



## **HEAP & Neighbor for Neighbor Programs Still Open To Those in Need of Heating Assistance**

(March 17, 2008) Williamsville, N.Y.: National Fuel would like to remind its customers in western New York that heating assistance through the HEAP is still available, for a limited time, for eligible households. The Neighbor for Neighbor program is also accepting applications for assistance to qualifying western New Yorkers to receive a one-time grant of as much as \$400.

Thanks to the availability of additional federal funding, the **Home Energy Assistance Payment (HEAP)** Program is still open to lend a hand to those who may be facing difficulties in paying their energy bills. The program has two major components: Regular HEAP grants and Emergency HEAP grants. Customers can receive a Regular HEAP payment by meeting the household income eligibility requirements, whether or not they pay separately for their heat. Regular HEAP payment amounts may range from \$120 to \$540 depending on a number of factors.

Emergency HEAP grants provide for additional crisis assistance payments needed to avert a heat-related emergency. That may include limited funding for furnace repair/replacement. Emergency HEAP payments are usually made to prevent termination of energy service, or to restore it, in amounts of \$250 or \$275. This year, the HEAP program is offering 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.

Customers can apply for HEAP through their county Department of Social Services (DSS) and Department of Senior Services. Last heating season, approximately 844,500 households throughout New York State received assistance through HEAP. For more information on HEAP grants, call your county DSS Department.

**The Neighbor for Neighbor Heat Fund**, a first-come, first-served home-heating assistance grant program is also open to provide assistance to elderly and disabled western New Yorkers to pay for energy-related expenses. This fund was established by National Fuel in 1983 and, has offered grants totaling nearly \$3.9 million for nearly 15,000 persons.

In order to qualify for a grant from the Neighbor For Neighbor Heat Fund, an applicant must be 60 years old or older OR they or a member of their household is handicapped or has a disability that reduces the household's income OR has a certified medical emergency. Applicants must reside in National Fuel's service territory, however, they are not required to be a National Fuel customer.



Eligible families or individuals in need of payment assistance are encouraged to contact their local Salvation Army and Catholic Charities agencies, which process and approve applications, to determine the necessary documentation to bring to the application interview. Neighbor for Neighbor grant amounts for 2008 have been increased to a maximum of \$400 and are determined by need. The Fund is administered by the Salvation Army and is sponsored by National Fuel, the Salvation Army and Catholic Charities. The program is funded with generous contributions from National Fuel customers and employees, private entities, and National Fuel's shareholders. National Fuel does not process grant applications. Please contact the Salvation Army or Catholic Charities agency to apply.

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 <http://www.nationalfuelgas.com> or by calling 1 (800) 365-3234.