



VERMONT
COMMUNITY ACTION
PARTNERSHIP

LIHEAP UPDATE

Potential Impacts of the Federal Shutdown



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Our Request: Fund LIHEAP Now

- Ensure the release of seasonal fuel funds to allow Vermonters to get fuel delivered.
- Ensure CAPs can access funds to staff up immediately and distribute crisis fuel.
- Ensure Vermonters can access Emergency Heat funds for repair/replacement of broken heating systems.

These Programs are a Lifeline for Thousands of Vermonters

- Older Vermonters
- Veterans
- People with Disabilities
- People on Fixed Incomes



Three Important LIHEAP Programs

- Seasonal Fuel Assistance – goes directly to households
- Crisis Fuel – for specific, acute needs
- Emergency Heat – to address broken heating systems

SEASONAL FUEL \$ Go Directly to FUEL DEALERS or HOUSEHOLDS

Funds are typically allocated directly to fuel dealers about one month from now (in mid-November), based on a complex formula that determines benefit levels — anywhere from a few hundred to a few thousand dollars per household.

Those using wood or pellets receive their benefit directly, often in the summer when these fuels are sold at a lower cost.



CRISIS FUEL is for when the tank runs dry

Available from the last Monday in November through mid-April (or the last working day in April for metered fuels).

Administered by the Community Action Agencies – people must apply.

A household must be in an actual heating crisis:

- ✓ Tank at 25% or less,
- ✓ A week's supply or less of wood/pellets,
- ✓ Or a shut-off notice from a utility that provides heat or electricity for a furnace.



EMERGENCY HEAT IS FOR BROKEN SYSTEMS

Administered by
the Weatherization
Assistant Providers
(WAPS)

Funding available
to repair or replace
a broken furnace

The Role of Community Action Agencies

Vermont's five Community Action Agencies (CAPs) are the front-line administrators of Crisis Fuel and Emergency Heat. At each Community Action Agency, staff:

- ✓ Screen applicants for eligibility and documentation,
- ✓ Coordinate with fuel dealers to schedule deliveries (typically 125 gallons per fill – which is typically the least amount of fuel dealers will deliver),
- ✓ Authorize payments and reconcile accounts,

In this process we field hundreds of calls from anxious Vermonters seeking help.



The Need is Now

Our timeline has already begun – the Community Action Agencies should be hiring seasonal staff

We are already getting inquiries for funds

Colder weather means people need heating fuels



Vermonters are Experiencing Many Levels of Economic Stress

Reduced 3SquaresVT (SNAP) benefits/Increased food insecurity.

Rising costs for utilities, food, housing, and other basic needs.

Lost work because of federal shutdown and other federal impacts or because of the overall economic outlook.



The Programs Work Together & Must Be Funded Now

- ✓ Seasonal Fuel should be available first for households, so that they can order the heating fuels they need.
- ✓ Crisis Fuel is a backstop that is used when Seasonal Fuel is not enough.

Crisis fuel is not enough to meet the need, but we do the best we can with what we have – but it is built on Seasonal Fuel assistance.

We need to ensure that people will have the ability to start the winter with something in the tank.



Thank you

Josh Davis

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