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Governor Rell: Thousands of Households To Receive Home Heating Aid

Fuel Assistance Information Available Through Free Statewide Helpline: 2-1-1

Governor M. Jodi Rell today announced that thousands of Connecticut households have been approved for home heating assistance this winter and thousands more applications are being processed.

“Despite the recent and welcome drop in fuel oil prices, many Connecticut households continue to struggle with the drastic effects of the national economic slump. The ripple effect is definitely hitting home. Every day we learn of more people losing their jobs and that means one less paycheck for a family to make ends meet. The last few weeks are a chilling reminder that winter weather has definitely arrived.”

The state Department of Social Services, which administers the state’s two primary low-income heating assistance programs – Connecticut Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) and the Connecticut Heating Assistance Program (CHAP) programs – began taking applications in mid-August. Since then, DSS reports:

- Nearly 67,000 households have applied;
- More than 47,000 have been accepted

The number of applications is a 20 percent increase for the same period in 2006, the last time DSS opened the application process in August.

The Governor also noted that nearly 600 moderate-income household are currently being served by the non-profit Operation Fuel. Under an emergency heating aid plan the Governor proposed and Legislature approved in August, Operation Fuel received \$14 million in state aid to assist senior citizens and households that do not qualify for CEAP or CHAP.

Information on all the programs is available by calling 2-1-1 – the statewide information helpline. Potential applicants can also visit a comprehensive energy aid Web site. The Web site can be found by clicking on the “CT Energy Resources” link on the State of Connecticut Web site at www.ct.gov.

The Governor is encouraging families and senior citizens who need assistance to apply as soon as possible so that their winter needs can be met promptly.

“The need for these safety net programs is as strong as ever as is my commitment to ensuring families and our elderly can heat their homes,” Governor Rell said. “I urge anyone concerned about winter heating bills to reach out for help – because it is there.”