

2011-2012 Program Definitions

Assisted Home Performance/AHP (INHS / TCAction): AHP provides homeowners or rental property owners who wish to make energy improvements to their homes/properties a 50% grant for project costs. Eligible activities include domestic hot water upgrades, furnace repair or replacement, insulation, duct work, window replacement, ventilation and air sealing. Remaining costs to owner can be out of pocket or through loan. Income limits apply.

Consumer HelpLine (CCE-Tompkins): Offers unbiased information on a wide range of consumer topics, including heating/energy-related issues. Referrals to appropriate agencies/programs. Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm: 272-2292.

Emergency Shelter (Red Cross): Temporary housing for families, individuals, and runaway youth who have no means of affording alternative living arrangements. Someone whose housing lacks heat in winter qualifies. On-site staff 24 hrs. a day / 7 days a week. When admitted to the shelter, residents receive case management services, which assist them in locating affordable housing and get them back on their own as soon as possible.

Emergency PA (DSS): Assistance offered to individuals or families who meet financial eligibility standards and who have an emergency need, including lack of safe housing or lack of heat. Application requires completing a form, an interview, and providing documentation. Assistance usually is in the form of direct payment to a service provider.

EmPower NY (TCAction): Provides energy reduction audits, customer education, and simple electricity reduction measures. Measures may include installing compact fluorescent light bulbs or programmable thermostats, replacing an old refrigerator or freezer, or converting a hot water heater from electric to natural gas. Targets NYSEG customers, owners or renters.

HEAP (COFA, DSS, TCAction): The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) is a federally funded energy assistance program. New York's benefit program is structured in such a way that higher benefits are provided to those households that have larger percentages of their income spent on energy costs, contain a vulnerable individual, and have the lowest income. HEAP provides financial assistance to pay energy bills, and can pay for heating system repair or replacement.

Housing Rehab Program (Better Housing, INHS): Loan and grants for low-income home-owners. Funds can be used for a wide variety of projects, including energy efficiency. INHS can provide extensive technical assistance with inspection, design, bidding and project management (INHS has limited program outside the City of Ithaca.).

Mini-Repair Program (Better Housing, INHS): Small or emergency repairs for very low-income homeowners. Virtually all recipients are seniors or disabled. Labor is provided free for seniors and persons with disabilities. The owner pays for materials, although INHS may be able to provide grants for materials. (INHS only within City of Ithaca.)

NYSERDA Energy Smart Loan & Grant Programs (INHS): Low interest loans for the installation of energy improvements. Insulation, furnaces, appliances, replacement windows, etc. are eligible. Energy Smart loans are available to homeowners throughout Tompkins County without income restrictions. Low income homeowners may be eligible for up to \$5,000 in matching grant funds from NYSERDA.

Energy Assistance Program (NYSEG): NYSEG's energy assistance program was designed to help customers gain control of their energy bills. There are two levels to the program: Basic Benefit which provides a monthly bill credit and Limited Benefit which provides arrears forgiveness for qualified customers as openings become available.

Project Share (Red Cross): Can help pay bills for oil, natural gas, electricity, propane, or wood. It may also help pay for repairs to heating equipment, water heaters, broken windows, and storm doors. To qualify, you must have an energy-related emergency, and be a NYSEG customer or live in NYSEG's service area. Project share is a 'last resort' option. All other options must be exhausted, including an agreement with NYSEG, before you are eligible for the program.

The Samaritan Center (Catholic Charities): An emergency services program that offers free clothing and personal care products, as well as financial assistance for car repairs, utility assistance, prescription assistance, security deposits, rent and other emergencies. Available assistance depends on funding. Requests are evaluated on an individual basis. Income documentation is required for all assistance.

Section 504 (Rural Development): USDA Rural Development Section 504 loans and/or grants are available to assist eligible homeowners outside the City of Ithaca with repair of their home. Repairs may be made to improve or modernize the home, to make it safe or sanitary, or to remove health and safety hazards. Grants are only available for repairs that remove health or safety hazards, and are limited to very low income people 62 years of age or older. 1% loans are available to those of any age that are under the very low income guideline.

Special Services (DSS): Special Services provides assistance to people who have an emergency need for housing and/or food, or are victims of domestic violence. Special Services will determine eligibility and then refer individuals and families to other services if they meet eligibility requirements. Special Services processes referrals from Red Cross to determine eligibility for emergency assistance for shelter stays. The staff also works with the Disaster Coordinator at Red Cross to help persons in natural disasters.

Weatherization Assistance Program or WAP (TCAction): A comprehensive home energy assessment of the applicant's home. Based on analysis and funds available, weatherization improvements are then made to the applicant's home, targeting those that are the most cost effective in reducing energy consumption and increasing health, safety, and comfort. Program is for homeowners and renters where owners provide partial investment.

Weatherization Referral And Packaging or WRAP (COFA): WRAP helps income eligible homeowners 60 years or older to apply for WAP or to locate and apply for resources for small housing repair.

Workshops (CCE-Tompkins): *Save Energy Save Dollars* – Low-cost, no-cost actions to reduce home energy use and lower energy bills. Free kit of energy-saving items given to each participating households Financial Management workshops – *Making Ends Meet* and *Exploring Credit/Debt Management Issues*. Free kit of money management tools given to all attendees. All workshops are free, 2 hour long, and open to the public.

Also, **Cornell Cooperative Extension Tompkins County website** provides many resources for energy savings. (<http://csetompkins.org/energy>)

Check out the Human Services Coalition at www.hsctc.org under Services Directory for additional resources to meet energy needs. *Revised Nov./2011*