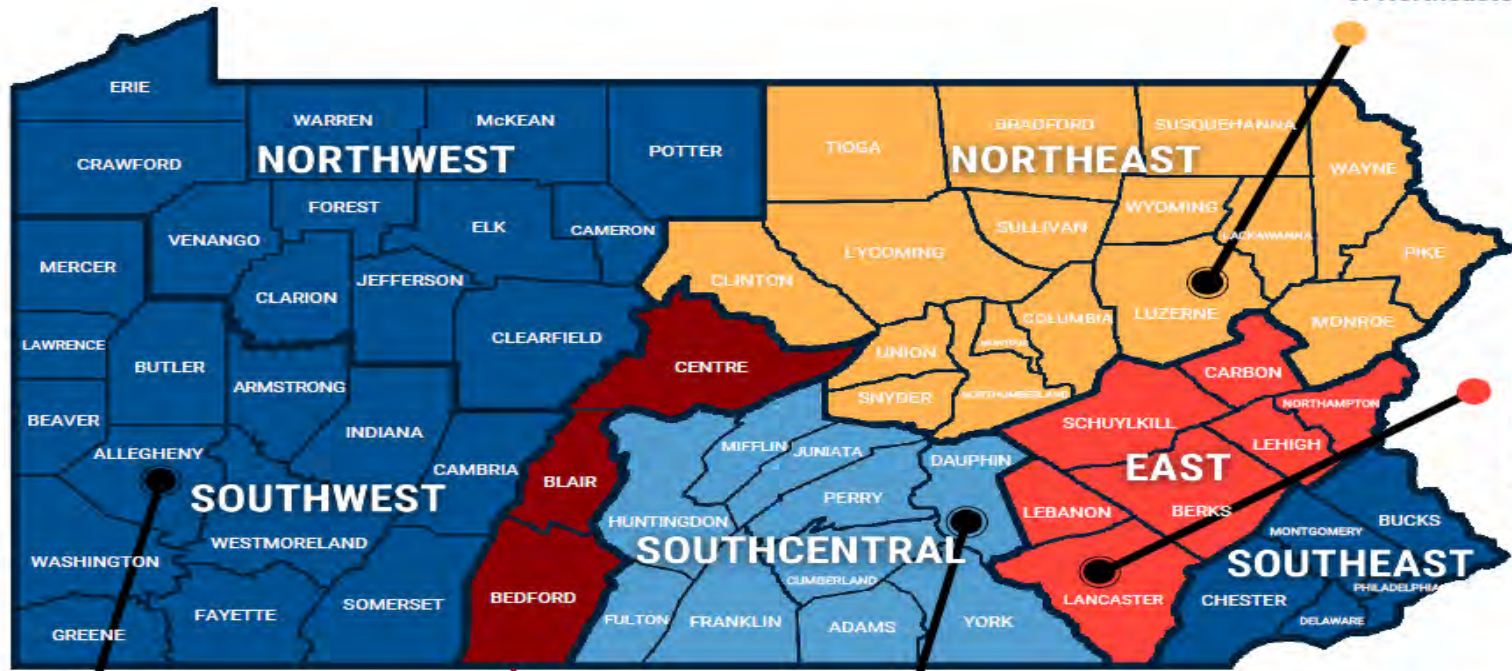
211

Where We Are

PA 211 REGIONAL CONTACT CENTERS

**PA 211 NORTHEAST
WILKES-BARRE**
Operated by Family Service Association
of Northeastern Pennsylvania

**24/7 SERVICE IN
ALL PA COUNTIES**



**PA 211
SOUTHWEST
PITTSBURGH**
Operated by United Way of
Southwestern Pennsylvania
Serving the SW, NW, and SE regions

*Counties served by the
SW, SC, or NE regions*

**PA 211
SOUTHCENTRAL
HARRISBURG**
Operated by Contact Helpline

211 covers the entire state of Pennsylvania, with regional centers handling the cultivation of community resource information



What We Do

- Connect personally with communities and community agencies
- Curate resources related to social determinants of health
 - Government, faith based, non-profit, community service and special population programs
- Provide competent and empathetic referrals to individuals with resource needs
- Housing intake and assessment for the federal Housing and Urban Development PA Continuums of Care
- Closed Loop Navigation

How We Do It

- Statewide Health and Human Services Information & Referral system
- Available 24/7/365 by phone and web. Text (898211) and chat during defined hours.
- Free and confidential connections to health and community services within local, statewide, and national communities
- Database of over 8,600 agencies and 27,000 programs that address SDOH needs for Pennsylvanians.
- Average about 25,000 contacts per month, and 35,000 web sessions per month.
- Fully equipped with API technologies that enable us to share community resource data directly with healthcare providers.

Direct Database Search

- Direct access to PA 211 database 24/7/365 via <http://www.contacthelpline.org>
- Webchat with a Resource Navigator during direct database search
- Search available in a number of different languages

Housing & Homelessness

- Complete housing and homeless assessments for 33 counties
- Respond to housing-related calls
- Complete homeless triage forms for York and Dauphin counties

GET CONNECTED.
GET HELP.

211

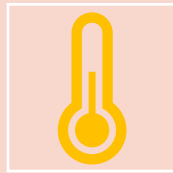
PA 211's Unique Value-Add to Communities



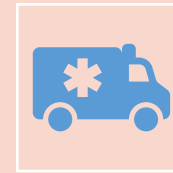
211 provides technology-centered access to community resources through publicly accessible websites, text, and/or chat, and it also maintains a network of contact centers that provide live, human-to-human navigation to community resources daily.



211 is the only community resource database curated as an asset to the community. Community-based organizations of all sizes and complexities rely on 211 as their billboard and megaphone to get the word out to people who need these resources.



211 collectively can provide the closest thing the United States has to a real-time barometer of human need.



The national 211 network has a unique capacity to quickly surge and meet the needs of communities impacted by disasters.

GET CONNECTED.
GET HELP.

211

PA 211 Interactions for 2022



928,679

Website Searches



254,796

Calls

(Callers had more than one request)



19,247

Texts



3,176

Live Chats

(Chats translated into 75 Languages)



11,896 Agencies



22,626 Sites



39,669 Programs



86,620 Services





2022 Service Report (Referrals)

Housing and Shelter



160,929

Utilities



54,352

Employment & Income



27,862

Food



18,000

Clothing and Household



12,302

Healthcare & COVID-19



9,448

Transportation



8,649

Mental Health and Drug Use Disorder



8,164

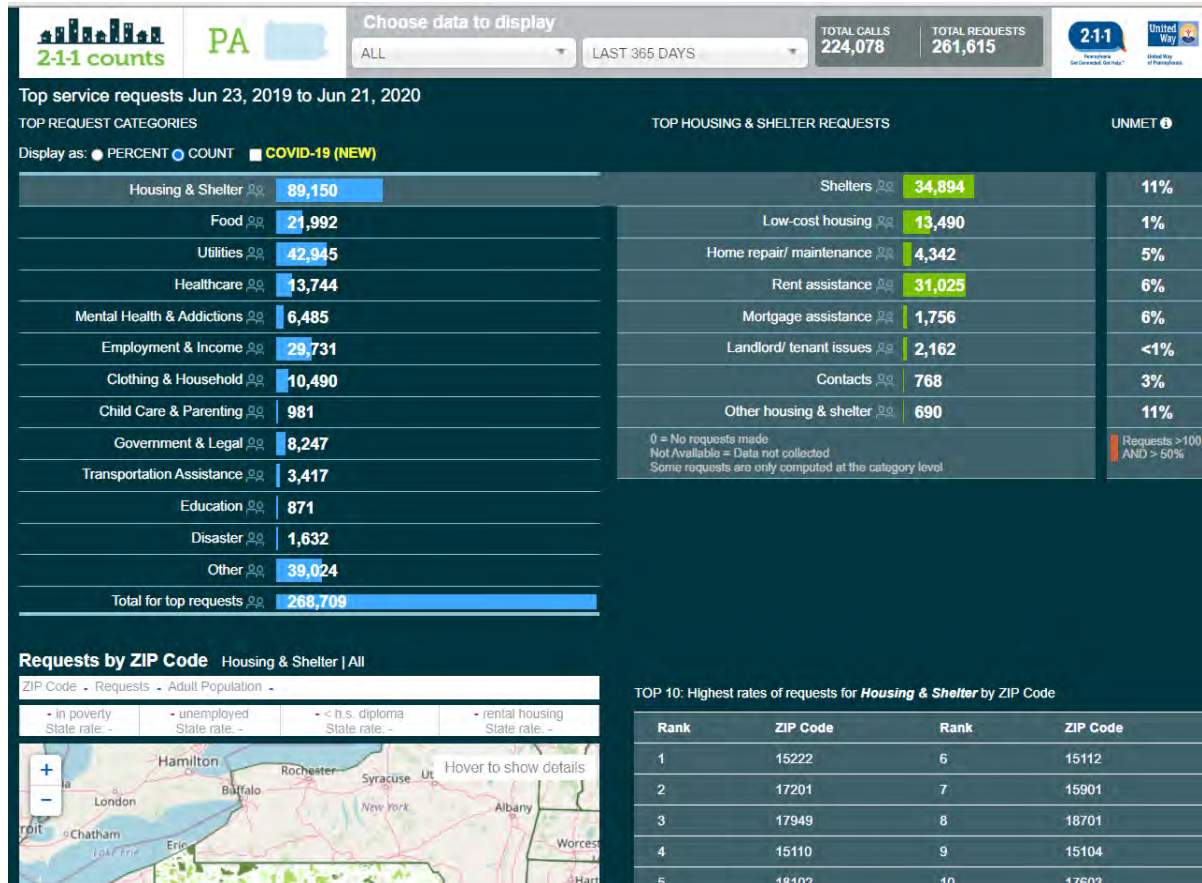
Helping People Connect to What They Need



GET CONNECTED.
GET HELP.

211

211 Public Needs Data



- <https://pa.211counts.org>
- View data from multiple vantage points
- Dive deeper into general need categories
- Look at met and unmet needs

QUESTIONS



Be Utility Wise

November 17, 2023

Elizabeth Marx, Executive Director
Pennsylvania Utility Law Project
emarxpulp@pautilitylawproject.org



Pennsylvania Utility Law Project

PULP is a statewide legal services project of Regional Housing Legal Services and is a member of the Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network.

PULP's mission is to secure just and equitable access to safe and affordable utility services for Pennsylvanians experiencing poverty.

