



**HEAP Applications to be Accepted on
Saturday, February 21st in Hamburg**

National Fuel offering appointments on a first-come, first served basis

(February 17, 2009) Williamsville, N.Y.: National Fuel today announces that, on Saturday, February 21, 2009, customers can apply for help with their heating bills from the federally funded Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) at the Hamburg Community Center (107 Prospect Avenue, Hamburg, NY 14075). Appointments for Erie County residents will be scheduled between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. by calling 857-7700.

This year, HEAP can help more families than ever before. The income eligibility guidelines have been increased. For example, a family of four making \$45,312 is now eligible and Regular grant amounts have increased to a maximum of \$685*.

Customers can also apply for HEAP through their county Department of Social Services (DSS) and Department of Senior Services during their normal business hours. And, in Erie County, other satellite locations are available where customers can apply for a HEAP grant. For a list of those satellite locations, visit www.HEAPhelps.com or call 1-877-443-2743.

Anyone who received a Regular HEAP grant last year and still lives in the same county can apply by mail for a Regular grant from this year's program. Customers can also apply by mail if they are the head of their household and are 60 years or older. New this year – customers can apply for Emergency Benefits by telephone if they already have been approved for the Regular HEAP grant. And, for those living in Allegany or Steuben counties, online applications may be filed.

The **Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)** has two major components: Regular HEAP grants and Emergency HEAP grants. Customers can receive a Regular HEAP grant by meeting the household income eligibility requirements, whether or not they pay separately for their heat.

Emergency HEAP grants provide additional assistance in order to avert a heat-related emergency. That may include limited funding for furnace repair/replacement. Emergency HEAP grants in amounts of either \$300 or \$350 are available to prevent termination of heating service, or to restore service that was shut off. The HEAP program offers two Emergency grants, which must be applied for separately. Customers who have already received an Emergency grant, but are still having trouble paying their bills and are faced with a pending termination of service, are encouraged to apply for a second Emergency grant. *Also, eligibility requirements were expanded for those in emergency situations. For example, a family of four with a gross annual income of \$56,640 can qualify for an Emergency HEAP grant of \$300 or \$350 if they lack the resources to make a payment sufficient to avoid their heating service being shut off.*

- more -



For more information on the HEAP program and how to apply, visit www.HEAPhelps.com or call 1-877-443-2743. See the chart below for this year's income eligibility guidelines.

Household Size	2008-2009 Maximum Annual Income for Regular Benefit	2008-2009 Maximum Annual Income for Special Emergency Benefit
1	0 - \$23,556	0 - \$29,448
2	0 - \$30,804	0 - \$38,508
3	0 - \$38,064	0 - \$47,568
4	0 - \$45,312	0 - \$56,640
5	0 - \$52,560	0 - \$65,700
6	0 - \$59,808	0 - \$74,760
7	0 - \$61,164	0 - \$76,452
8	0 - \$62,520	0 - \$78,156
9	0 - \$63,888	0 - \$79,860
10	0 - \$65,244	0 - \$81,552
11	0 - \$69,600	0 - \$83,256
12	0 - \$75,000	0 - \$84,948
13	0 - \$80,400	0 - \$86,652
14	0 - \$85,800	0 - \$88,356
15	0 - \$91,200	0 - \$91,200
Each additional person	+ \$5,400	+ \$5,400

National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation comprises the Utility segment of National Fuel Gas Company, a diversified energy holding company that is engaged in a number of natural gas-related activities. The Utility provides natural gas service to approximately 500,000 customers in western New York. Additional information about National Fuel and its customer services is available at www.NationalFuelGas.com or by calling **1 (800) 365-3234**.

*\$685 is the maximum grant amount for a Regular HEAP grant. Actual grant amount will be based on household income, energy burden and individual circumstances.