

Need Help with Heating Bills?

Programs such as HEAP and the Red Cross/RG&E Heating Fund are available to help you with your heating bills.

■ **The Home Energy Assistance Program** (HEAP) is administered by the New York State Department of Social Services. HEAP aids low-income customers who have difficulty paying their energy bills. The program may help you pay for electricity, natural gas, propane, oil, wood, and kerosene, even if your utilities are included with your rent. For HEAP guidelines and qualifications, call (585) 292-3960 or toll free 1-800-342-3009.

■ **The Red Cross/RG&E Heating Fund** is another energy-assistance program. People who are not eligible for government assistance programs (like HEAP) may qualify for a one-time heating grant. For more information, contact your local chapter of the American Red Cross, which administers the program. Customers, shareholders, and employees support the Red Cross/RG&E Heating Fund.

The Red Cross/RG&E Heating Fund grants become available in the first quarter of the year. You do not have to be an RG&E customer to qualify.

Smell Gas? Get Up. Get Out and Call from a Neighbor's Home (24 hours a day) 546-1100 or toll free 1-888-253-8888. Or 9 1 1.

Budget Billing Can Help You Plan Your Energy Bills

For a more predictable energy bill try RG&E's Budget Billing.

Budget Billing can level out the highs and lows of your monthly bills, helping make your energy bills consistent. Budget Billing **does not** reduce your total energy expenses. Budget Billing lets you pay your RG&E bill in 12 equal payments, helping you avoid those higher bills during the heating season. For Budget Billing information, call RG&E toll free at 1-888-253-8888 or visit rge.com. Click on "residential services."

Know that feeling of finding a dollar in your pocket? Multiply by 2000



That's what it feels like when you volunteer for the 2004 Tax Assistance Program. For only a few hours a week, you can help low-income families claim thousands of dollars in tax credits they didn't even know they had coming to them. Money for savings, home repairs, or a car. Want to feel like a million bucks? Call (585) 242-6485. Or e-mail: CASH@uwrochester.org today.



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Dear Customer,

Winter weather is here and with it comes our increasing reliance on electricity and natural gas to keep us warm, brighten our day, and make us comfortable and safe.

The federal government has predicted an increase in energy prices — particularly natural gas prices — this winter.

Although RG&E's natural gas **delivery** prices have remained essentially flat since 1994, you pay the market-based **supply** price for the natural gas you use. This market-based price is determined by supply and demand. And RG&E makes no profit on natural gas **supply**.

HIGHLIGHTS



While we cannot predict what will happen with market-based energy prices, we can give you ideas to help you manage your energy costs this winter — and throughout the year.

Jim Laurito

In past issues of *Highlights* we've written about the three factors that affect your energy bills: **delivery** cost, **supply** cost, and how much energy you use, which is largely due to the weather.

In this and future issues of *Highlights* we'll **bring information about energy prices and use** to your attention. For even more information about how to stay warm this winter while staying within your energy budget, visit rge.com. Click on "residential services."



Jim Laurito
President, RG&E



A note about the market price of natural gas:

- Although RG&E's natural gas **delivery** prices have remained essentially flat since 1994, the changing market-based price of the natural gas you use (**supply**) accounts for more than half of your natural gas bills. To put market-based **supply** prices in context, natural gas that has been purchased for consumption during the heating season costs about double of what it did at the same time last year.



Tips for Using Energy Wisely

Tips for heating wisely

- Have your heating system checked annually to make sure it is safe and working properly.
- Clean or replace furnace filters when they get dirty or once a month.
- Keep heating supply and return registers clean and unobstructed by furniture or draperies.
- Consider installing a setback thermostat. Set your thermostat at 65° during the day, and lower it to 60° at night. (May not be advisable if you have frail, ill or young persons in your home.)

- Open draperies on south-facing windows during the day to let in heat from the sun. Close them at night and on cloudy days to keep heat in.

Tips for using electricity wisely

- Turn off electrical appliances and equipment when not in use.
- Use fluorescent, rather than incandescent, light fixtures and bulbs. Fluorescent lights are three to four times more energy efficient.
- Clean your refrigerator's condenser coils frequently to ensure peak efficiency.
- Run your dishwasher only when it's full, and let the dishes air dry.

Tips for making your home energy efficient

- If your home isn't adequately insulated, you may be wasting energy dollars. It may pay for you to insulate or to have a reputable contractor insulate your home.
- If you have an older water heater, you can wrap the sides of it with a specially-made insulation blanket to save energy.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions to set your water heater temperature to 120°.
- Install flow restrictors in showers and on faucets to reduce water use.