We work to achieve our mission by empowering individuals and communities through:

- Legal Representation, Groups, and Individuals
- Education and Training
- Policy Advocacy
- Supportive Services
- Consultation





**Overview:
Pennsylvania Legal
Services**

Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network

Pennsylvania's official statewide network of independent civil legal aid programs that provide free legal assistance to low-income individuals and families.

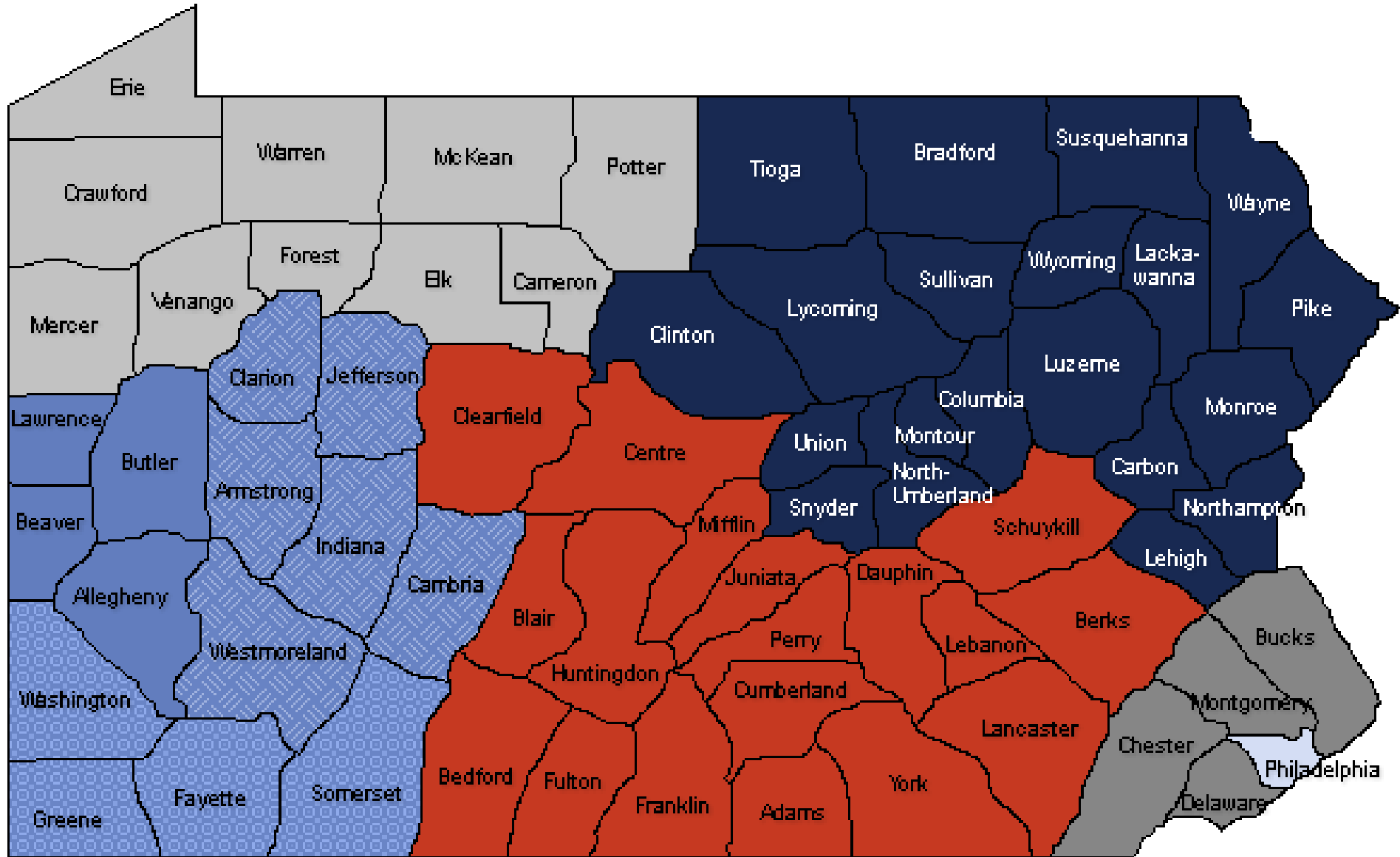


Local Legal Services Programs

Regional Legal Aid Programs Serve All 67 Counties:

- Neighborhood Legal Services
- Summit Legal Services
 - *Formerly Laurel Legal & Southwest Pa. Legal Services*
- Northwest Legal Services
- MidPenn Legal Services
- North Penn Legal Services
- Community Legal Services
- Philadelphia Legal Assistance
- Legal Aid of Southeast Pennsylvania

www.palegalaid.net



Local Legal Services Programs

Areas of Practice:

- Custody
- Eviction
- Landlord / Tenant Disputes
- Foreclosure / Homeownership
- Employment
- Public Benefits
- Consumer Rights / Credit
- Bankruptcy
- Fair Housing
- Social Security / Disability

Eligibility for services varies by program and project - most often 125% FPL.

www.palegalaid.net

Specialty Legal Services Programs

- **Pennsylvania Utility Law Project**

- www.pautilitylawproject.org
- Utility Access and Affordability

- **Pennsylvania Health Law Project**

- www.phlp.org
- Medicaid / Medical Assistance
- Managed and Long Term Care
- **Statewide Helpline: 800-274-3258**

- **Community Justice Project**

- <https://www.communityjusticeproject.org/>
- Class Action / Impact Litigation
- Housing, Public Benefits, Employment, and Immigration

- **Justice at Work**

- www.justiceatworklegalaid.org
- Wage Theft, Labor Trafficking, Work Discrimination, Immigration, Housing

- **Pennsylvania Institutional Law Project**

- www.pailp.org
- Rights of Incarcerated Individuals / Families

- **Regional Housing Legal Services**

- www.rhls.org
- Affordable Housing Development / Advocacy

Other Pennsylvania Legal Aid Programs

- **Pro Se Legal Assistance**

- www.palawhelp.org
- Provides information on civil legal issues.

- **Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence (PCADV)**

- www.pcadv.org/Find-Help
- Free, confidential, any time, any county in Pennsylvania.
- Resources and tools for safety planning, economic stability, housing, and other basic needs of victims of domestic violence.

- **SeniorLaw Helpline**

- www.seniorlawcenter.org
- 1-877-727-7529

Utility Insecurity

Table 1. Estimated Winter Heating Expenditures

2023-24 vs. 2022-23 winter heating seasons. "Average of All Sources" is a weighted average of winter heating expenditures by households using the four energy sources listed.

Winter Heating Season	Electricity	Natural Gas	Propane	Heating Oil	Average of All Sources
2022-23	\$1,357	\$787	\$1,476	\$2,094	\$1,118
2023-24	\$1,374	\$726	\$1,538	\$2,275	\$1,106
Percent Difference	1.2%	-7.8%	4.2%	8.7%	-1.1%

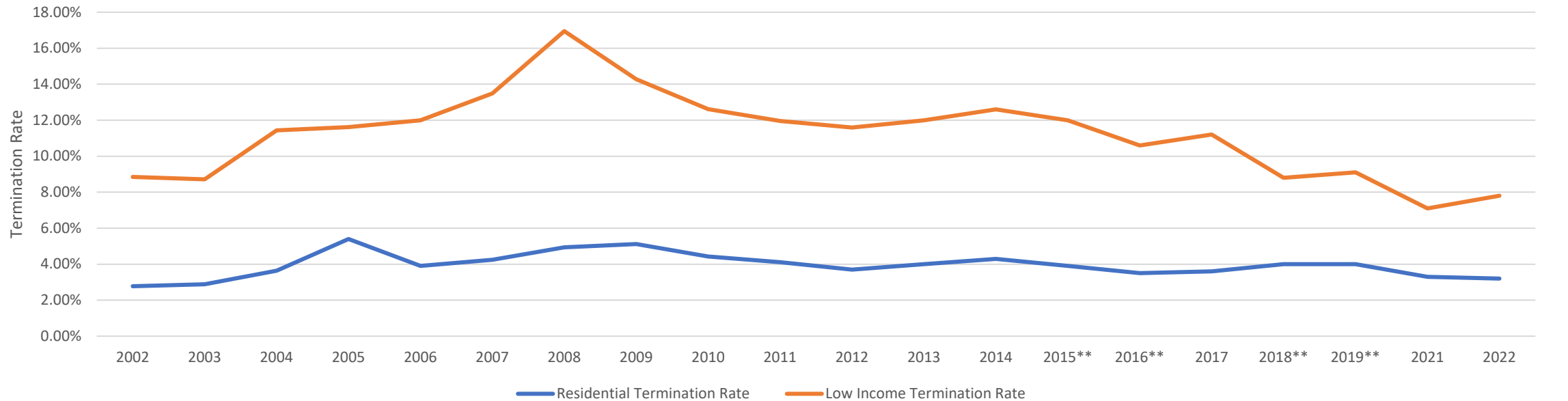
The winter heating season is defined as October through March.

Table: National Energy Assistance Directors Association • Created with Datawrapper

Electric Termination Rates (2002-2022)



Gas Termination Rates (2002-2018)



Electric / Gas / Water Terminations Year Over Year, January - September

2022	2023
257,896	268,881

The median energy burden of Black households is

than that of white (non-Hispanic) households.

43% higher



ACEEE
American Council on Energy Efficiency

The median energy burden of Hispanic households is

than that of white (non-Hispanic) households.

