Seniors and Disabled Individuals Can Receive Help with Applications for Heating Costs Through HEAP

The Area Agency on Aging District 7 (AAA7) and the Ohio Development Services Agency wants to remind Ohioans that assistance is available to help with their home energy bills. The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) helps Ohioans at or below 175 percent of the federal poverty guidelines pay their heating bills.

Applied directly to the customer's utility or bulk fuel bill, the benefit can help manage heating costs. Ohioans can visit www.energyhelp.ohio.gov to apply online, download a copy of the application, or find contact information for a local Energy Assistance Provider (EAP). When applying, individuals need to have copies of the following documents:

• Most recent utility bills.
• A list of all household members (including birth dates and Social Security numbers).
• Proof of income for the past 30 days for all household members (12 months for certain income types).
• Proof of U.S. citizenship or legal residency for all household members.
• Proof of disability (if applicable).

HEAP benefits are applied to an individual's energy bill after January 1st. Applications for the HEAP program must be received by May 31, 2021.

HEAP is not an emergency program. Low-income households that have been disconnected (or have a pending disconnection notice), need to establish new service, need to pay to transfer service, have 25 percent (or less) of bulk fuel supply remaining, or have a household member who was diagnosed with COVID-19 in 2020, may also be eligible for the HEAP Winter Crisis Program, which began on November 1, 2020. If you need immediate assistance with your energy bills, please contact your local EAP. A list of providers can be found at www.energyhelp.ohio.gov.

Applications for the HEAP Winter Crisis Program must be received by March 31, 2021. For more information on HEAP, visit www.energyhelp.ohio.gov or call (800) 282-0880. Hearing-impaired customers can dial 711 for assistance.

Local partners in the AAA7's core 10-county district include:
Adams County – Adams County Senior Citizens Center
Brown County – Brown County Senior Citizens Center
Gallia County – RSVP of the Ohio Valley
Highland County – Highland County Community Action
Jackson County – RSVP of the Ohio Valley
Lawrence County – Ironton-Lawrence County Community Action
Pike County – Community Action Committee of Pike County
Ross County – Ross County Community Action
Scioto County – Scioto County Community Action
Vinton County – RSVP of the Ohio Valley

You can obtain a HEAP application online at the Ohio Department of Development's website – look under the tab "Individual" on the home page, or you can contact any of the partners listed previously for more information.

QUICK QUIZ

Falls, sprains, strains and burns are a common source of injuries for older adults. In planning for comfort and safety at home, think ahead. Answer True or False to the questions below.

1) *If a medication causes dizziness or sleepiness, be extra careful when the person in your care is walking.   T   F*

2) *If you are planning to take care of an older or disabled person at home, prepare the house with safety in mind.   T   F*

3) *Have an emergency fire escape plan and keep the route clear.   T   F*

4) *Furniture should be kept in the same familiar place and be sturdy so as not to move when leaned on.   T   F*

5) *Outside doors do not need to be locked or alarmed for the safety of people who are confused and are mobile.   T   F*

6) *To prevent falls, provide a sturdy chair or table next to the bed for help getting in and out of bed.   T   F*

7) *Sore feet are a major reason for unsteady gait and poor balance, and most older adults who fell reported that they had chronically aching feet.   T   F*

8) *To prevent scalding, set the hot water thermostat below 120° F.   T   F*

9) *Low-pile carpets in solid colors are not the safest for an older person.   T   F*

10) *Help avoid falls by picking up clutter from the floor, especially on the stairs.   T   F*

<u>KEY:</u>   1. T   2. T   3. T   4. T   5. F   6. T   7. T   8. T   9. F   10. T