

## A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR ENERGY CONSCIOUS CONSUMERS

JANUARY—MARCH 2024

### NAVIGATING THE CHILL: WHAT TO DO IF YOU RUN OUT OF HEATING OIL

As winter blankets us with its chill, the last thing anyone wants is to run out of heating oil. If you find yourself in a situation where the oil gauge hits empty, don't panic. [Follow the steps below to help you stay warm and cozy even in unexpected circumstances.](#)

#### Step 1: Confirm You're Out of Oil

##### ***Check the Gauge.***

- Verify that you are indeed out of heating oil by checking the gauge on your oil tank. It's possible that the gauge may be faulty, so visually inspect the tank if needed.

#### Step 2: Emergency Heating Measures

##### ***Alternative Heat Sources.***

- If temperatures are extremely low, consider using alternative heat sources temporarily. Electric space heaters, blankets, and layered clothing can help maintain warmth until your heating oil is replenished.

##### ***Seal Off Unused Areas:***

- Close doors and seal off unused rooms to concentrate heat in essential living spaces. This can help conserve warmth and make the most of any alternative heat sources you may be using.

#### Step 3: Contact Your Heating Oil Provider

##### ***Request a Delivery.***

- Contact Hinds Energy immediately to request a delivery. In the event you run out of heating oil during a snowstorm, a cold snap, or on a holiday weekend, the promptness of your delivery may be impacted; however, diesel fuel can be used as a substitute until the delivery is made.

#### Step 4: Supplement Fuel Oil Tank with Diesel Fuel

##### ***Pick up 5 or 10 gallons of diesel fuel from the gas station.***

- A notable advantage of having a heating oil system is the flexibility it offers in emergencies. In the event of running out of heating oil, you can conveniently visit a gas station and add diesel fuel to your oil tank. For this task, we recommend using a yellow can from the gas

station, specifically designated for diesel fuel. This precaution ensures that the can won't be inadvertently used for regular gas in the future.

- While 5 gallons may suffice for a night's use (depending on your house size and prevailing temperatures), having 10 gallons in the tank offers additional peace of mind.
- Access the outside fill cap where the oil truck connects. This cap typically has a hex on top and is easily removable. Simply pour the diesel into the fill pipe, and it will seamlessly make its way into the oil tank.

##### ***Restart the furnace.***

- After allowing the diesel or kerosene to sit for 10 minutes, it's time to reignite the furnace. Most furnaces can be restarted by pressing the reset button located on the unit. The button is typically red.

##### ***Bleeding air from the system.***

- If, despite adding replacement fuel to the tank, your furnace fails to turn on, it may indicate a need to bleed the line between the tank and the furnace. Leave this task to the professionals. Incorrect procedures can lead to further complications.

#### Step 5: Learn and Plan for the Future

##### ***Understand Your Oil Consumption:***

- Reflect on your oil consumption patterns and consider scheduling more frequent deliveries during the colder months to avoid running out in the future.

##### ***Enroll in Automatic Delivery and Tank Monitoring Programs.***

- Hinds Energy offers automatic delivery and tank monitoring programs that use advanced monitoring systems to track your oil levels and schedule deliveries proactively. Enrolling in such programs can provide peace of mind.

## PLANNING AHEAD: PREPARING YOUR HEATING SYSTEMS FOR SPRING

Yes! Even in the middle of winter, we encourage our customers to start thinking ahead and planning for the upcoming spring. A smooth transition ensures optimal performance and energy efficiency and prepares your home for the changing climate. [Here are some proactive steps you can take as we get closer to spring:](#)

**End-of-Season Maintenance:** Schedule maintenance for your heating system to clean components, check for leaks, and address any wear and tear from the winter season.

**Efficiency Upgrades:** Consider exploring upgrades or improvements for your heating system to enhance long-term energy efficiency.

**Tank Inspection:** Inspect your propane or oil tank for any signs of damage or corrosion. Ensure the tank is secure, and consult with Hinds Energy for any necessary maintenance.

## OPTIMIZING YOUR HVAC SYSTEM FOR COMFORT DURING THE WINTER MONTH

From fluctuating temperatures to potential winter storms, this time of year demands attention to maintaining a cozy and energy-efficient home. Here are some key tips to keep your indoor environment comfortable throughout the winter season:

**Check and Change Your Air Filters:** Clean your HVAC system's air filters to promote better airflow, enhance indoor air quality, and reduce the strain on your system. Aim to check and change filters monthly, especially if you have a heating system that's working hard during the winter.

**Prepare for Winter Storms:** Stay ahead of potential winter storms by ensuring your HVAC system is ready. **Clear snow and debris away from outdoor units, vents, and exhaust pipes (blocked vents can lead to a dangerous buildup of carbon monoxide inside your home),** and have a plan for power outages, such as having a backup heating source or generator.

**Programmable Thermostats for Efficiency:** Take advantage of programmable thermostats to optimize temperature settings based on your daily routine. Lowering the temperature when you're away or asleep can lead to significant energy savings. January is an ideal time to review and adjust your thermostat programming for maximum efficiency.

**Review Energy Usage:** Review your energy usage patterns from the winter season. This information can guide adjustments to your HVAC settings, helping you save on energy costs as you transition to spring. Reflecting on your fuel consumption during the winter months can also help you plan for future heating needs and consider energy-efficient upgrades or adjustments for the next winter season.

By taking these steps now, you'll be ahead of the curve and ready to embrace the warmer days of spring without worrying about your home comfort systems. If you have any questions or need assistance with scheduling maintenance checks, feel free to reach out to us. We are here to support you in making your home comfortable, efficient, and ready for the changing seasons.



