

National Fuel Funds Network – Washington Action Day for LIHEAP
February 11, 2009

WEATHERIZATION NATIONAL MESSAGE:

- The federal Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP), administered by DOE, provides energy conservation assistance to LIHEAP eligible households.
- Due to limited funding, WAP has been severely hindered in providing assistance to the vast numbers of eligible households desperately in need of measures to aid in reducing their bills. The Stimulus legislation's projected significant increase for Weatherization will assist in providing increased conservation assistance to limited income households and will also assist with stretching LIHEAP dollars by assisting customers with reducing their energy bills.

WEATHERIZATION NEEDS IN MARYLAND:

- The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) administers WAP in Maryland. In FY 2008, due to limited funding, DHCD was able to weatherize only 991 low-income households. In contrast, Maryland has an estimated 345,000 low-income households which could potentially be eligible for WAP services.
- Using FY 2007 data, OHEP's data shows that approximately 6300 EUSP households used over 24,000 kwh annually (almost 400 used over 40,000 kwh annually) in FY 2007. Average kwh usage for households with proper efficiency components is approximately 10,000 to 12,000 kwh.
- Due to prior limited funding in Maryland's WAP program, there were no WAP funds to assist with major load-producing equipment repair or replacement, such as furnaces. In order to address this lack of resources, OHEP has traditionally transferred \$750,000 yearly from its MEAP budget to provide State WAP with funds to partially address furnace issues.
- As of January 2009, WAP had utilized all of the budgeted furnace funds for FY 09 and reported that, of the repair cases known to WAP, hundreds more are currently in need of assistance. LIHEAP regulations require that no heat circumstances be addressed within 48 hours of notice to LIHEAP grantees. Insufficient furnace repair funds are a formidable obstacle to the state's effort to address households with no heat.
- Customers who have inefficient or inoperable furnaces often resort to heating with their stoves or other inefficient and dangerous devices.
- OHEP has recently warned WAP that OHEP may not be able to transfer furnace monies to WAP in FY 10 due to lack of adequate funding to address the growing OHEP population suffering with ever-increasing energy costs.

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