



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

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**Winter Warmth Program Helps 1,596 Families**  
*Funds Available for Qualifying Low-Income Customers as*  
*March 15 Moratorium Approaches*

**MERRILLVILLE, IN** – A one-year pilot program aimed at providing low-income natural gas customers with home heating assistance has helped nearly 1,600 families, according to Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO). NIPSCO also announced today that funds are still available to help more qualifying customers as the March 15 conclusion of the state’s moratorium for LIHEAP customers approaches.

Since NIPSCO’s Winter Warmth program was launched in mid-December, nearly half a million dollars in assistance has been directed to eligible customers to help pay either a delinquent natural gas bill or a deposit to restore service. In addition, NIPSCO limited natural gas deposit payments to \$150 for LIHEAP eligible customers and \$300 for non-LIHEAP eligible customers determined to have a financial hardship.

“The Winter Warmth program is working well by providing qualifying customers with the funds they need to stay safe and warm in their homes this winter,” said NIPSCO President Mark Maassel. “Winter Warmth funds are still available to help LIHEAP and hardship customers who qualify for the program.”

The state moratorium on disconnects began Dec. 1 and concludes March 15. During this period, known as the moratorium, utilities in Indiana will not disconnect service to families participating in LIHEAP and who are delinquent on their utility bills. At a minimum, the following steps are taken before any disconnection of service:

- Beginning in early March, NIPSCO mails disconnect notices separately from the bill.
- NIPSCO attempts to call each customer within three to five days of the scheduled disconnect date.
- NIPSCO may attempt another call one day prior to the disconnect date to offer customers payment or energy assistance options to help avoid disconnection of service.

**-more-**

## **Winter Warmth Funds Available for Qualifying Customers**

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“Our customer service representatives, as well as the participating Winter Warmth agencies, are prepared to work with customers who have received a disconnect notice and require bill payment assistance,” said Maassel. “We want to underscore the importance for these customers to contact NIPSCO or one of the 26 participating Winter Warmth agencies immediately to get the help they need to avoid a service disconnection.”

**Editor’s Note: A list of Winter Warmth agencies follows.**

NIPSCO, with headquarters in Merrillville, Ind., is one of the 10 energy distribution companies of NiSource Inc. (NYSE: NI). With nearly 700,000 natural gas customers and 440,000 electric customers across the northern third of Indiana, NIPSCO is the largest natural gas distribution company, and the second largest electric distribution company, in the state. NiSource distribution companies serve 3.7 million natural gas and electric customers primarily in nine states. More information about NIPSCO is available at [www.nipSCO.nisource.com](http://www.nipSCO.nisource.com)

### **NIPSCO 2005 Winter Warmth Agencies by County**

#### **Adams County**

Community & Family Services  
313 W. Jefferson, Room 142  
Decatur, IN 46733  
(260) 724-3574

#### **Allen County**

Community Action of Northeast Indiana (CANI)  
2260 Lake Ave.  
Fort Wayne, IN 46802  
(260) 423-3546

#### **Benton County – N/A**

#### **Carroll County**

Area IV Agency  
700 N. Washington  
Delphi, IN 46733  
(765) 564-6466

#### **Cass County**

Area Five Council on Aging  
1801 Smith St.  
Logansport, IN 46947  
(574) 722-4451

#### **Clinton County**

Area IV Agency  
301 E. Clinton St.  
Frankfort, IN 46041  
(765) 659-1408

#### **Elkhart County**

Salvation Army  
300 N. Main St.  
Elkhart, IN 46516  
(574) 294-6668

Salvation Army  
1013 N. Main St.  
Goshen, IN 46527  
(574) 533-9584

Open Door, Inc.  
201 S. Main  
Nappanee, IN 46550  
(574) 773-3820

**Fulton County**

United Ministries  
625 Pontiac St.  
Rochester, IN 46975  
(574) 223-4802

**Jasper County**

Jasper County Community Services  
967 E. Leopold  
Rensselaer, IN 47978  
(219) 866-8071

**Kosciusko County**

Combined Community Services  
1110 E. Prairie St.  
Warsaw, IN 46580  
(574) 269-6019

**LaGrange County**

Community Action of Northeast Indiana (CANI)  
317 S. Wayne St., Suite 3G  
Angola, IN 46703  
(260) 665-1160

**Lake County**

South Lake County Community Services  
1450 E. Joliet St., Suite 202  
Crown Point, IN 46307  
(219) 663-0627

Catholic Family Services  
3901 Fir St.  
East Chicago, IN 46312  
(219) 397-5803

Catholic Family Services  
6919 Indianapolis Blvd.  
Hammond, IN 46324  
(219) 844-4883

Metro Corps  
1100 Massachusetts  
Gary, IN 46402  
(219) 886-3155

**LaPorte County**

Salvation Army  
209 State St.  
LaPorte, IN 46352  
(219) 326-5342

Salvation Army  
1201 S. Franklin  
Michigan City, IN 46360  
(219) 874-6885

**Marshall County**

Marshall County Council on Aging  
1305 W. Harrison  
Plymouth, IN 46563  
(574) 936-9904

**Miami County**

Miami County Helping Hands, Inc.  
65 S. Miami St.  
Peru, IN 46970  
(765) 472-1875

**Newton County**

Community Energy Assistance Program  
106 E. State St.  
Morocco, IN 47963  
(219) 285-2247

**Noble County – N/A****Porter County**

Porter County Council on Aging  
1005 Campbell  
Valparaiso, IN 46383  
(219) 464-9736

**Pulaski County**

Pulaski County Human Services, Inc.  
115 W. Pearl St.  
Winamac, IN 46996  
(574) 946-6500

**St. Joseph County**

Family Children's Center  
101 E. Jefferson, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
South Bend, IN 46601  
(574) 287-2671

**Starke County**

Starke County Council on Aging  
311 Culver Rd.  
Knox, IN 46534  
(574) 772-7070

**Wabash County**

Winchester Senior Center  
239 Bond St.  
Wabash, IN 46992  
(260) 563-4475

**Warren County – N/A**

**Wells County**

Christmas Assistance Bureau  
121 S. Johnson St.  
Bluffton, IN 46714  
(260) 824-4836

**White County**

Area IV Agency  
116 E. Marion  
Monticello, IN 47960  
(574) 583-6048

**Whitley County**

Whitley County Family & Children's Services  
115 S. Line St.  
Columbia City, IN 46725  
(260) 244-6331