

**MAE, MDHHS announce 2017-18 MEAP grant awards  
to help low-income residents pay energy bills**

LANSING, Mich. – Ten service agencies in Michigan will share \$45.5 million in grants that will be distributed to low-income consumers who fall behind on paying their energy bills this winter, the Michigan Agency for Energy (MAE) and Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) announced today. The grants also support programs to make low-income households energy self-sufficient.

The Michigan Energy Assistance Program (MEAP) grants totaling \$45.5 million are funded by the state Low-Income Energy Assistance Fund (LIEAF) monthly per-meter surcharge assessed by participating utilities. This year's surcharge is 93 cents. Additional money for MEAP grants comes from the federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). LIHEAP funds have not yet been allocated to the state.

The 10 grant recipients, how much they received and the area they serve are:

- Barry County United Way: \$112,000, Barry County.
- Flat River Outreach Ministries, Inc.: \$50,000, Lowell School District.
- Michigan Community Action Agency Association: \$5 million, statewide.
- Society of St. Vincent de Paul of the Archdiocese of Detroit: \$2.41 million; 39 counties throughout Michigan.
- Superior Watershed Partnership: \$1.6 million, 15 Upper Peninsula counties.
- The Heat and Warmth fund: \$5.578 million, statewide.
- The Salvation Army: \$9 million, statewide.
- TrueNorth Community Services: \$11 million, statewide.
- United Way of Jackson County: \$4 million, Consumers Energy customers.
- United Way of Southeastern Michigan: \$6.75 million, DTE Energy Co. customers in Macomb, Oakland, and Wayne counties.

Residents who need assistance with energy services should contact the grantee that serves their area, call 2-1-1 or go to [mi211.org](http://mi211.org) for information. The programs provide services that enable participants to become or move toward becoming self-sufficient, including helping participants in paying their energy bills on time, assisting participants in budgeting for and contributing to their ability to provide for energy expenses, and instructing participants in utilizing energy services to optimize on energy savings.

The 10 service agencies will emphasize assisting the lowest-income households that have the highest energy burden. More than 102,000 households in Michigan received MEAP assistance this past funding period, which ended Sept. 30. Of those households, more than 20,600 had someone age 60 or older, nearly 27,500 had a member who was 5 years old or younger, and nearly 39,800 had someone diagnosed with a disability.

The assistance will help eligible recipients meet home energy costs for their primary residence to prevent future crisis situations through payment or partial payment of one of more bills for electric, natural gas, propane, heating oil, or any other deliverable fuel used to provide heat.

The energy assistance programs also include services that will enable participants to become or work toward becoming self-sufficient, including helping participants pay their energy bills on time, budgeting for and contributing to their ability to provide for energy expenses, and using energy services to optimize energy savings.