

## George Wiley Center's Mission

The George Wiley Center is a state-wide group actively committed to local community organizing for the purpose of creating social and economic justice through changes in public policy.

Yes, I support the goals of the *George Wiley Center* and want to be part of the solution by:

- Attending Membership Meetings
- Staying Informed with Mailings & Emails
- Consumer Advocacy or Lobbying
- Volunteering a Special Skill (s)

### *Interest Areas:*

- Affordable Utilities
- Green Energy for Low-Income Families
- Food & Anti-Hunger Advocacy
- Jobs & Economic Justice
- Welfare Rights
- Other

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_



32 East Avenue, Pawtucket, RI 02860

Phone: 401-728-5555

Fax: 401-725-1020

[volunteer1@georgewileycenter.org](mailto:volunteer1@georgewileycenter.org)

[www.georgewileycenter.org](http://www.georgewileycenter.org)

## Where to Get Help

Get Access to heating assistance and free weatherization through the Low Income Energy Assistance Agencies Program (LIHEAP) at RI CAP agencies

Blackstone Valley Community Action

- (401) 723-0227

Cranston—Comprehensive Community Action

- (401) 467-7013

East Bay Community Action

- (401) 683-3322

Northeast—Tri-Town Community Action

- (401) 351-2750

Providence Community Action

- (401) 273-0882

Department of Elderly Affairs

- (401) 462-3000

South County Community Action

- (401) 789-3016

West Bay Community Action

- (401) 732-4660

To get involved in making policy changes:

- to improve low-income consumer access to basic utilities or
- To work in a group to help resolve problems you experience at the Division of Public Utilities or any public agency in charge of administering welfare, SNAP or other social benefits

Call the George Wiley Center (728-5555) to find a meeting closest to you.

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## Keep Your Electric & Gas Services Turned ON!

You qualify as a “protected” customer if you are:

- Unemployed
- In a household where all members are over 62 years
- Living in a household with a “handicapped” person
- Qualified & signed up for LIHEAP funding
- In a household with a member who is “seriously” ill
- Experiencing a “financial hardship” or divorcing

Prevent an immediate utility shut-off by knowing the rules and exercising your **RIGHT** to a fair hearing.

**Know your consumer utility rights  
and Get “Protected” customer  
status for the Winter Moratorium!**

Customers are “protected” from a utility shut-off between November 1st and April 15th (the “Winter Moratorium”) by signing up each year for “heating assistance” through a local CAP agency. The elderly (over 62), disabled or those financially qualified for federal Low-Income Heating Assistance (LIHEAP) can become “protected.”

The income guidelines for LIHEAP are based on 60% of RI median income by household size.

Household Size	Monthly Income	Annual Income
1	\$2,164	\$25,971
2	2,830	33,962
3	3,496	41,953
4	4,162	49,945
5	4,828	57,936
6	5,494	65,927

**2010 LIHEAP Income Qualifications**

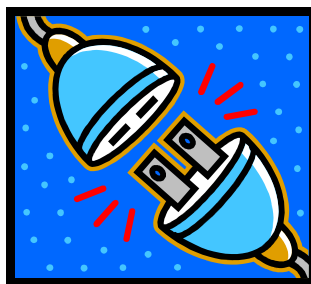
Consumers are responsible for providing written documentation of their circumstances.

Typical documents needed to apply for LIHEAP benefits: Photo ID/Drivers license/SSI Cards and Birth Certificates/Pay stubs/divorce decree/alimony/child support payments/Welfare benefits/unemployment compensation/workers comp/Gas & electric bills/oil receipts etc.

It is the **customers responsibility** to contact National Grid to apply for “protected” status due to illness, age or financial circumstance. Contact National Grid with any questions and obtain forms (1-800-870-1664)

**LIHEAP benefits include:**

- A grant for heating with either a credit for natural gas or electricity utility accounts, or
- Delivery of 100 Gal. of Heating Oil.
- Free Weatherization of apartment or house (requires separate CAP signup)



- Yearly sign-up at local CAP (Community Action Program) agencies are required if renewal forms do not arrive in the mail.
- Sign up for Heating Assistance at local CAPs usually begins in October and ends in March. Sign up early!

**Steps to take BEFORE a shut-off**

- Call National Grid (1-800-870-1664) to negotiate a payment plan. **DO NOT AGREE** to payments you can’t afford!
- If National Grid proposes a payment plan that is **UNAFFORDABLE**, call the Division of Public Utilities (780-2110) and insist on an “informal” hearing to temporarily suspend a shut-off. (Bilingual hearing officers are available.)
- Contact the **George Wiley Center** to learn about policy reforms & meet with others who working on utility shut-offs.

**Utility shut-offs are not allowed ...**

- when the National Weather Service has issued a heat advisory warning for Rhode Island
- on Fridays
- if there is a baby 24 months or younger living in your household. You must notify National Grid in writing and provide proof via Birth Certificate/Birth Record This protection does NOT apply to pregnant women.
- if a disconnection will directly result in death or a “serious” illness (life threatening). A physician’s note must be on file and updated every year.
- whenever the customer initiates a request for an “informal hearing” or “review” of a dispute with National Grid through the RI Division of Public Utilities. This is a temporary freeze on shut-offs that lasts through the informal appeal and formal hearing process.
- if a wage earning spouse is moving out

Find the rest of the rules at the PUC website.

(<http://www.ripuc.org/index.html>)