

Energy Equity and Energy Security Programs in Connecticut

Purpose and scope

This document was created to serve the following purposes:

1. To thoroughly explain the energy safety net as it exists now
2. To review this safety net across a spectrum of advocates, policy makers, and residents to determine what the gaps are in the net
3. To create a document that advocates can use to help residents in need as we conduct outreach and education programs (such as HeatSmart)

This document is deliberately focused on energy and we recognize that health, housing, nutrition, and education are related and adjacent issues. The focus of the CT Energy Network is Energy and that is the focus of this document.

Energy related programs addressing energy security and equity imbalances

Energy Security refers to programs that are designed to help residents to obtain and pay for energy needs.

Energy security plans:

[Winter Protection Plan](#) - Customers who meet income eligibility or receive certain government benefits and lack the resources to pay their gas or electric bill may qualify for shutoff protection during the winter months.

- [Eversource](#) and [UI](#) Payment Plans
 - Extended payment plans allow most residents to deal with past balances. There are a couple types of such programs – the “Matching Payment Program” and the “New Start Program”
- [Connecticut Energy Assistance Program](#)
 - Dealing with debt
 - Dealing with shutoff and maintenance of service
- [Operation Fuel](#) provides fuel grants and emergency equipment repair. Operation Fuel administers gap-funding between other programs through the Better Homes and Buildings Program to support residents executing transitions to heat pumps from existing fossil fuel equipment

Energy efficiency and evening the playing field:

- [SCEF](#) – In shared clean energy facilities, 20 percent of output goes to low-income residents and 40 percent goes to moderate income residents. Those in the program receive on-bill credits to lower their electric rates.
- [HES-IE](#) is no-cost to LMI (Low & Moderate Income) residents and offers a rich suite of benefits to start weatherization improvements. Copayments may be required for “Add-On” efficiency upgrades, depending on many factors.
- [Weatherization Assistance Program](#) provides no-cost weatherization to LMI residents
- [Low Income tariff](#) – a low-income tariff is provided in two levels: Households with incomes at or below 60% of the state median income are eligible for a 10% discount and households earning up to 160% of the federal poverty guidelines are eligible for 50% off of their monthly rates.
- A new program has been created to help residents overcome mold and other barriers to energy efficiency. The [Statewide Weatherization Barrier Remediation Program](#), overseen by the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and implemented with [ICAST](#), will evaluate and pay for the cleanup of mold, asbestos and other health and safety barriers that are uniquely preventing

homeowners from executing weatherization projects. Participants will need to apply for both WAP and HES-IE.

Financing efficiency upgrades

- Smart-E Loan
- CT Home Heat Loan
- HES Microloan
- Landlord Loan
- Emergency Conservation Loan (must be ineligible for other loans first)
- Historic Preservation Loans (Hartford)
- Energy Efficiency Rehabilitation Assistance Program EERAP (New Haven)
- Emergency Elderly/Disabled Repair Program EEDRP (New Haven)
- NEIF loan (gas appliances)
- Contractor Loans or Leases (primarily for electrical panel upgrades and energy storage with solar)
- Historic Tax Credits (when in combination with energy efficiency projects that utilize other financing, such as those above)
- Sealed - 20 yr lease agreement with private company to evaluate, fund, execute, and monitor upgrades at the home

Third-party guidance (no-cost)

- [Energize CTSM Heat Pump Consultation Service](#) (heat pumps)
- [I Heart My Home CT](#) (whole home)

[Community Action Agencies](#) help administer the programs above: “Through the identification and removal of social and economic barriers, the mobilization of community resources, advocacy, and the provision of direct services at the community level, CAAs use cost-effective and community-based processes to help limited income people and communities in all 169 cities and towns across the state.”

Connecticut Children’s Medical Center administers the “[Healthy Homes Program](#)”, which assesses homes and develops a scope of work to address housing-related health hazards, such as lead-based paint, mold, asbestos, and injury risks through a forgivable mortgage lien.

From the State website: [Energy Assistance Programs | Energize Connecticut \(energizect.com\)](#)

WHO	HOW THEY HELP
Infoline	Infoline maintains information on energy and conservation assistance, and programs and protections for utility customers on their website . To find resources that may help your family and information on how to apply for assistance, call Infoline at 2-1-1.
Connecticut Energy Assistance Plan Programs	Help paying a primary heat bill may be available during the heating season for low income households. Help may also be available if heat is included in the rent payment. Information about who is eligible, benefits available, and where to apply can be obtained from the Department of Social Services (DSS), or call 2-1-1 or the DSS Office of Community Services at 1-800-842-1132.

Fuel Banks	Connecticut has a network of fuel banks that may be able to help with utility and energy bills for low income households. Each fuel bank has its own eligibility and benefits rules. Operation Fuel raises funds and designs programs for local fuel banks. To find information on available assistance go to Infoline's website . Call 2-1-1 for information on where to apply for assistance.
Utility Matching Payment Programs	Eversource, YG, UI, SCG, and CNG have special payment programs for their heat customers who receive assistance from Connecticut Energy Assistance Plan Programs (above). The utility matches customer payments and energy assistance based on a year-round customer payment plan. Making all required payments in the payment plan protects the household from utility shut-offs, in addition to getting the utility's payment match. Sign up begins November 1 each year. Eversource and UI also have programs for their non-heat customers.
Citizen's Energy	During the heating season, free fuel deliveries may be available to needy households. For more information go to Citizens Oil Corporation or call 1-877-JOE-4-OIL.
Soldiers', Sailors' and Marines' Fund	Honorably discharged veterans who served during specified periods, and their families, may be eligible for emergency assistance that may include utility or energy bills. For more information go to Soldiers', Sailors', and Marines' Fund or call 844-454-8900.

Problems Identified:

A representative of Children's Medical Center indicates that often the programs are not well communicated and understood. So – even when a program is available – and would help – the residents may not know about it.