



# Help for Kentucky customers with higher winter bills

Winter brings colder weather, which can bring higher energy bills. That's especially true if you use natural gas for heating – as natural gas prices are rising across the globe. These rising prices could have impacts for electric customers, too. Our money-saving programs, tips and guidance can help you control your energy usage and reduce your energy bills.

## WHY IS YOUR ENERGY BILL INCREASING?

Several factors can impact your bill. It's important to know that:

- As the weather turns colder, you may be using more natural gas.
- The commodity cost of natural gas has more than doubled since January 2021, impacting overall market prices for energy supplies.
- This cost is set by financial markets that are influenced by national and international events such as weather events, exports and changes in supply and demand.
- Duke Energy does not control the commodity cost of natural gas and does not make a profit on it.
- Duke Energy purchases energy at the best possible price and then passes this cost directly to customers.

## LOW- TO NO-COST ENERGY-SAVING TIPS

Natural gas use usually spikes in the winter since it is typically used as a heating source. Here are some tips to help prepare for cold weather and manage your energy use.

- **Learn how to reduce energy use.** The first step to reduce energy use in your home is to identify and prioritize energy-saving improvements. This can be accomplished through a certified auditor or by performing your own energy audit.
- **Seal your home.** One of the quickest energy-saving tasks you can do is caulk, seal and weatherstrip all seams, cracks and openings to the outside. This can save up to 20% on your heating and cooling bills.
- **Seal air ducts.** Make sure the air ducts from your home's furnace and central air conditioner are properly sealed. Ducts that leak into the attic or crawl space can substantially increase your heating and cooling bills.
- **Manage water heating.** Set your water heater temperature to 120 degrees Fahrenheit or consider installing an on-demand or tankless water heater that only heats water when you need it.
- **Change air filters regularly.** A dirty air filter makes a heating system work harder, which uses more energy.
- **Operate ceiling fans in a clockwise direction,** which pushes warm air back down into the room.
- **Leave drapes or blinds open** during sunny winter days to allow the sun to warm the house. Close them at night to help insulate your home.
- **Install smart thermostats.** Install a "smart" or programmable thermostat to reduce your energy use while you are asleep or away.
- **Consider insulation.** Consider whether you need to add insulation to your ceiling, floors and walls. Insulation between the indoors and outdoors reduces energy demand, saving you money while improving the comfort of your home.

## DUKE ENERGY PROGRAMS

### Budget Billing

Budget Billing allows you to pay a predictable monthly amount to help better control your budget. Your monthly Budget Billing amount is based on the average of your actual bills over the last 12 months and is periodically reviewed and adjusted. Learn more at [duke-energy.com/BudgetBilling](https://duke-energy.com/BudgetBilling).

### Pick Your Due Date

With Pick Your Due Date, you can choose the date you want your energy bills to be due each month. Learn more at [duke-energy.com/PYDD](https://duke-energy.com/PYDD).

### Installment Plans/Payment Plans

Installment plans give you more flexibility to pay back past-due balances over longer periods of time. You can request a few extra days or restructure your entire past-due balance into a monthly payment plan. Learn more about the options available by visiting [duke-energy.com/MoreTime](https://duke-energy.com/MoreTime) or calling us at 800.544.6900.

Find more information to help you manage winter bills at [duke-energy.com/WinterBills](https://duke-energy.com/WinterBills)

## LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

If you need assistance paying utility bills this winter, these programs may be able to help.

### Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

LIHEAP is an income-based program that allows those earning below certain thresholds to qualify for federal energy bill assistance money. More information is available by calling the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services at 800.456.3452 or by visiting [duke-energy.com/LIAssistance](http://duke-energy.com/LIAssistance).

### Home Energy Assistance (HEA)

HEA is a program in partnership with Community Action Kentucky, Northern Kentucky Community Action Commission and Duke Energy. Eligible customers may receive up to \$693 in bill assistance January through April. Combination electric and gas customers can receive up to \$99 per month January to April and July to September. Gas-only customers can receive \$173.25 January to April. Find assistance at a neighborhood center near you at [www.nkcac.org/neighborhood-centers/](http://www.nkcac.org/neighborhood-centers/).

### WinterCare Energy Fund

WinterCare is a Duke Energy-sponsored program administered by the Northern Kentucky Community Action Commission (NKCAC). Eligibility is determined, in part, by household income. The NKCAC will take applications for WinterCare each year until funds are depleted. For additional information, or to apply for assistance, please call 859.581.6607.

### Certificate of Financial Need

Eligible customers may qualify for two winter certificate-of-financial-need programs from November 1, 2021 through March 31, 2022. For more information, contact your local Community Action Agency.

### Duke Energy Weatherization Program

Weatherizing your home can help lower heating costs by keeping cold drafts out and reducing the amount of warm air that escapes. People Working Cooperatively manages the enrollment and qualification for free home weatherization improvements. To apply, call 859.331.1991.

### Federal Assistance

Customers having trouble paying housing or utility expenses due to pandemic hardships may find help through new and existing assistance programs. Learn more by visiting [duke-energy.com/Help4You](http://duke-energy.com/Help4You).

## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

**Community Action Agencies** – Emergency funds may be available for utility bills through Northern Kentucky Community Action Commissions. Find out more by calling the agency in your area.

Boone County, 859.586.9250

Grant County, 859.824.4768

Campbell County, 859.431.4177

Kenton County, 859.655.2959

Gallatin County, 859.567.4660

Pendleton County, 859.654.4054

**United Way** – United Way can refer you to other organizations that may provide assistance with utility bill or other needs. Learn more by visiting [211.org](http://211.org).

The following agencies may also be able to provide assistance.

Brighton Center: 859.491.8303

The Salvation Army: 859.261.0835

Boone County: 859.586.9250

Find more information to help you manage winter bills at [duke-energy.com/WinterBills](http://duke-energy.com/WinterBills)



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