20% higher



ACEEE
American Council on Energy Efficiency

The median energy burden of Native American households is

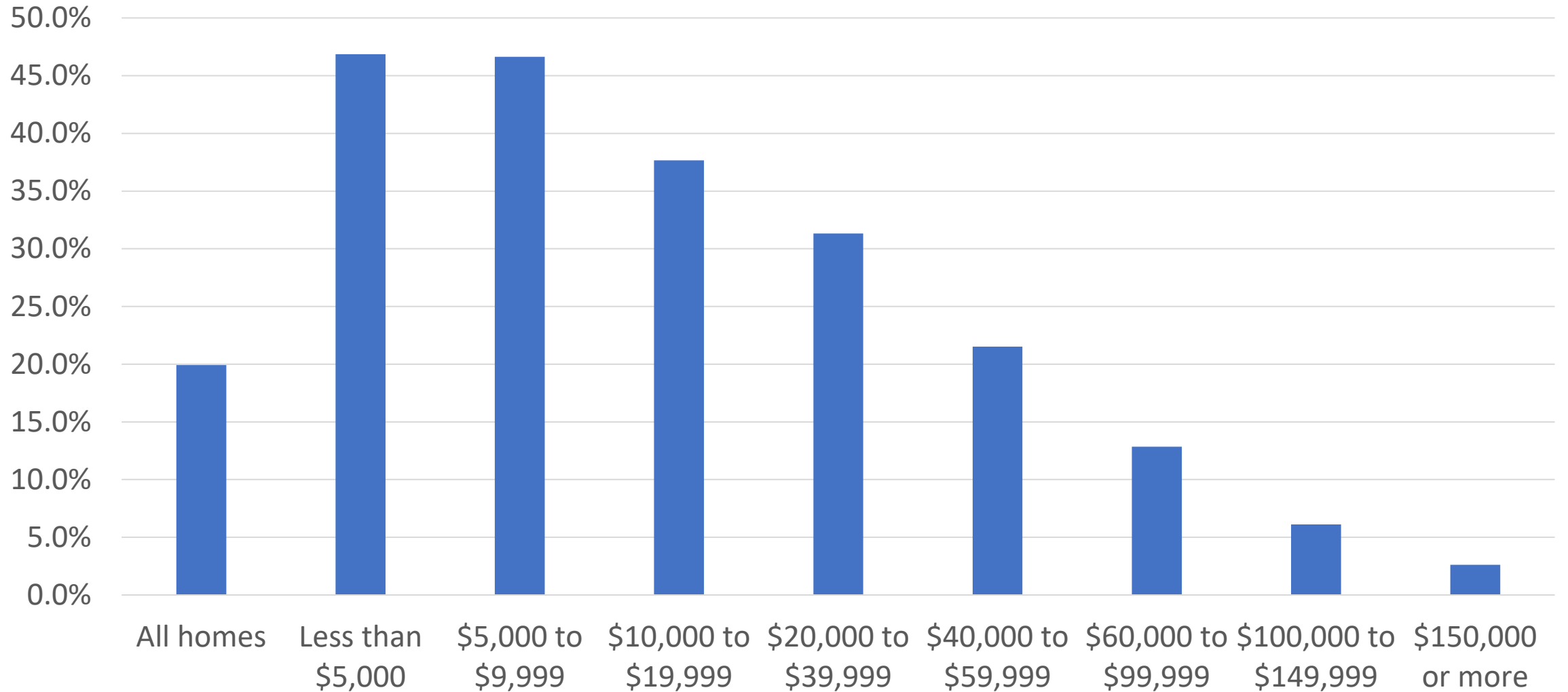
than that of white (non-Hispanic) households.

45% higher

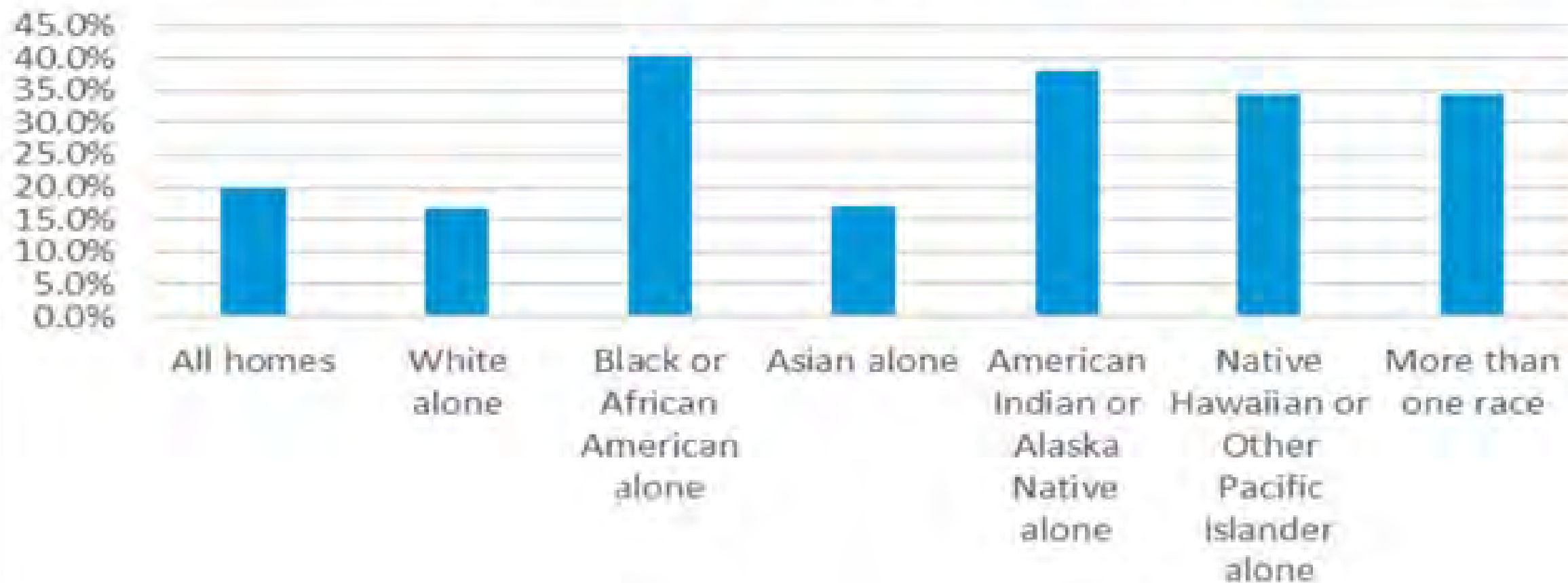


ACEEE
American Council on Energy Efficiency

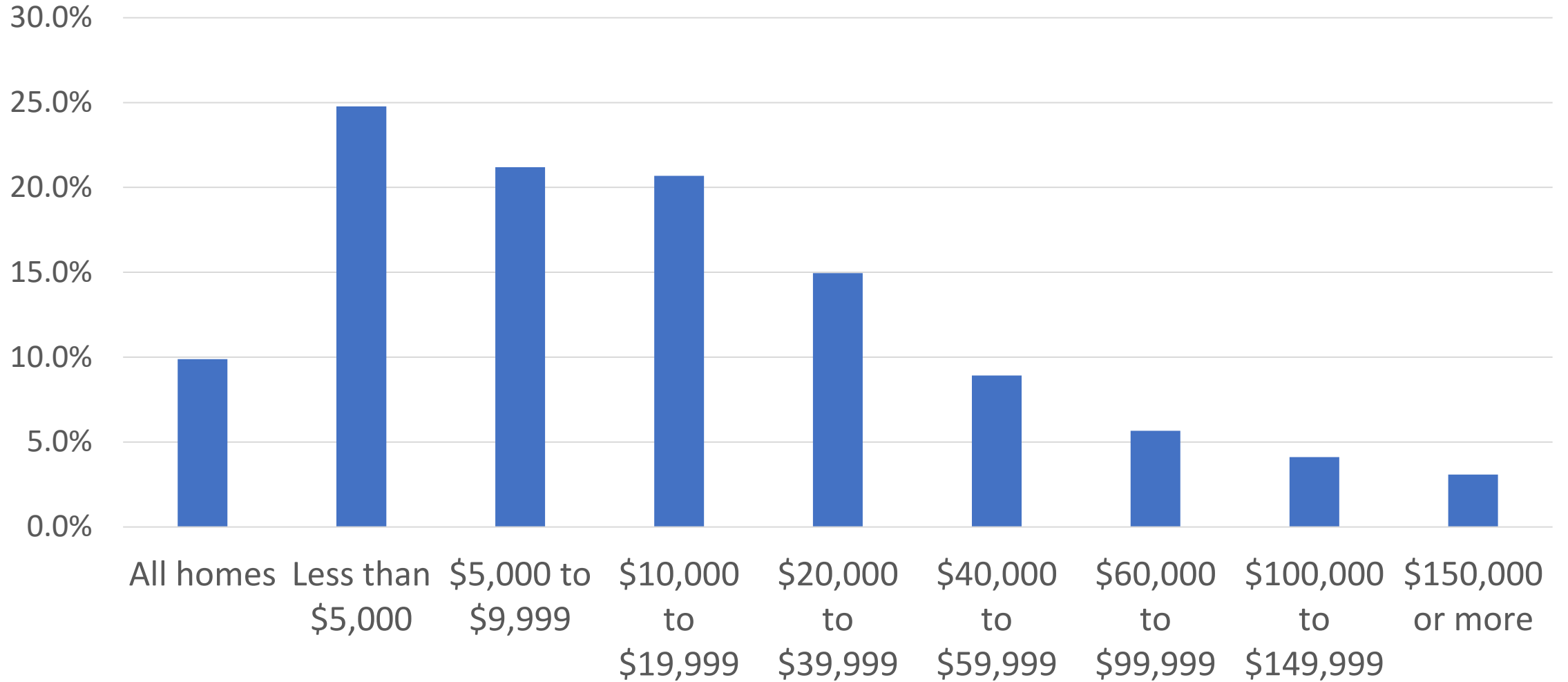
Reducing or forgoing food or medicine to pay energy costs - Household Income



