Fund Kicks Off 38th Annual Campaign

Celebrating its 38th year of providing energy assistance to Massachusetts residents in temporary crisis, the Massachusetts Good Neighbor Energy Fund (GNEF) and its sponsoring energy companies held their annual breakfast on November 16th, 2022, to help kick off its “Give the Gift of Warmth” campaign.

Hosted this year by long-time sponsor North Attleborough Electric Department, the breakfast served as the official start to the 2022-23 campaign, which set a fundraising goal of $500,000. Peter Schiffman, General Manager of North Attleborough Electric, welcomed attendees and thanked the 19 utilities across the state for their support of the Fund, as well as The Salvation Army which administers the GNEF.

“The Fund is going to be more important than ever this winter season due to the high costs of essentials like food, gas at the pump and utilities,” said Schiffman. “The successful history of the Fund, along with the enthusiasm of everyone here today, makes me especially confident that we will expand its good work this winter and make a difference in the lives of thousands of families in temporary crisis across the state.”

Judy Chang, Undersecretary of Energy and Climate Solutions for the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, was a featured speaker at the breakfast. She provided an update on the state’s energy and climate initiatives and shared her support of the Fund.

The kick off also featured the following speakers: Harvey Leonard, WCVB-TV 5 Meteorologist Emeritus, who gave his predictions on what kind of weather to expect for the winter season and the possible impact it might have on the urgency of need; Major Everett Henry, Divisional Commander of The Salvation Army, who provided insight into the vital role the GNEF plays across the state; and Marie McCabe, Chairperson of the GNEF and Customer Service Representative for North Attleborough Electric.

Although many of the Fund’s sponsoring energy companies provide a donation at various points throughout the year, National Grid and Eversource Energy presented their grants at the end of the breakfast to ensure that eligible families in need may be helped as soon as possible.

Schiffman closed by referencing the more than 93,250 households in the Commonwealth that got through a tough time by receiving assistance from the Fund since its inception in 1985. “Let’s all raise the bar, exceed this year’s fundraising goal and ‘Give the Gift of Warmth’ to all the families in our state who are eligible this winter.”

FUND FACTS

- The Good Neighbor Energy Fund is available to any Massachusetts resident who, due to temporary crisis, cannot meet a month’s energy expense and is not eligible for state of federal assistance.
- Last year, the Good Neighbor Energy Fund helped more than 1,225 households pay an electric, gas or oil bill.
- Since 1985, the Fund has raised more than $23.5 million and assisted over 93,250 households in need.
- Sponsoring gas, electric and oil companies support their respective customers’ generosity through various giving programs.
- To qualify for assistance from the Good Neighbor Energy Fund, an applicant’s gross household income must fall between 60 and 80 percent of the state’s median income levels.
- Households with a fairly broad income level are eligible for the Fund. For example, a household of four can have a total gross yearly income of between $81,562 and $108,748 to qualify.
- This year’s maximum disbursement is $500 per eligible household per heating season.
GNEF Sets Goal to Meet Anticipated Need

Massachusetts residents’ support of their neighbors in need was evident during last year’s campaign as the Fund surpassed its fundraising goal and assisted more than 1,225 households.

The Fund’s goal for 2022-2023 has been set at $500,000. It is anticipated that the money raised will help provide energy assistance to more than 1,500 Massachusetts families this winter season and throughout the spring. The Salvation Army, which administers the Fund, is already beginning to see a rise in the number of phone calls from families in need. In fact, the Fund expects to receive thousands of requests for aid this winter alone.

And the need doesn’t end with the cold weather. Families in temporary crisis also request assistance with their energy bills even when the weather warms up. The need is year-round.

To make a donation, please look for the Good Neighbor donation envelope provided with your utility bill, take advantage of some companies’ “add a dollar” program whereby customers are asked to contribute a dollar more on their utility bills or simply visit www.magoodneighbor.org.

Also, those that are in need can visit the more than 30 local Salvation Army Community Center's throughout the state.

For more information, call:
Eastern Massachusetts
1-800-334-3047
(Serving Area Codes 508, 617, 781 & 878)
Western Massachusetts:
1-800-262-1320
(Serving Area Code 413)

You may also visit: www.magoodneighbor.org

GNEF Collaborates with Mass Save® to Better Serve Households

The Massachusetts Good Neighbor Energy Fund award letter also serves as qualification for the Mass Save® Enhanced Insulation Incentive for customers of a Massachusetts investor-owned utility. Specifically, the offer provides qualified customers with no-cost insulation, as well as other no-cost energy savings measures.

"Partnering with Mass Save over the last couple years has really helped moderate-income households," said Marie McCabe, 2022-23 GNEF Chairperson. "This collaboration provides a simplified process to qualify for this energy efficiency offer."

Mass Save is a statewide initiative sponsored by Berkshire Gas Company, Blackstone Gas Company, Cape Light Compact, Eversource Energy, Liberty Utilities, National Grid and Unitil.

National Grid Donates $250,000 to Fund

Massachusetts Good Neighbor Energy Fund sponsor, National Grid, announced a donation of $250,000 to the Fund as part of its $1 million effort to provide winter heating bill relief to Massachusetts residents. The grant will help an estimated 500 households receive assistance from the Fund this winter. The GNEF was selected based on its longstanding commitment to helping meet the energy assistance needs of Massachusetts residents in temporary crisis.

Thank You GNEF Sponsors

Ashburnham Municipal Light
Belmont Municipal Light
Berkshire Gas
Braintree Electric Light Dept.
Eversource Energy
Groton Electric Light
Holyoke Gas & Electric
Liberty Utilities
Littleton Electric Light
Merrimac Municipal Light Department
National Grid
North Attleborough Electric Dept.
Petro Home Services
Reading Municipal Light
Rowley Municipal Lighting Plant
Unitil/Fitchburg Gas & Electric
Wakefield Municipal Gas & Light
Wellesley Municipal Light Plant
Westfield Gas & Electric

Do You Qualify?

The GNEF’s 2022-23 income eligibility guidelines are as follows:

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<th>Household Size</th>
<th>Total Gross Yearly Income</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>$112,555 - $150,072</td>
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