



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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**NIPSCO, LAKE COUNTY ENERGY TASK FORCE
TO HOST ENERGY FAIR AT GENESIS CONVENTION CENTER**

MERRILLVILLE, Ind. – Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO) and the Lake County Energy Task Force today jointly announce that they will be hosting an Energy Fair on Sat., Oct. 14, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Genesis Center in Gary.

The Energy Fair, which is being sponsored by NIPSCO and is free to the public, will provide the community with the tools, resources, and information needed to prepare for the upcoming winter season and ways to manage winter heating bills. The fair will feature weatherization demonstrations, entertainment, giveaways and refreshments.

“NIPSCO is proud to sponsor and join the Lake County Energy Task Force in hosting this Energy Fair,” said NIPSCO President Mark Maassel. “The fair will offer consumers a venue to learn how to prepare for the winter heating season, manage their heating bills by learning how to use energy wisely, benefits of weatherization, as well as how to utilize bill-payment programs.”

Over the past several years, the cost of heating a home during the winter season has become increasingly more expensive due to the high cost of natural gas on the wholesale market, which remains volatile due to a tight balance between supply and demand.

"The energy fair will be geared to help consumers and homeowners," said Calumet Township Trustee Mary Elgin. "We encourage everyone to come out and learn how to use energy wisely, access energy assistance programs, and view demonstrations of simple ways to seal homes and to cut down on heating bills."

“Too often, when we are confronted with rising energy costs, we do not have an opportunity to provide real solutions. Instead, we react to the situation and try to come up with short-term fixes to the problem,” said NIPSCO Public Affairs Manager Mike Suggs, who has been working the Task Force to coordinate the event. “The energy fair is a step toward empowering customers to get to the root cause of their heating issues, which often can be solved by applying some simple fixes in the home. As the price of natural gas fluctuates with the market, the price NIPSCO charges to deliver the gas to homes and businesses has not changed since the late 80s. Price increases for natural gas have increased the urgency to address weatherization.”

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In addition, Gary Fire Department officials, health service agencies, and other groups such as The Indiana Underground Plant Protection Service (IUPPS) will be on-hand to show consumers how to stay safe during the winter heating season, as well as the importance of calling before digging.

“We want our customers to stay safe and warm in their homes during the winter heating season and we appreciate the collaboration with the Lake County Energy Task Force to get information in the hands of customers,” said Suggs. “The energy fair is just one example of a cooperative commitment to reaching out to and educating our customers.”

Hands-on demonstrations showing customers how to properly caulk and seal windows and doors will be held throughout the day. In addition, door prizes will be awarded every hour to attendees who attend at least five booth presentations. Refreshments and hot dogs also will be available to attendees, as well as entertainment for both adults and children.

Among the companies and organizations that will be exhibiting include: NIPSCO; Indiana chapter of the American Association of Blacks in Energy; Menards; Lowe’s; Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor; Urban League of Northwest Indiana; Calumet Township Trustee Mary Elgin; Northwest Indiana Community Action Corp.; North Township Trustee Frank Mrvan; Gary Neighborhood Services; Metro Corps of Gary, Inc.; Healthy East Chicago; South Lake County Community Services; City of Gary Health & Human Services; Gary Fire Dept.; and Vision Quest.

About NIPSCO

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.

About the Lake County Energy Task Force

The Lake County Energy Task Force is a collaborative effort comprised of representatives from NIPSCO, Indiana Chapter of American Association of Blacks in Energy, as well as Urban League of Northwest Indiana, Calumet Township Trustee, NWI-CA, North Township Trustee, Gary Neighborhood Services, Metro Corp., Healthy East Chicago, and South Lake County Community Services.

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