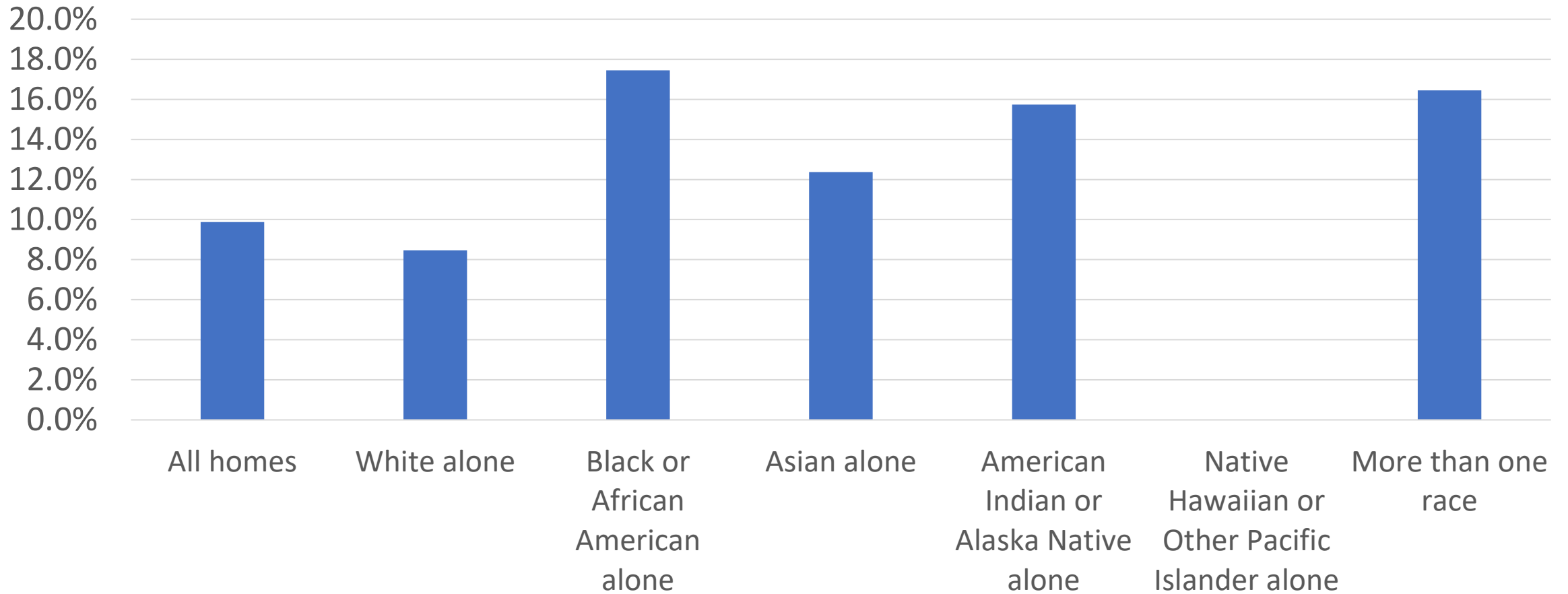
Reducing or forgoing food or medicine to pay energy costs - Race of Householder



Leaving home at unhealthy temperature - Household Income



Leaving home at unhealthy temperature – Race of Householder



Key Factors Driving Utility Insecurity

Inefficient Housing

- Lower income households tend to live in older, less efficient homes with less insulation, older appliances, leaky pipes, and other structural issues that drive up usage.

Infrastructure Costs

- Increasing climate-related infrastructure needs.
- System upgrades to integrate clean energy technologies.
- PFAS/PFOAS and Lead Line Removal

Energy Transition

- Low income communities experience increased susceptibility and exposure to environmental pollutants and the effects of a changing climate – but the costs to fix those disparities also fall hardest on those same communities.

Residential Energy Competition

- Confusing offers, teaser rates, and high pressure sales.
- Evidence of targeting in low income communities and communities of color.
- From 2015-2020, residential customers who “shopped” for an alternative energy supplier paid well over **\$1.5 Billion** more for electricity than if they remained with their utility at the default service price.

Utility	Dates Analyzed	Aggregate Shopping Charges Over Default Service Price
PECO	Jan. 2015 – April 2020	\$733,197,940
PPL	Jan. 2015 – May 2020	\$295,828,735
Duquesne	Jan. 2017 – May 2020	\$102,869,316
FirstEnergy	Aug. 2017 – Dec. 2021	\$431,152,822
Total		\$1,563,048,813

Average Per Customer Over PTC, FirstEnergy Service Territories

	MetEd	Penelec	Penn Power	West Penn Power
2018	\$180.01	\$158.29	\$192.72	\$184.95
2019	\$233.80	\$201.09	\$234.73	\$230.56
2020	\$253.64	\$198.67	\$241.19	\$271.32
2021	\$244.37	\$245.03	\$287.93	\$352.32

Consequences of Utility Insecurity

Health

- Exacerbates negative health outcomes
- Exposure to unhealthy/unsafe temperatures
- Inability to properly sanitize

Family

- Interrupts family unity (CYS/custody disputes)
- Hinders child learning and development
- Severs critical communication with work/school

Finance / Consumer Credit

- Long-term impact on consumer credit

Housing

- Catalyst for eviction, foreclosure, and homelessness
- Constructive eviction / “Self-Help”
- Results in condemnation
- Difficulty relocating to new housing
- Ineligibility for public and private housing

**Utility moratoria nationwide reduced COVID-19 infection rates by 4.4%
and reduced mortality rates by 7.4%.**

Emerging Policy Solutions

- **Federal Funding to Support Just and Equitable Clean Energy Transition**
 - HOMES/HEEHRA
 - Solar for All
- **Whole Home Repairs**
- **Low Income Usage Reduction Program Rulemaking**
- **LIHEAP Cooling Pilot**
- **Chapter 14: Billing, Collections, Termination Standards**
- **Public Utility Commission Universal Service Program Working Groups**

Universal Service Work Groups

- **Public Utility Commission Established Four Work Groups**
 - **Data Sharing – LIHEAP / Utility CAPs**
 - **Common Application**
 - **Centralized Website / Online Portal**
 - **Statewide Administration**
- **Report will be issued to the Commission in March, and program reforms may follow.**
- **Still time to get involved!!**

Termination and Reconnection

Preventing Terminations

- **Ensure Client is Responsible for Bill**
 - Tenant Rights
 - Protections for Victims of Domestic Violence
 - Other issues with bill amount or client liability?
- **Enroll in Utility Assistance Program**
 - Customer Assistance Program (CAP)
 - Braid Together Grant Assistance
 - LIHEAP Cash and LIHEAP Crisis
 - Hardship Fund Grants
 - Local Resources (Churches / Salvation Army / Aging Offices / Disability Rights)
- **Negotiate a Payment Arrangement**
 - Utilities have broad discretion to issue payment arrangements.
 - If a utility refuses, a client can ask the PUC for an income-based payment arrangement
 - 150% FPL = 60 mo.
- **Obtain a Medical Certificate**
- **Dispute Processes**

Tenant Protections

- **If a utility is in the landlord's name, and the landlord does not pay, a renter must be:**
 - Notified of the landlord's debt 30 days in advance of termination.
 - Given an opportunity to pay the last 30 days of charges.
 - Allowed to pay utility bills going forward and deduct from rent, without taking on the debt of the landlord.
 - Protected from retaliation / eviction for exercising their rights.
- **A landlord/owner may not voluntarily shut off service while occupied by a tenant without notarized consent – or in emergencies.**
 - Tenant must be given notice and ability to keep service on going forward.
- **Applicable Laws:**
 - Discontinuance of Service to Leased Premises 66 Pa. C.S. 1521 et seq.
 - Utility Service Tenants Rights Act (USTRA), 68 P.S. 399.1 et seq.

Tenant Protections

- **Foreign Load**

- If a tenant's electric meter is powering a shared / common area, **the landlord is responsible for the FULL BILL** for that residence until they remove the load from the shared / common area.
- The tenant is only responsible for the utility bills going forward, after the foreign load issue is resolved.
- Only applies to PUC- regulated utilities.

Domestic Violence Protections

- **Protections for Customers with PFA or Other Court Order**
 - Must provide utility with a copy of PFA or other court order showing clear evidence of domestic violence.
 - A victim of domestic violence with a PFA or other court order may NOT be terminated for “nonpayment for residential service already furnished in the names of persons other than the customer...” **52 Pa. Code 56.323**
 - Cannot charge victim debt accrued in someone else’s name, even if they lived at the residence when the arrears were accrued.
 - Flexible payment arrangements based on individual facts and circumstances.
- **Additional Notice of Termination for Customers with PFA or Other Court Order**
 - Attempted “personal contact” immediately preceding termination.
 - If no personal contact, notice is posted at the property and termination is delayed for 48 hours.

Medical Certificates

- **A household may obtain a medical certificate to stop termination if a household member has a serious illness OR a medical condition which requires utility service to treat their illness.**
 - Examples: asthma requires air conditioning in summer / diabetes requires refrigeration for medication).
 - A medical professional, not the utility, decides which conditions qualify.
- **A medical certificate stops termination for up to 30 days from date of issuance.**
 - A customer can submit a new certificate every 30 days if she/he pays all current charges by due date. If they are paying current charges, there is no limit on the number of certificates.
 - A customer may renew medical certificates two times (90 days of protection) even if they do not pay current charges by due date.

Winter Moratorium

- Low Income households are protected from termination in the winter (December 1 to March 31).
 - 250% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines or below.
 - Applies to gas, electric, and heat-related water service
 - *e.g. radiator heating system, which requires water*
- ***Does not guarantee restoration if service is already off.***
 - Low income customers should report their income to the utilities to ensure they are protected

Bills continue to accrue during the moratorium - Must address debt!

Helping with Reconnections

- **No Security Deposit for CAP-Eligible Households**
 - Not required to enroll in CAP to waive security deposit but may be required to provide proof of income.
- **Protections for Customers with PFA or Other Court Order**
 - Cannot charge victim arrears accrued in someone else's name, even if they lived there when the debt was accrued.
 - Flexible payment arrangements based on individual facts and circumstances.
- **4-Year Rule**
 - Arrears which are more than 4 years old cannot be required to be paid as a condition to providing service.
- **Utility-Issued Payment Arrangements**
 - Utilities have broad discretion to enter any number of payment arrangements for any length of time.
 - If utility refuses to issue a payment arrangement, client can go to PUC for PUC-issued payment arrangement.
- **PUC-issued 1407 Payment Arrangement (For Service Restoration)**
 - 150-300% FPL - 12 month \ 150% FPL or below - 24 months
 - No payment arrangement if defaulted on two or more arrangements for the same balance.



