



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

September 7, 2006

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**Tom Cuddy**

NIPSCO Communications

219-647-6556

**WINTER WARMTH PROGRAM PROVIDES \$10.7 MILLION TO  
MORE THAN 24,000 CUSTOMERS**

*NIPSCO Seeking Regulatory Approval to Continue Program*

**MERRILLVILLE, Ind.** – Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO) today announced that its Winter Warmth program has distributed \$10.7 million to more than 24,000 customers since it was approved two years ago. NIPSCO filed a petition with the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC) to continue the program for two more heating seasons.

“Targeted energy assistance programs like Winter Warmth, coupled with existing federal and state energy assistance programs, do help low-income and hardship customers pay their heating bills, restore service and stay connected,” said NIPSCO President Mark Maassel. “Our focus is to move the process forward with the IURC so we can have a program in place before the start of the winter heating season.”

From Nov. 2005 to May 2006, the Winter Warmth program provided over \$5.6 million in bill and deposit assistance to 15,321 customers. NIPSCO proposes to keep the general requirements of the program in place and projects it could distribute between \$9.9 million and \$11.1 million – depending on the weather – to eligible customers during the next two winter heating seasons.

“There is still a vital need in the community for programs such as Winter Warmth, which was invaluable to customers of Gary, Hammond, East Chicago, Portage, Michigan City, Shelby, and even South Bend,” said Yvonne Cox, director, Metro Corps of Gary, Inc. “The program guidelines and process made it possible to service customers that did not qualify for the regular Energy Assistance Program, but fell in the category of hardship cases, which allowed them to have uninterrupted services and this was due to the Winter Warmth program.”

**-more-**

**NIPSCO SEEKS REGULATORY APPROVAL OF WINTER WARMTH**  
**PAGE 2 OF 2**

If the program is approved by the IURC, NIPSCO will contribute up to \$1.2 million to the program. The average residential customer would pay approximately \$0.63 per month to help fund the program, which would be administered by the same 26 agencies strategically located throughout NIPSCO's gas service area.

“It's never too early to prepare for the winter heating season and that's exactly what we're doing,” said Maassel. “Even though we continue to enjoy warm days, now is the time to start winterizing your home and thinking of ways to use energy wisely this winter heating season.”

NIPSCO, with headquarters in Merrillville, Ind., is one of the 10 energy distribution companies of NiSource Inc. (NYSE: NI). With over 712,000 natural gas customers and 445,000 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 3.8 million natural gas and electric customers primarily in nine states. More information about NIPSCO is available at [www.nipsco.com](http://www.nipsco.com).

###