

# Low-Income Energy Assistance Grants

On November 1, the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) began taking applications from all low-income households. Until now it was only taking application from the elderly, disabled, or households in crisis.

LIHEAP expects to have about \$68 million in federal funds for one-time grants of about \$600 to help pay heating bills. Grants are awarded on a first-come first-serve basis.

Income cannot exceed 150% of the poverty level, which is \$16,245 for a household of one person, \$21,855 for two persons, \$27,465 for three persons, and \$33,075 for four persons. For larger households, add \$5,610 for each person over four.

Households cannot be disconnected for nonpayment of a utility bill through April 1st, if they are certified as eligible for LIHEAP, whether or not they receive any funds. Other customers may be disconnected during the winter.

Despite the winter disconnection prohibition, eligible households should continue to pay their utility bills as much as possible to avoid accumulating a large debt over the winter months.

Iowans apply for LIHEAP through their local Community Action Program (CAP) office. To locate the nearest CAP office, call the Iowa Department of Human Rights at (515) 281-0859, or check their web site: [http://www.dcaa.iowa.gov/bureau\\_EA/index.html](http://www.dcaa.iowa.gov/bureau_EA/index.html)

Local CAP agencies can also help utility customers apply for and obtain Home Weatherization Program assistance to improve energy efficiency and cut energy bills.