**Additional Utility
Assistance
Programs**

DCED-Administered Programs

Weatherization Assistance Program

- Eligibility:
 - 200% FPL
 - Priority: Seniors, Disabled Individuals, Families with Children, High Energy
 - Landlord permission, if renter
- Benefits:
 - Weatherization Measures, Depends on Needs of Home
 - Health and Safety Deferral Program
 - **Clean and Tune Pilot**
 - **Cooling Pilot**
- Apply: Local WAP Provider, <https://dced.pa.gov/housing-and-development/weatherization/agency-list/>

DCED-Administered Programs

Whole-Home Repairs Program

- Benefits:
 - Up to \$50,000 to repair, update, and adapt homes.
 - Enhanced coordination of efficiency, Wx, and home repair programs.
 - Local workforce development.
- Administered at the county level.
 - *Adams, Perry, and Sullivan Counties did not apply.*
- \$120M in Funding

Federal Communications Commission

Lifeline

- Eligibility:
 - 135% FPL
 - SNAP, Medicaid, SSI, Public Housing, TANF, Veterans / Survivor Benefits
- Benefit: \$9.25 monthly subsidy for phone / internet service
 - One subsidy per household (economic unit)
- Apply: www.usac.org, or through internet/phone provider

Affordable Connectivity Program

- Eligibility:
 - 200% FPL
 - SNAP, Medicaid, SSI, Public Housing, TANF, Veterans / Survivor Benefits
- Benefit: \$30/mo discount for broadband + one-time \$100 discount on device
- Apply: www.getinternet.gov

IRA – Home Energy Rebate Programs

- Home Energy Rebate Programs (HEEHR and HOMES) = \$8.8B
- **High Efficiency Electric Home Rebate (HEEHR)**
 - PA = \$129.2M over 10 years
 - **Eligibility: Low and Moderate Income Households**
 - Low Income = Under 80% Area Median Income
 - 100% of Costs, Up to \$14,000
 - Moderate Income = Between 80-150% Area Median Income
 - 50% of Costs, Up to \$14,000
 - **Qualified Electrification:**
 - Heat Pump HVAC Systems (\$8K cap)
 - Heat Pump Water Heaters (\$1,750 cap)
 - Electric Stoves / Cooktops
 - Heat Pump Clothes Dryers
 - Enabling Measures (e.g., circuit panels, insulation, air sealing, ventilation, wiring) (\$4,000 cap)
 - **Contractor Incentives for Work in LMI Communities (up to \$500/project)**

IRA – Home Energy Rebate Programs

- **Home Energy Performance-Based Whole House Rebates (HOME Rebates)**
 - **PA: \$129.98M over 10 years**
 - **Benefits:**
 - **Single Family:**
 - Lesser of \$2,000 or 50% of project for retrofits reducing energy usage by 20%+
 - Lesser of \$4,000 or 50% of project for retrofits reducing energy usage by 40%+
 - LMI = Lesser of 2x maximum rebate level, or up to 80% of cost
 - **Multifamily:**
 - Lesser of \$2,000 / dwelling unit – maximum \$200K/building for reducing energy usage by 20%+
 - Lesser of \$4,000 / dwelling unit, maximum \$400,000/building for reducing energy usage by 35%+

<https://www.rhls.org/utilities/pulp/links-to-utility-resources/>

Questions?

Contact PULP

Training / Technical Assistance: pulp@pautilitylawproject.org

Elizabeth Marx, Executive Director

emarx@pautilitylawproject.org



**CENTRAL
PENNSYLVANIA**  
FOOD BANK

No One Should Be Hungry

MEMBER OF
**FEEDING[®]
AMERICA**

MEMBER OF
**FEEDING[®]
PENNSYLVANIA**

www.centralpafoodbank.org

Definition of Food Insecurity

The USDA defines food insecurity as a lack of consistent access to enough food for every person in a household to live an active, healthy life. This can be a temporary situation for a family or can last a long time.



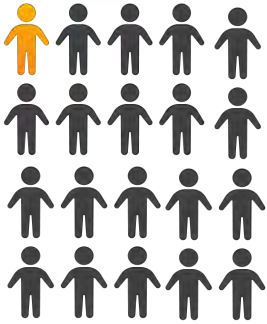
More than 44 million people, including 13 million children experience food insecurity in the United States.

Food Insecurity in Pennsylvania



1 in 11

People in Pennsylvania face hunger



1 in 20

Seniors in Pennsylvania face hunger



1 in 8

Children in Pennsylvania face hunger

Pennsylvania



THE BOLD GOAL

By 2025 our collaborative network will provide **access to enough nutritious food** for everyone struggling with hunger in each of the 27 central Pennsylvania counties we serve, and we will convene and nurture partnerships to make progress toward **ending hunger**.

HOW OUR FOOD BANK WORKS



COLLECT FOOD & DONATIONS

Donated food from farmers, wholesalers, retailers, food drives, state/federal government & monetary donations.

SORT & PACKAGE FOOD

With the help of many volunteers, we inspect, sort, package & store food at one of our two healthy food hubs.

DISTRIBUTE TO PARTNER AGENCIES

Items are then delivered to our network of over 1,000 programs.

GIVE TO OUR NEIGHBORS IN NEED

Our partners, in turn, give nutritious food to individuals, families, seniors, veterans, and children.

www.centralpafoodbank.org

Central Pennsylvania Food Bank



27

counties served in PA



200,000+

neighbors in need served each month



1,100+

partner agencies and programs



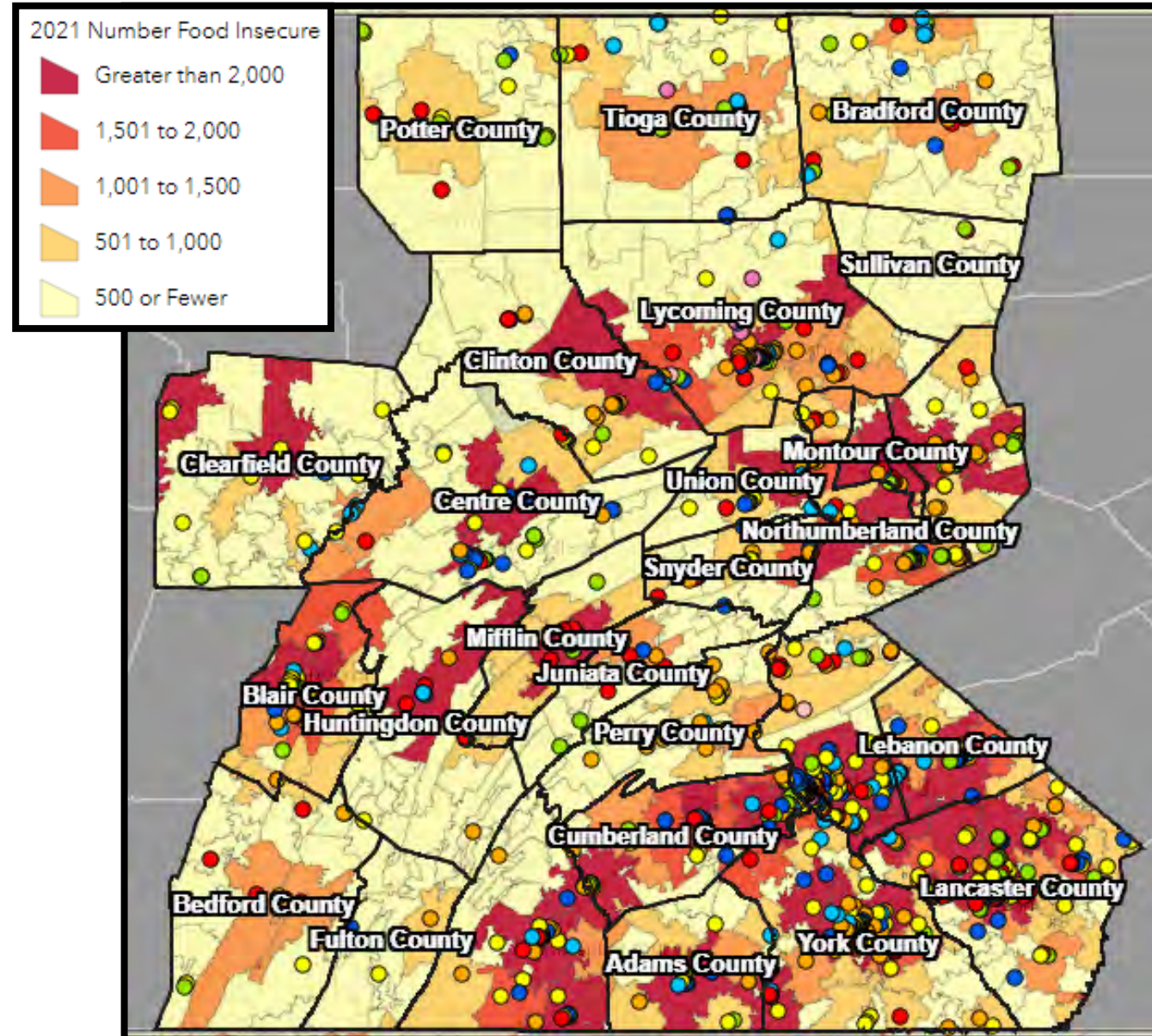
53 million +

meals provided each year

75%

distributed food comes from corporate retail donations

www.centralpafoodbank.org



Acquiring Fresh Food

Last year we:

- Rescued nearly 17.1 million pounds of food
- Distributed over 13 million pounds of produce
- Distributed 5.2 million servings of fresh milk

www.centralpafoodbank.org



HUNGRY
YOU CAN'T THINK
OF ANYTHING ELSE
- Juana Janie Mendez
teenager from the midwest

NO ACT OF
KINDNESS
NO MATTER HOW SMALL
IS EVER WASTED.
- Aesop

Improving Access to Fresh Food



OUR PROGRAMS

- **Youth Programs**
 - Serving 268,000 kids and teens
- **Senior Programs**
 - 62,000 senior boxes distributed
- **Mobile Distributions**
 - MilitaryShare served more than 10,000 veterans and active-duty military members and their families
 - 92 Fresh Express sites in 20 counties
- **Health Innovations**
 - Partner with 12 different healthcare partners
- **SNAP Outreach**
 - Through our Helpline, more than 3,000 families and individuals have been assisted in completing their SNAP application submissions



Advocacy

Farm Bill

The Farm Bill impacts access to nutritious food for millions of American families struggling with hunger.

Nutrition **provisions** include:

- The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)
- Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
 - SNAP Benefit Levels and Enrollment Policies
 - SNAP Outreach
 - SNAP Nutrition Education
 - SNAP Employment and Training (E&T)
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)

www.centralpafoodbank.org



Together We Can End Hunger

Volunteer

- Last year, volunteers donated more than 77,000 hours.

Donate

- Every \$1 donated helps us provide up to four meals
- Participate in a fund (virtual) drive

Advocate

- Together our voice can be mighty in representing those in need

www.centralpafoodbank.org



Research, Data, and Analysis

Census Tract Data Alignment Details:

- The number of food insecure people is a function of the food insecurity rate and the population
- Municipalities in rural areas
- Neighborhoods in urban areas
- The southeast portion of our service territory the most food insecure people
- Overall Food Insecurity is higher in urban areas

COMMUNITY HUNGER MAPPING DETAILS



01 FOOD INSECURITY ANALYSIS

What is the extent of food insecurity and where is it concentrated?

