

PAYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS AVAILABLE FOR FIRSTENERGY CUSTOMERS IN PENNSYLVANIA

Reading, PA – With the arrival of winter, FirstEnergy Corp.’s (NYSE: FE) Pennsylvania electric utility operating companies – Pennsylvania Power (Penn Power), Pennsylvania Electric (Penelec), and Metropolitan Edison (Met-Ed) – are reminding customers that numerous payment programs are available to provide assistance during the winter heating season.

“We know that some of our 1.2 million customers in Pennsylvania have trouble paying their bills sometime, including their electric bill,” said Doug Elliott, president, Pennsylvania Operations, for FirstEnergy. “Rather than accumulate a large unpaid balance, we ask customers who are falling behind to contact us as soon as possible to find out what payment assistance programs are available and how they can apply.”

Some of the available payment assistance programs include:

- Customer Assistance Program (CAP) – Helps qualifying residential customers maintain electric service and eliminate their past-due balance. CAP offers a reduced bill that is based on a percentage of income. For Met-Ed and Penelec, credits for some past-due balances also can be applied directly to participants' electric service accounts in recognition of payments that are made on time and paid in-full.
- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) – A federally funded grant program designed to help low-income customers meet the cost of home heating by providing a one-time payment during the winter heating season. LIHEAP is administered by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania through its network of local county assistance offices.
- Dollar Energy Fund/Project Reach – Emergency hardship funds designed to help Met-Ed, Penelec and Penn Power residential customers who have suffered financial hardships get their electric service reconnected. The program is administered by community-based organizations and funded by the companies and their customers and employees.

- Customer Assistance & Referral Evaluation Services Program (CARES) – Provides short-term program referral assistance to qualifying residential customers, including: those 60 years of age or older; anyone handicapped, disabled, or seriously ill; and a family with a member who is seriously ill residing in the household.
- Extended Payment Plans – For customers who have accumulated past-due balances that could trigger disconnection, an extended payment plan can be arranged by dividing the overdue balance into equal payments over a set period of time. Each month, a customer pays their current amount plus the extended payment installment amount until the past due balance is zero.

In addition to the payment options, the companies also offer Third Party Notification, a program for a relative, friend, clergy or social service agency to be notified along with the customer if electric service is about to be disconnected. The third party is not obligated to pay overdue bills, but can help make payment arrangements for the customer who might have difficulty paying their bill.

And, if a loss of electric service would be especially dangerous to the health of a permanent member of a customer's household, disconnection because of overdue bills can be delayed up to 30 days under the Medical Certification program. A health care professional must complete a Medical Certification Form describing the resident's medical condition and it must be submitted to the company in order for the customer to be considered for this program.

The company also offers Critical Customer Care Program that identifies customers who use certain electrically operated life sustaining medical equipment in their home. The program helps these customers prepare for planned and unplanned power outages.

Customers with questions about payment assistance plans can call toll-free customer service numbers for their electric company:

- Penelec and Met-Ed – 1-800-545-7741
- Penn Power – 1-800-720-3600

FirstEnergy is a diversified energy company headquartered in Akron, Ohio. Its subsidiaries and affiliates are involved in the generation, transmission and distribution of electricity, as well as energy management and other energy-related services. Its seven electric utility operating companies comprise the nation's fifth largest investor-owned electric system, based on 4.5 million customers served within a 36,100-square-mile area of Ohio, Pennsylvania and New Jersey; and its generation subsidiaries control more than 14,000 megawatts of capacity.

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