

Maine Winter Heating Resources

2024-2025 Heating Season



MAINE GOVERNOR'S
Energy Office

October 2024

Energy prices going into this winter are forecasted to be similar to last year's prices. This guide contains resources for Maine people to help stay warm during the winter heating season and find heating assistance if needed.

BE INFORMED

Track Home Heating Fuel Prices

The Governor's Energy Office (GEO) tracks heating fuel prices weekly to help consumers make informed energy decisions. The latest Maine heating fuel prices are available to view [here](#). To compare the costs of operating different home heating systems, visit [Efficiency Maine](#).

Review Electric Rates

Track the latest Maine electricity prices on the [GEO website](#) or find information about competitive electricity providers through the [Office of the Public Advocate](#) or [Maine Public Utilities Commission](#). Higher-usage households may qualify for new alternative rates from Central Maine Power (CMP) or Versant Power. Contact your utility for details.

Know Your Rights

Maine law protects consumers when it comes to heating fuels. More information on home heating rights is available in the Office of the Maine Attorney General's [Consumer Protection Guide](#).

GET EFFICIENT

Tune Up

Schedule your annual heating system maintenance as soon as possible to ensure safe and efficient operation. Schedule a chimney cleaning for wood and oil burning systems. Stay comfortable and save money by keeping your heat pump properly maintained. Learn more about heat pump maintenance by visiting [Efficiency Maine](#).

Weatherize

Numerous financial incentives and low-cost financing options exist to help consumers and businesses improve energy efficiency and reduce energy usage. Learn about incentives for weatherization improvements from [Efficiency Maine](#) and [MaineHousing](#).

Heat Pumps Electric heat pumps are a cost-efficient heating source and are proven to work in cold weather. Multiple incentive programs exist to reduce the cost of installing a heat pump for low and moderate-income Maine households. Learn more about heat pump programs from [Efficiency Maine](#) and [MaineHousing](#).

Community Action Agencies help low-income households access these energy efficiency programs. Visit [MaineHousing](#) to find an agency near you, or click the link below.

Emergency Fuel Assistance

If you are very low on fuel and can't afford to fill your tank, you may qualify for an emergency delivery. Emergency funds are available at non-profits, churches, municipalities, and other organizations. Call 211 or contact the Community Action Agency in your area for more information.

COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES

HEATING FUEL GUIDANCE

Automatic Delivery

Ask your heating fuel provider about automatic delivery. Your provider will monitor your fuel usage so you don't accidentally run out of fuel. Automatic delivery also offers added security in the unlikely event of supply disruptions or very cold or inclement weather.

Fixed-Price Contracts

Some consumers may elect to lock a fuel price before winter to ensure predictability and guard against rising prices. If your dealer offers a contract, and you decide to lock in a price, be sure to read the contract terms carefully and understand all parts of the contract before signing. Once signed, fixed-price contracts between a customer and dealer are binding.

Propane

If you heat with propane, read our [Propane Consumer Guide](#), which includes information on obtaining a good price, changing suppliers, and potential start-up and closing fees.

PROPANE GUIDE

Firewood

If you use wood to heat your home, read the [firewood guide](#) prepared by the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. Remember to schedule a chimney cleaning to ensure safe heating during winter.

FIREWOOD GUIDE

ENERGY AGENCIES

Governor's Energy Office

The Governor's Energy Office (GEO) conducts a weekly survey of heating fuel prices obtained from fuel retailers statewide. The survey collects the current Maine cash prices rounded to the nearest penny. GEO also provides information to assist consumers in obtaining the best propane price for their household and location, a comparison of heating fuel prices (e.g., firewood, natural gas, wood pellets, heating oil, etc.), and monthly heating fuel price trends.

Contact: Call (207) 624-7449 or visit maine.gov.energy.

MaineHousing

The Maine State Housing Authority (MaineHousing) is an independent authority that addresses problems of unsafe, unsuitable, overcrowded, and unaffordable housing. Working with Community Action Agencies around the state, MaineHousing administers home heating assistance and weatherization programs for Maine people to help them stay warm during the winter.

Contact: Call (800) 452-4668 or visit mainehousing.org

Public Utilities Commission

The Maine Public Utilities Commission (PUC) is the state's governing body that regulates the rates and services of Maine's utilities. If you have contacted your utility and still need help, contact the PUC's Consumer Assistance Division. They can help resolve disputes and help negotiate a mutually-agreeable payment arrangement.

Contact: Call (800) 452-4699 or visit maine.gov/mpuc

Efficiency Maine Trust

Efficiency Maine Trust (Efficiency Maine) is the independent administrator of energy efficiency programs in Maine. It provides consumer information, rebates, loans, and other initiatives to promote high-efficiency equipment and operations that help Maine's homes, businesses, and institutions reduce their energy costs and lower their greenhouse gas emissions.

Contact: Call (866) 376-2463 or visit efficiencymaine.com

Office of the Public Advocate

The Office of the Public Advocate's (OPA) primary responsibility is to represent the interests of Maine utility consumers. The OPA provides information regarding utility services as well as resources for energy consumers in Maine.