Who is most impacted? How does food insecurity differ by age and race/ethnicity?

02 CHARITABLE AND RETAIL FOOD ACCESS

How accessible is charitable and retail food in the county and how does access vary in different areas?

What are the barriers to access? Where do food distribution gaps exist?

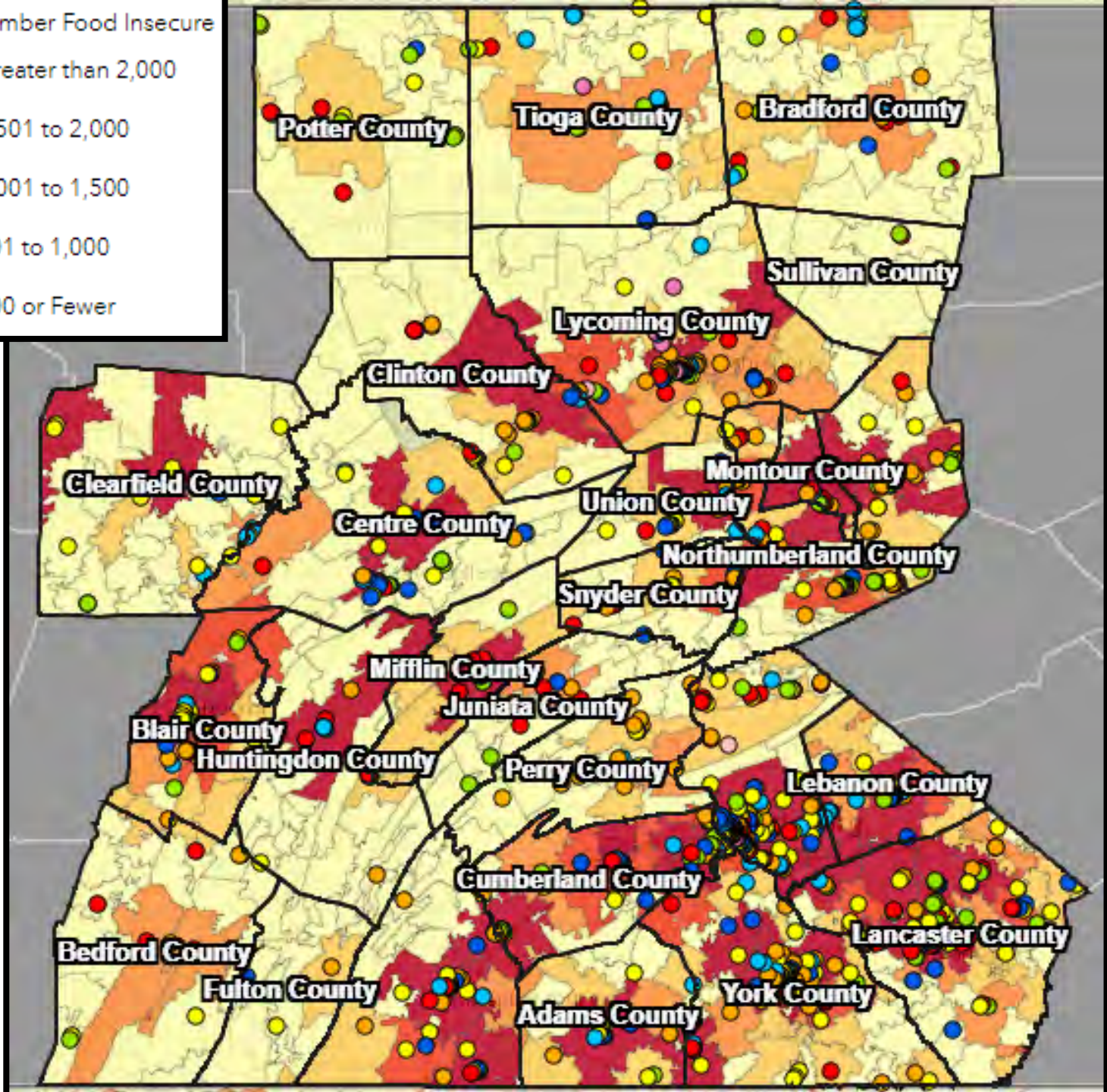
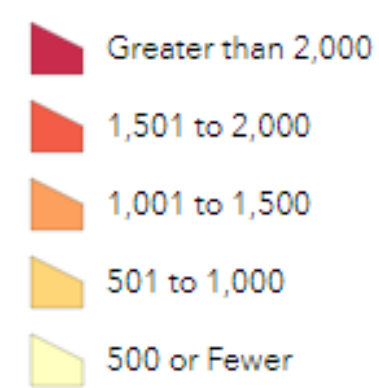
03 UTILIZATION OF KEY GOV'T PROGRAMS

What are utilization rates of key government nutrition-related programs and how do they vary?

04 INTERSECTING AND UPSTREAM ISSUES

What are the upstream issues impacting food insecurity in the county?

2021 Number Food Insecure



Food Insecure Individuals by ZIP Code





JOIN US
in the fight to end hunger.

WE'RE SOCIAL!

Join in the conversation and tag us.



@centralpafb



/CentralPAFoodBank/



/centralpafb/



/central-pennsylvania-food-bank/



c/CentralPAFoodBank

www.centralpafoodbank.org





Thank You!

Questions?

Tara M. Davis, Senior Vice President, Chief Programs Officer

Phone number: 717-724-3186

Email: tdavis@centralpafoodbank.org

www.centralpafoodbank.org

November 17, 2023

2023 Tri-Region BeWise

- Utility Imposters
- Natural Gas and Electric Costs this Winter
- Shopping Tips



UTILITY IMPOSTERS



UTILITY IMPOSTERS:



- A utility will not call a customer demanding payment over the phone “or will shut you off immediately.”
- These are scammers – frightening customers into providing a credit card number, bank account routing number, pre-paid gift/credit card number, PayPal, Bitcoin, etc.
- If any doubt about a phone call – HANG UP. Then call your utility company – find the phone number on your bill.

UTILITY IMPOSTERS:

IN-PERSON SCAMS: Utility personnel will rarely visit you...



- If someone knocks on your door claiming to be from your electric, water or gas utility, and “asks to see your meter” or “asks to inspect your service” etc... ask to see I.D.
- They should also be in some sort of uniform; also a clearly marked utility vehicle.
- If someone shows up and threatens to “shut off your service unless you pay me right now” – SCAM! Utilities do not collect cash in the field.
- If any doubt – DO NOT let them in, and then call the utility and ask if they sent someone to see you.

UTILITY IMPOSTERS:



- If you feel threatened, call your local police department or state police.
- If you have been deceived into paying someone, call your local police and your bank, credit card issuer, etc. and the PA Bureau of Consumer Protection (1-800-441-2555)

Philadelphia business owner scammed of over \$3,000 by PECO impersonators

Latoya Faison said she filed a police report and told PECO about the incident, but she has been unable to recover her money.



By [Beccah Hendrickson](#)



Thursday, November 9, 2023 12:13AM



BUSINESS SCAMMED

ENERGY COSTS THIS WINTER



Natural Gas Purchased Gas Cost (PGC).



- If you do not shop - you receive default gas supply service from your natural gas distribution company (NGDC).
- NGDCs: PECO, PGW, Peoples, National Fuel Gas, Columbia, UGI.
- To serve their default customers - they go out and buy gas on the wholesale gas market.
- Pass the cost on to the consumer with no mark-up.
- **Makes up 40-60% of the bill.** Changes quarterly.

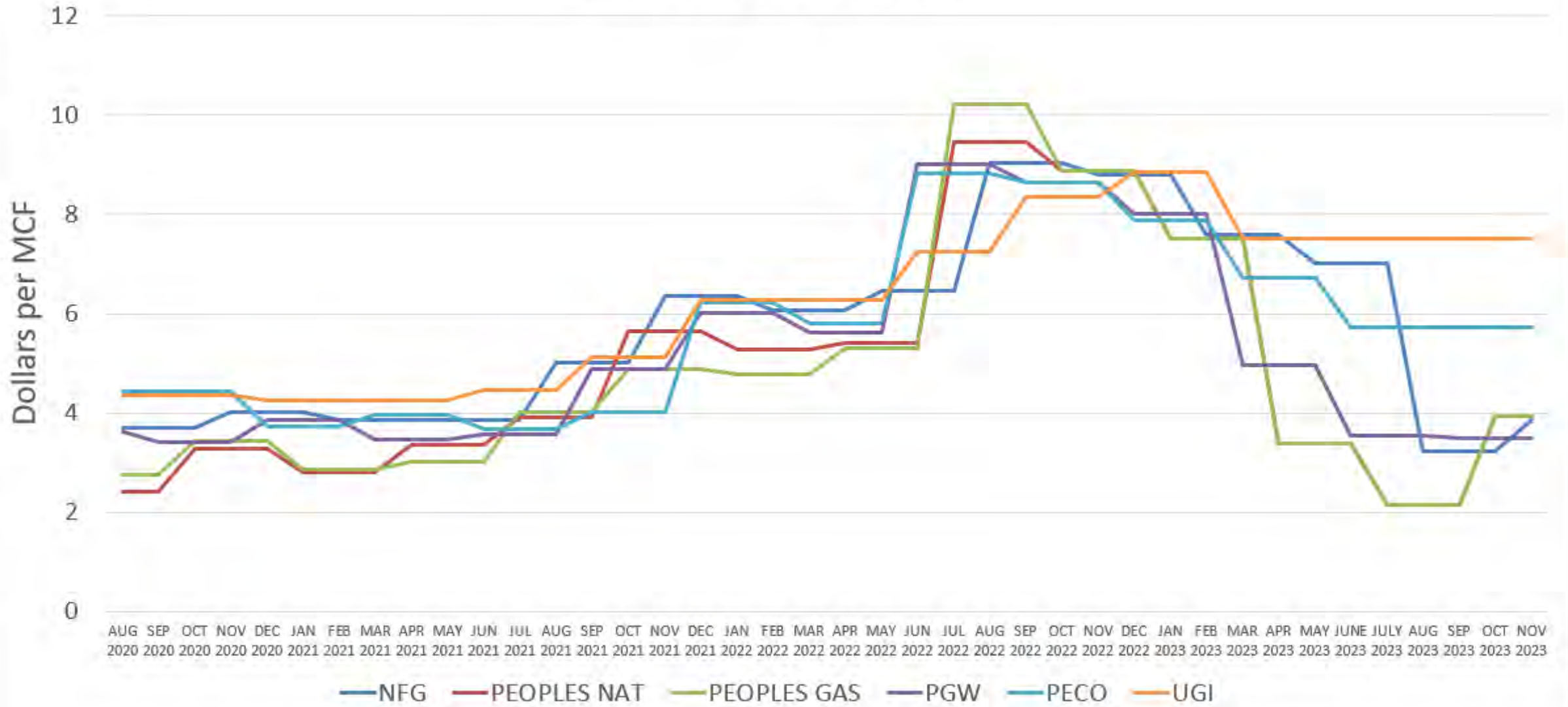
Natural Gas: Purchased Gas Cost Rate



Residential PGC per Mcf:			
	NOV 2022	NOV 2023	% CHANGE
NFG	8.7905	3.8717	-56%
PEOPLES	8.8807	3.9521	-56%
PGW	8.6371	3.5056	-59%
PECO	8.6336	5.7364	-33%
UGI	8.3507	7.5238	-10%