**Address Drafts and Insulation:** Check for drafts around windows and doors, as these can significantly impact your heating efficiency. Use weather stripping and consider additional insulation in key areas to keep the warm air in and the cold air out.

**Utilize Ceiling Fans Wisely:** If you have ceiling fans, use them strategically. In winter, set your fans to run in a clockwise direction at a low speed to push warm air down. This can help distribute heat more evenly and make your space feel more comfortable.

**Humidity Control:** Maintain optimal indoor humidity levels. Dry air can make your space feel cooler, leading you to turn up the heat unnecessarily. Consider using a humidifier to add moisture to the air and improve comfort.

## A GUIDE TO HEATING ASSISTANCE

The need for affordable heating becomes a pressing concern for many households as winter sets in. Fortunately, assistance programs like the [Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program \(LIHEAP\) in Pennsylvania](#) and the [Home Energy Assistance Program \(HEAP\) in New York](#) are available to provide financial support to eligible individuals and families. Below, we delve into the details of these programs and how they can make a significant difference in ensuring warmth and comfort during the colder months.

### LIHEAP in PENNSYLVANIA

#### What is LIHEAP?

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) in Pennsylvania is a federally funded program designed to help low-income households meet their heating needs. It provides financial assistance to eligible individuals and families, helping them pay their heating bills and maintain a safe and warm living environment.



#### Eligibility Criteria

To qualify for LIHEAP assistance in Pennsylvania, applicants must meet specific income and household size criteria. The program considers various factors, including the type of heating fuel used, the region of residence, and the overall financial situation of the household.

#### How to Apply

Applying for LIHEAP in Pennsylvania is a straightforward process. Eligible individuals can submit applications through the COMPASS website or by visiting their local County Assistance Office. The application period typically opens in the fall, and it's essential to apply promptly to secure assistance for the winter heating season.

#### Benefits of LIHEAP

LIHEAP benefits provide crucial financial assistance, helping eligible households pay a portion of their heating bills. The program aims to prevent energy crises by providing support to those who may struggle to afford heating during the colder months.

#### LIHEAP Contacts (PA)

- LIHEAP hotline: 1-866-857-7095
- Susq. County Assistance Office: 570-278-3891

### HEAP in NEW YORK

#### What is HEAP?

The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) in New York is a federally funded program that assists eligible low-income individuals and families with their heating and energy costs. HEAP offers various benefits, including regular benefits, emergency benefits, and heating equipment repair or replacement.

#### Eligibility Criteria

Similar to LIHEAP, HEAP in New York considers income, household size, and heating source when determining eligibility. Both homeowners and renters may qualify for assistance. Additionally, emergency benefits are available to address heating-related emergencies, such as a furnace breakdown.

#### How to Apply

Applying for HEAP in New York is accessible through the myBenefits online application or by submitting a paper application to the local Department of Social Services. The application process typically begins in November, and eligible individuals are encouraged to apply early to ensure timely assistance.

#### Benefits of HEAP

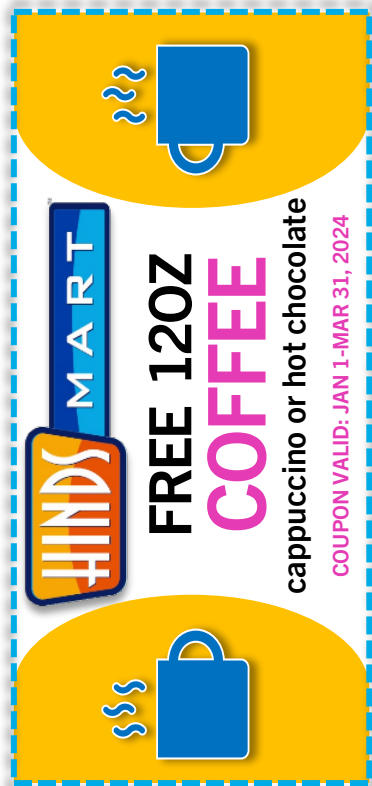
HEAP benefits provide vital financial relief to eligible households, helping them cover the costs of heating during the winter months. Emergency benefits offer additional support in urgent situations, ensuring that individuals and families can stay warm and safe.

#### HEAP Contacts (Broome County)

- Dept. of Social Services: 607-778-1100
- Office for the Aging: 607-778-241



**LIHEAP** in Pennsylvania and **HEAP** in New York stand as pillars of support for those facing financial challenges in meeting their heating needs. These programs not only provide essential assistance but also contribute to creating a more resilient and caring community. If you or someone you know may be eligible, don't hesitate to explore these programs and ensure a warmer and more comfortable winter season.



## HINDS MART CONVENIENCE STORES

### Montrose (Sunoco)

242 Church Street, Montrose, PA 18801

- Gasoline • E-Free Gasoline • Off Road Diesel •

### Susquehanna (Gulf)

1503 E. Main Street, Susquehanna, PA 18847

- Gasoline • On Road Diesel • Off Road Diesel •
- Heating Oil • Propane Refills •

### Susquehanna (Valero)

239 Erie Blvd., Susquehanna, PA 18847

- Gasoline • On Road Diesel • Dyed Kerosene •

### New Milford (Gulf)

519 State Route 492, New Milford, PA 18834

- Gasoline • On Road Diesel •

## CONTACT US

### Main Office Hours

Monday—Friday, 8am-4pm

☎ Phone ☎

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