Contact: Call (207) 624-3687 or visit maine.gov/meopa

MAINEHOUSING PROGRAMS

If you cannot afford to heat your home, pay electric bills, or would benefit from energy improvements such as new insulation or a new heating system, help may be available from MaineHousing. Lower income households may qualify for heating assistance and energy improvements at no cost to them. Moderate income households may qualify for low-cost energy loans. To get started with programs offered by MaineHousing, check the income eligibility requirements or contact your local Community Action Agency.

Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

The Home Energy Assistance Program (commonly called HEAP Fuel Assistance) provides money to low-income homeowners and renters to help pay heating costs. The funds are distributed by Maine's 10 local community action agencies and Prosperity Maine, in most cases directly to the fuel vendors. The program is not intended to pay for all heating costs, but to assist in paying heating bills. For more information, visit [MaineHousing](#) or call **(877) 544-3271**.

Weatherization Program

MaineHousing's Weatherization Program provides grants to low-income homeowners and renters to reduce energy costs by improving home energy efficiency. MaineHousing offers this program to consumers through Community Action Agencies, who screen people for eligibility as part of the HEAP application process. For more information, visit [MaineHousing](#) or call **(207) 626-4600 ext. 57433**.

EFFICIENCY MAINE PROGRAMS

Efficiency Maine offers a variety of incentives and rebates for technologies to improve your home's energy efficiency as well as home energy loans to help income-eligible Maine homeowners pay for incentive-eligible energy upgrades. Call **866-376-2463** or visit [Efficiency Maine](#) to learn more.

Residential Energy Efficiency Rebates and Incentives

[Financial incentives](#) for households are available for weatherization, heat pumps, heat pump water heaters, and more. Enhanced incentives are available for income-eligible households.

Residential Home Energy Loans

Efficiency Maine offers [home energy loans](#) to help income-eligible Maine homeowners pay for incentive-eligible energy upgrades. Qualifying homeowners can borrow up to \$7,500 over 10 years with no fees and interest rates as low as 5.99% APR. Electric vehicles are not eligible.

Heat Pump Program

MaineHousing's [Heat Pump Program](#) pays for the cost and installation of heat pumps for eligible Maine homeowners. Heat pumps are popular and efficient tools to help heat homes in cold climates. They can help save on heating costs if used correctly.

Central Heating Improvement Program

MaineHousing's [Central Heating Improvement Program](#) (CHIP) provides grants to repair or replace central heating systems that serve low-income households.

Low Income Assistance Program

The [Low Income Assistance Plan](#) (LIAP) helps low-income homeowners and renters with their electric utility bills. Through Community Action Agencies, MaineHousing accepts customer applications for LIAP as part of the HEAP application process.

Non-Residential Programs

If you are a commercial, industrial, municipal, educational, or multifamily (i.e., three or more units) customer, review the available non-residential energy efficiency initiatives offered by [Efficiency Maine](#).

Federal Credits and Incentives

The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) contains over \$350 billion to help fight the causes and impacts of climate change. Tax credits, rebates, and other incentives directly help individuals and businesses transition to cleaner technologies, from electric cars to heat pumps to rooftop solar panels. The [Mainers' Guide to Climate Incentives](#) provides more information about current state and federal incentive programs.

OTHER PROGRAMS

Natural Gas Customer Discounts

If you are an income-eligible natural gas customer receiving service under the residential heating and non-heating rates, you may be eligible to receive a 30% discount on your delivery and gas supply rates.

The discount applies to any customer identified by MaineHousing as eligible for HEAP. Once enrolled, customers receive the discount for 12 consecutive months. Call your gas utility to enroll.

Electricity Bill Assistance

Find programs and support for managing your electricity bill through the Maine Public Utilities Commission's online resource guide, available at MaineElectricHelp.com.

CMP and Versant Power each operate an Arrearage Management Program (AMP) that assists eligible low-income residential customers who have past-due balances on their electricity bills.

Customers who are eligible for HEAP and have a past-due balance of \$500 or more that is at least 90 days old are eligible to participate in the program. Participating customers will have 1/12 of their past-due amount, up to \$300, forgiven every month that they pay their current bill on time. To enroll in an AMP, customers should contact either their local [Community Action Agency](#) or their utility.

Optional electricity rates are available for customers of CMP and Versant Power that heat with electricity, such as a heat pump. To learn more, contact your electric utility. Not sure how? Visit the Maine PUC [website](#).

Energy Crisis Intervention Program (ECIP)

The Energy Crisis Intervention Program (ECIP) provides emergency fuel assistance to HEAP-eligible households. A household may be eligible for up to \$800 in emergency funds to avert an energy crisis beginning after November 1. Contact your local [Community Action Agency](#) to learn more, check eligibility, and apply.

Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) Alternative Heat Source Safety Guide

During a power outage, or when one source of fuel such as propane or heating oil is in short supply, people may seek alternative heating sources. There are a number of safety considerations to keep in mind when using an alternate heat source. Learn more about alternative heat source safety by visiting [MEMA](#).

DIY Energy Efficiency Ideas

Leaky windows or ducts, old appliances, or inefficient heating and cooling systems can cost families money during winter heating seasons. The [Energy Saver Do-It-Yourself \(DIY\) Savings Projects](#) from the U.S. Department of Energy offers easy, step-by-step instructions for home energy efficiency improvements that can save you money and reduce your energy consumption.

Additional Programs

More home energy financial assistance programs are listed on the Maine PUC's [consumer assistance programs page](#).



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maine.gov/energy