COLUMBIA Residential PGC per THERM:			
	OCT 2022	OCT 2023	% CHANGE
COLUMBIA	5.6572	4.4854	-21%

NGDC PGCs 2020 - 2023



Electric Price To Compare (PTC)



- If you do not shop - you receive default generation service from your electric distribution company (EDC).
- EDCs: PPL, PECO, FirstEnergy, Duquesne, Citizens, Wellsboro, UGI Electric, Pike Co.
- The EDCs do NOT own their own generation facilities.
- To serve their default customers - they need to go out and buy electricity on the wholesale electric market.

Electric Price To Compare (PTC)



- The price you pay for this is called the PRICE TO COMPARE (PTC).
- The PTC changes quarterly at PECO and twice a year at PPL, FirstEnergy, and Duquesne Light.
- **The PTC makes up 40-60% of the typical customer's bill.**
- EDC PTC changes do not impact shopping customers - those customers receiving generation service from a competitive supplier.

Electric Residential PTCs - cents per kWh - NOW



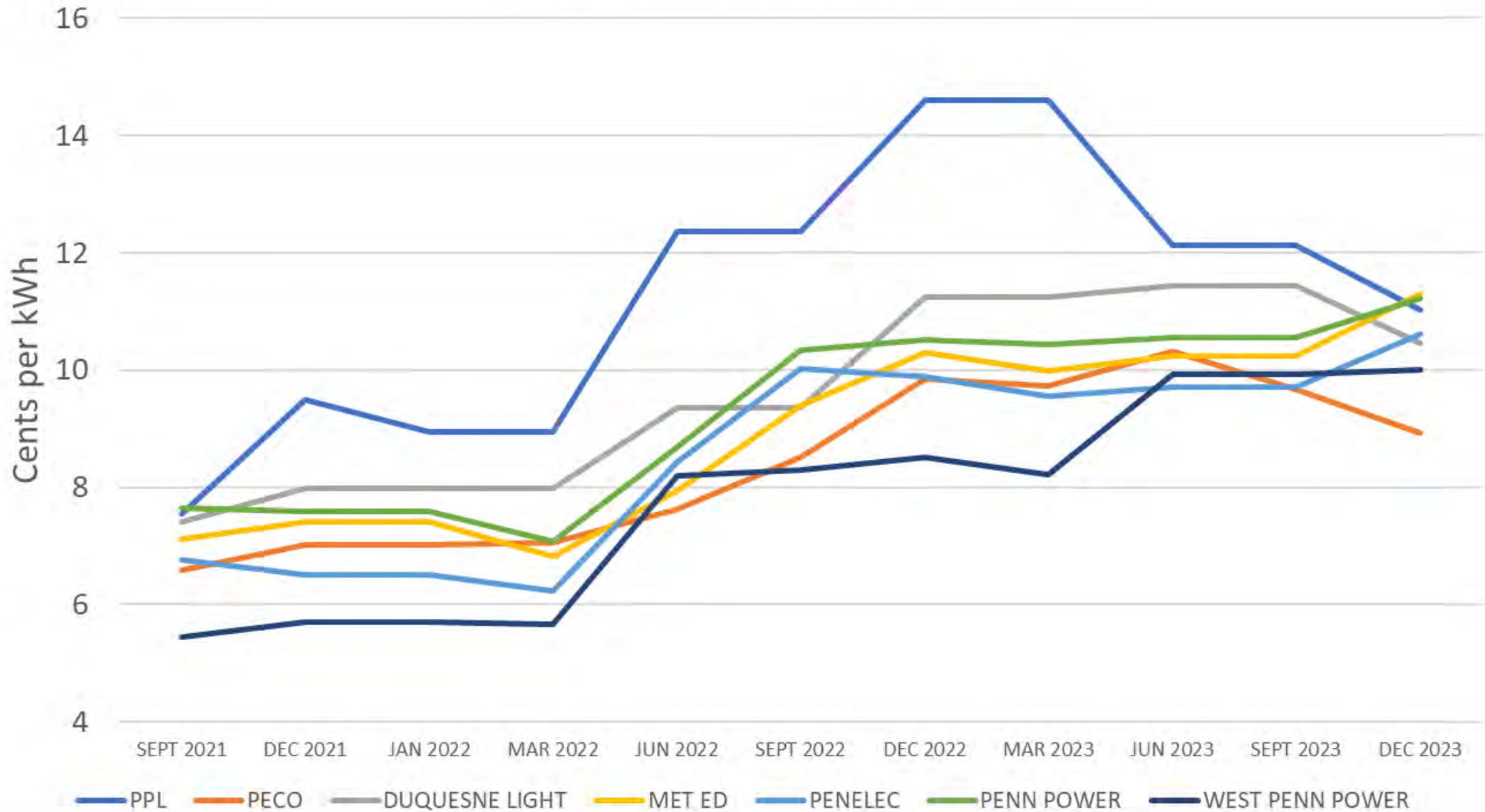
	JAN 2023	NOV 2023	% CHANGE
PPL	14.612	12.126	-17%
PECO	9.855	9.672	-2%
DUQUESNE LIGHT	11.25	11.45	2%
MET ED	10.303	10.24	-1%
PENELEC	9.889	9.703	-2%
PENN POWER	10.511	10.556	0%
WEST PENN POWER	8.517	9.929	17%

Electric Residential PTCs - cents per kWh - DECEMBER 1



	NOV 2023	DEC 2023	% CHANGE
PPL	12.126	11.028	-9%
PECO	9.672	8.919	-8%
DUQUESNE LIGHT	11.45	10.46	-9%
MET ED	10.24	11.306	+10%
PENELEC	9.703	10.607	+9%
PENN POWER	10.556	11.231	+6%
WEST PENN POWER	9.929	10.001	+1%

EDC Residential PTCs since 2021



Coming up on December 1



- Every electric utility will be revising their default PTCs on December 1.
- Also some of the larger gas utilities will be revising their PGCs and PTCs on December 1 (including UGI, PECO, PGW)
- As these prices become known, the Commission will be doing outreach to the media and consumers to let everyone know what winter heating costs will look like.



Winter expected to be costlier for those who heat with oil. But natural gas heat users will finally get a break.



By [Tami Luhby](#), CNN

Updated 6:59 PM EDT, Wed September 20, 2023



SHOPPING FOR COMPETITIVE ELECTRIC AND GAS SUPPLIERS

#SaveInPA

*Jumpstart Fall and Winter
natural gas cost savings*



SHOPPING FOR COMPETITIVE ELECTRIC AND GAS SUPPLIERS:



Reasons to shop:

- Saving money, especially if you are a large user.
- Compare prices. Remember that the utility default service price is NOT fixed. Can change quarterly (PECO) or every 6 months (PPL and FirstEnergy).
- Renewable energy – usually costs more – but prices are dropping. The amount of renewable can vary.
- Comparison shop. Direct mail offers. Go online.

SHOPPING FOR COMPETITIVE ELECTRIC AND GAS SUPPLIERS:



Reasons to shop:

- Renewable energy – usually costs more – but prices are dropping.
- The amount (up to 100%) and type (solar, wind, etc.) of renewable can vary.
- Popular – 1 out of every 3 residential shoppers are choosing renewable energy products.

Our New Improved PAPowerSwitch.com



The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the PAPowerSwitch.com website. On the left is the logo for PAPowerSwitch, Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission. To the right are navigation links: Shop for Home, Shop for Business, How To Switch, and Understanding Energy. A teal bar contains links for Contact Us, Rate Change Alerts, and español. The main content area features a large image of a house with the headline "Finding Electric Rates is Easier Than Ever". Below the headline is a text prompt: "Enter your zip code to instantly compare electricity plans for your home in Pennsylvania." At the bottom of this section is a search bar with a location pin icon and the text "Zip Code", and a green button labeled "Compare Now". A link at the bottom left says "Learn about business plans" with a right-pointing arrow.

Our New Improved PAPowerSwitch.com



See What Offers Are Available In Your Area

Select Rate Preference (optional)

- Fixed Rate
- Variable Rate
- Unlimited/Flat Rate

Next

Skip to Results

Select Your Offer Preferences

Choose All That Apply (optional)

- No Cancellation Fee
- No Monthly Fee
- No Enrollment Fee
- Net Metering
- Introductory Prices
- Renewable Energy

Submit

Shop For Rates

Zip Code Home GO >

Shop for Natural Gas

About Switching

Understanding Rates and Terms

Rights & Protections

Ways to Save Energy

Home > Shop for Your Home

THINGS TO CONSIDER
When Choosing a Fixed or Variable Rate
[Learn More >](#)

Zip Code

Monthly Usage

Sort by

Price

Shop for Your Home's Natural Gas in PA

Lower your energy costs or find natural gas services that fit the needs of your home.

In Pennsylvania, you can choose the company that supplies your home's natural gas — also known as your natural gas supplier. This means you have the power to choose to switch to a competitive supplier that can offer the lowest price. Compare natural gas suppliers and rates to lock in your home's new gas plan.

Our home gas shopping page allows you to quickly compare natural gas suppliers' residential rates and products. **Individual suppliers determine eligibility for their home offers, which may vary from supplier to supplier.**

The **Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PA PUC)** approves rates for Natural Gas Distribution Companies (NGDC) on an annual basis. These rates can change every three months.

