

Who is Eligible

The fund disburses grants during the heating season until about the end of May, depending on the amount of funding available and public demand. Persons qualifying have included those facing a temporary hardship caused by a major illness, overwhelming medical bills, fixed incomes, or unexpected unemployment.

The following guidelines are used to determine the eligibility:

- A person must live in the nine-county RG&E service territory. Applicants do not have to be RG&E customers.
- The applicant cannot be eligible for the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) or Department of Social Services (DSS) assistance.
- There must be a heating emergency, such as a lack of fuel oil, wood, or propane. Or there must be a potential discontinuation of gas or electric service or other hardship. A shut off or termination of service notice is required.

If you need help this winter paying heating bills and think you may qualify for the Red Cross/ RG&E Heating Fund, call your local Red Cross chapter. In Rochester, call (585) 241-4474.

Eldersource: The One Phone Number Needed for Older Adults



ELDERSOURCE is proud to be celebrating our eighth year as the one phone number to call to gain access to the myriad of services available to our older adult population in Monroe County. If you or your loved one needs consultation, assessment, or assistance with coordination of services, we can help. You can count on us to provide timely and pertinent information regarding housing, transportation, finances, senior centers, and other issues of aging. Eldersource is also now available on the web at www.eldersource.org. Or you may continue to reach us at 325-2800.



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Crestwood Children's Center is Here to Help



Crestwood Children's Center, an affiliate of the Hillside Family of Agencies, is committed to providing services to children, ages 3 through 21, with serious emotional, behavioral, or mental challenges. Founded in 1885, Crestwood's primary objective is to promote the growth and development of these children, in partnership with their families, through its Residential, Day Treatment, and Outpatient programs.

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HIGHLIGHTS

Is it the Flu? Or Carbon Monoxide Poisoning?

With the onset of colder temperatures and snow, people spend more time indoors using their furnaces, fireplaces, and other heating devices to keep their homes warm. Now is the time to be aware of the potential of carbon monoxide poisoning, which has many of the same symptoms as the flu.

What is Carbon Monoxide?

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a toxic, tasteless, colorless, and odorless gas. It can cause severe illness and even death. Symptoms include headaches, dizziness, faintness, drowsiness, pain in the ears, or seeing spots. Many people often mistake CO symptoms for the flu. With today's more energy-efficient homes, there is less fresh air circulation to help dissipate CO.

CO results from the incomplete combustion of any carbon-based fuel. That includes wood, kerosene, gasoline, oil, propane, or natural gas. It can come from heating systems, appliances, engines, fireplaces, decorative fireplaces, water heaters, clothes dryers, cooking grills, pool heaters, and improperly vented appliances and chimneys.

Never use a natural gas oven for heating. These kitchen appliances are designed for cooking only. Prolonged use of an open natural gas oven in a closed house consumes oxygen, thereby causing an improper combustion of gas, which creates lethal carbon monoxide.



Get Out

If you suspect CO fumes are present, leave your home immediately. Then from a nearby telephone call RG&E at 546-1100 or 1-888-253-8888. Or call 9-1-1. Remain nearby so you can explain the situation to the RG&E or the emergency crew that arrives.



Consider Installing CO Detectors

To help fight potential CO poisoning, RG&E recommends using CO detectors. There are several brands available and most major stores sell them. Make certain your CO detector meets Underwriters Laboratory-listed (UL) standards. It is best to locate CO detectors in bedrooms or hallways leading to bedrooms. You may want to install more than one in your home. You should check and replace batteries regularly.

If your existing CO detector is more than five years old, you may want to consider replacing it. Consult the manufacturer's specification for your specific model.



Need Help with Winter Heating Bills?

You may qualify for assistance from the Red Cross/RG&E Heating Fund. One-time emer-

gency financial assistance is available through this fund, which is supported by contributions from customers and matching grants from shareholders.

People who are not eligible for help from other government programs may apply for a grant through their local Red Cross chapter. Any assistance for those who qualify will be applied directly to heating or fuel bills.

Volunteers and staff from the American Red Cross chapters located in RG&E's service territory administer the fund, except in Allegany County where ACCORD Corp. administers the fund.

They assess the applicant's situation. They may also make referrals to other organizations that can help.

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