Natural gas distribution companies and natural gas suppliers are responsible for posted prices. Please consult the natural gas distribution company and natural gas supplier for prices, including introductory prices, cancellation policies and potential discounts that may be available to you. The prices listed are for **NEW CUSTOMERS**.

The Price to Compare must be expressed on a per Ccf/Mcf/Dth basis and includes the cost of the gas commodity, the gas procurement charge and the merchant function charge.

SHOPPING FOR COMPETITIVE ELECTRIC AND GAS SUPPLIERS: Dealing with an agent...



- Be careful with your utility account number. Only give it IF you have indeed decided you want service with that supplier. The account number is the KEY that is used to switch your service.
- You do NOT have to shop. You NEVER have to pick a supplier.
- Ask for things in writing.
- If you do not feel comfortable – don't do it.

- “I need to see your bill”
- “I want to make sure you are receiving the utility discount/rebate/refund you are entitled to.”
- “I am conducting a survey for the [utility, PUC, etc.]”
- “You have to shop because your current [utility, supplier] is going out of the business.
- “An urgent matter about your utility bill.”
- “We are partners/working for your [utility].”

SHOPPING FOR COMPETITIVE ELECTRIC AND GAS SUPPLIERS: dealing with an agent...



DOOR-TO-DOOR SALES AGENTS:

- Must leave when asked to do so.
- Agent shall display his identification badge. The identification shall be prominently displayed. Needs to include name, supplier, logo, photograph, phone number.
- Agent shall immediately identify himself by name; the supplier the agent represents; reason for the visit.
- Agent shall state that he is not working for and is independent of the local utility.
- Language barrier: agent shall leave.
- Provide a copy of each document that the customer signed.

SHOPPING FOR COMPETITIVE ELECTRIC AND GAS SUPPLIERS: Dealing with an agent...



TELEMARKETERS:

- Caller (agent) shall immediately identify himself by name; the supplier the agent represents; and reason for the call.
- Agent shall state that he is not working for and is independent of the local utility.
- You still must receive a written disclosure (by mail or email).
- You can still ask for things in writing.
- “DO NOT CALL” list is to be respected.
- <https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/protect-yourself/do-not-call-list/>

SHOPPING FOR COMPETITIVE ELECTRIC AND GAS SUPPLIERS:



CAP (Customer Assistance Programs)

CUSTOMER SHOPPING:

- CAP customers cannot shop. CAP customers must remain with default service from their utility.
- Call your utility for details.

Problems or Questions? Call the PUC hotline: 1 800 692 7380.

<https://www.puc.pa.gov>

**Thank You for Your
Attention**



Dan Mumford

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Taylor Doyle
Consumer Liaison

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5th Floor, Forum Place
555 Walnut Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1923
Phone: 717-783-5048



PENNSYLVANIA OFFICE OF
CONSUMER ADVOCATE

COMMITTED TO PROTECTING THE INTERESTS OF
PENNSYLVANIA UTILITY CONSUMERS SINCE 1976



Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA)

- Created by the General Assembly in 1976
- Independent State Agency administratively housed within the Office of Attorney General
- Consumer Advocate is appointed by Attorney General subject to confirmation by Pennsylvania Senate
Current Consumer Advocate: Patrick Cicero
- Represent the interests of utility consumers before the Public Utility Commission (PUC), federal agencies, and state and federal courts



Types of Utility Service

Electric
Natural Gas
Water and Wastewater
Landline Telephone



How Do We Accomplish Our Mission?

Represent utility consumers before state and federal regulatory agencies and courts

- Overall interests of utility consumers
- Residential, including low-income consumers in matters that affect specific customer classes differently

Assist individual consumers with questions or complaints regarding their public utility service through the call center, consumer inbox, general assembly referrals

Initiate complaints on behalf of all consumers in matters pertaining to a specific issues



Individual Complaints

The OCA will answer consumer questions, contact utility and advocate for consumers with individual utility companies.

The OCA acts as a liaison between the consumer and the utility to resolve:

- Billing concerns
- Quality of service
- Customer Assistance Programs
- Main extensions



Call Center Information

- Operating Hours: M-F 8:30 am- 5 pm
- Basic Intake Information: Name, Contact Information, Company you are having issues with and what the problem is.
- Contact the company on the customer's behalf to gather additional information and attempt to find a resolution.
- Most intake cases are resolved within 10 days



Education and Outreach

- Provide information about the OCA and utility issues on our website www.oca.pa.gov, including electric and natural gas shopping guides
- Inform and educate consumers about utility issues through presentations at town meetings, seminars, conferences, consumer forums, and other meetings across Pennsylvania



Shopping for competitive electric & natural gas suppliers

Do your research to ensure the selected supplier offers the type of service that you want and is licensed to provide service in Pennsylvania.

- We recommend checking the OCA's natural gas and electric shopping guides or visiting papowerswitch.com and pagasswitch.com. Both are official state hosted and monitored websites. Use their filters to search for specific criteria that works best for your household.
- Make your own choices, be aware the marketers are trying to steer you towards their product.



Shopping for competitive electric & natural gas suppliers

Before signing up for service, learn of any additional fees that may be associated with the contract.

- Looking at the price-to-compare is not the only factor. Some suppliers charge additional fees that may include but are not limited to introductory fees, enrollment fees, monthly fees, customer charges or early cancellation fees.

After enrollment, calendar the end of your contract.

- Although suppliers are required by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission's regulations to notify customers of the end of their contracts, it is best to keep track of this information to ensure the account is not rolled into a variable or higher rate when the contract expires.

Stay vigilant with your account.

- Be sure to monitor your monthly electric and natural gas bills to ensure you are being charged the agreed upon rate with your selected supplier.



Electric Distribution Information for Tri-County

PPL: 12.126 cents per kWh (*Rate beginning December 1: 11.028 cents per kWh*)

Dauphin County, Cumberland County, Perry County, York County, Lebanon County, Lancaster County

Met-Ed: 10.24 cents per kWh (*Rate beginning December 1: 11.306 cents per kWh*)

Dauphin County, Lancaster County, Lebanon County, York County

Penelec: 9.703 cents kWh

Cumberland County, Perry County

Next Price-to-Compare change: December 1



Where to Shop

PA Office of Consumer Advocate

www.oca.pa.gov

** Consumers who would prefer to review the information in paper form or do not have internet access can request a copy of the shopping guide to be sent by US mail.

PA Public Utility Commission

www.papowerswitch.com
www.pagasswitch.com





Rising Utility Cost

Terminations – Residential Electric Customers – 2020-2022

Utility	2020		2021		2022	
	Number	Termination Rate	Number	Termination Rate	Number	Termination Rate
Duquesne	0	0.0%	30,945	5.7%	30,476	5.6%
Met-Ed	848	0.2%	26,941	5.3%	28,816	5.6%
PECO-Electric	80	<0.1%	76,313	5.0%	75,516	5.0%
Penelec	850	0.2%	20,354	4.1%	20,488	4.1%
Penn Power	174	0.1%	2,416	1.6%	3,244	2.2%
PPL	1,502	0.1%	30,843	2.5%	35,241	2.8%
West Penn	909	0.1%	16,147	2.6%	21,021	3.3%
Total/Industry Average	4,363	0.1%	203,959	4.0%	214,793	4.2%

Terminations – Residential Natural Gas Customers – 2020-2022

Utility	2020		2021		2022	
	Number	Termination Rate	Number	Termination Rate	Number	Termination Rate
Columbia	12	<0.1%	9,760	2.4%	11,380	2.8%
NFG	0	0.0%	7,091	3.6%	6,861	3.5%
PECO-Gas	30	<0.1%	12,634	2.6%	14,527	2.9%
Peoples	823	0.1%	23,754	4.0%	15,335	2.6%
PGW	0	0%	15,669	3.2%	14,410	3.0%
UGI Utilities – Gas	357	<0.1%	23,013	3.8%	26,882	4.3%
Total/Industry Average	1,222	<0.1%	91,921	3.3%	89,395	3.2%

PUC Universal Service Programs & Collections Performance- 2022 Report



What to do about rising utility costs

Budget Billing

Budget Billing programs are available to everyone at no cost. With Budget Billing, the utility company takes your total annual utility costs and divides that total evenly across all twelve months of the year.

Payment Agreements

Households who are behind on their bills and may not be eligible for other assistance can get a payment agreement. Most households, regardless of income, are eligible for a payment agreement from both their utility and the Public Utility Commission.



What to do about rising utility costs

Hardship Funds

Hardship Funds can provide you with cash assistance if you need help paying your utility bill or if you still have a critical need for assistance after other resources have been exhausted.

Customer Assistance Programs (CAP)

If you are having trouble paying your utilities, a Customer Assistance Program (CAP) can lower your monthly utility bills. May forgive some outstanding debts.

Low Income Usage Reduction Programs (LIURP)

Help you reduce the amount of energy you use and lower overall energy bills. If you qualify, you will receive an energy audit to determine your household's energy use. You may then receive the installation of free energy conservation measures to help reduce your household's energy consumption.



Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

Opening and Closing Dates- November 1, 2023- April 5, 2024

Cash Grant

Minimum \$300 / Maximum \$1,000

•Eligibility:

- Pennsylvania resident with income at/below 150% FPL
- Home heating responsibility

Crisis Grant

•Minimum \$25 / Maximum \$1,000

- Eligibility same as Cash Grant, PLUS Imminent Home Heating Emergency

Crisis Interface

- Repair/replace broken or inoperable heating system or replace/repair service line.
- Primary heating system must be operational within the last 2 years.



Be Aware of Utility Scams

- Always ask to see a company photo ID before allowing any workers into your home.
- If a caller tells you that you must pay your utility bill immediately to avoid disconnection, ask to verify that the call is legitimate and then call back a trusted number for the company.
- Be proactive in stopping scams. If you suspect a scammer, ask the person to provide you with your account number, your last payment amount, and date of payment. If the person is a legitimate utility representative, they should have this information readily accessible.
- Never make a utility bill payment to anyone calling you on the phone or coming to your door. Always call the utility directly at the trusted number on your bill. Never wire money from a prepaid card to someone you do not know.



Website and Social Media Information



www.oca.pa.gov



@pa_oca



Office of Consumer Advocate
or pennoca



Questions

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555 Walnut Street, 5th Floor Forum Place
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1923
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