

# Summer customer assistance programs available

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electricity bills, extend the life of your light bulbs, and result in buying bulbs less often.

✓ **Consider installing a programmable or smart thermostat.** Programmable thermostats allow you to run your air conditioning on a schedule. Smart thermostats offer the ability to control your home's temperature from your mobile device or computer. Preset your schedule, adjust temperatures remotely, and take full control of your cooling. Smart thermostats could lower your energy bills by up to \$180 a year.

✓ **Prep your home when you go on vacation.** If there's a road trip or beach vacation on your calendar, take a couple of extra steps such as turning up your thermostat to keep your air conditioning from running while no one is home. Unplug electronics with remote control or "instant on" features and save \$4 a month.

✓ **When the Heat Arrives Turn up the temperature on your thermostat.** The lower you set your air conditioning temperature, the more costly it is to operate. For example, a 75-degree setting costs about 18% more than a 78-degree setting. Don't compromise your comfort or safety, but use this to test how cool you really need it.

✓ **Run fans with your air conditioning.** Oscillating or box fans near your air conditioning vents create an air flow like winter wind-chills, as cold air is circulated throughout the room.

✓ **Close your window coverings.** Ambient sunlight can heat a room. Drawing your curtains and blinds can reduce the sun's heat-



National Grid image

ing of your home, and keep your air conditioning from running more than necessary.

✓ **Think twice before starting your oven.** Conventional and convection ovens can add unnecessary heat to your home and force your air conditioner to run unnecessarily. Keep the heat outside by using a grill or, if that's not an option, consider using a microwave or slow cooker to do the job.

✓ **Know the signs of heat-related illness.** Heavy sweating, muscle cramps and a fast pulse aren't just signs of being warm. They are symptoms of heat-related illnesses like heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Know the signs and pay extra attention to children, seniors and other vulnerable groups when the temperature and humidity rise.

Visit [www.ngrid.com/ee](http://www.ngrid.com/ee) to learn about our residential, multi-family, and commercial energy-efficiency programs, and find more information on ways to reduce your energy costs.

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**Summer Cooling Assistance for Income-Eligible Customers**

The Home Energy Affordability Program, or HEAP, provides assistance to New Yorkers looking to stay cool through the summer season. Applications for 2023 HEAP cooling assistance benefits opened on May 1. Customers who meet qualifying income and residency criteria may receive up to \$800 to purchase and install a portable air conditioner or fan, or up to \$1,000 for a wall-sleeve air conditioning unit. Funds are limited and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis through your HEAP local district contact.

**Billing Programs for All National Grid Customers**

All residential customers, regardless of income, qualify for two programs to manage energy costs.

• National Grid's budget billing plan spreads payments out more evenly across the year to help better manage energy costs. Budget billing smooths out peaks and valleys in customer bills, by using account history to make bills more predictable. Your account is reviewed periodically to make minor adjustments, and the company reconciles the account with customers annually.

• Deferred payment agreements aid customers who have fallen behind in their payments. Customers with past-due accounts can arrange to have their balance spread over multiple months to create manageable payments and avoid disconnections.

Residential customers who receive Supplement Security Income, Social Security Disability Insurance or a retirement pension, and are enrolled in an active payment agreement, may qualify for a 10-day extension on their billing due date through the company's bill extender program.

**Information Available in Multiple Languages**

Since 2022, National Grid's consumer advocates have provided assistance to more than 27,000 New York households. National Grid has Spanish-speaking consumer advocates available to assist customers. They can be reached by calling 1-800-642-4272 or emailing [ConsumerAdvocateSUNY@nationalgrid.com](mailto:ConsumerAdvocateSUNY@nationalgrid.com). In addition, translation services are available by phone for more than 120 languages and dialects.

Spanish- and Chinese-speaking customers may now find the cost-saving and energy-efficiency resources in their favored language at [www.ngrid.com/heretohelp](http://www.ngrid.com/heretohelp). Translation to more than 60 languages is available on National Grid's website by visiting [www.nationalgridus.com](http://www.nationalgridus.com), scrolling to the bottom of the page, and choosing from the "Select Languages" dropdown box.

## Catholic Charities: \$9.1M+ raised for Appeal

Submitted on behalf of Catholic Charities

Catholic Charities of Buffalo announced that Appeal 2023, in support of Catholic Charities and the "Fund for the Faith," achieved a total of \$9,124,024.89 in cash and pledges, representing 96% of its \$9.5 million goal.

"Thank you for your continued generosity and support of Appeal 2023," said Deacon Steve Schumer, president and CEO of Catholic Charities "Over the last 100 years, we have certainly had our challenges, but Catholic Charities continues to stand ready as a beacon of hope to our neighbors of all faiths in need."

The annual Appeal helps fund 57 programs and services administered by Catholic Charities across Western New York, and many diocesan ministries through the "Fund for the Faith." Catholic Charities' programs and services include basic emergency assistance such as food pantries, educational and vocational advancement services, family safety and stabilization services, immigration and refugee assistance, behavioral health and substance use treatment, and youth and family support services.

"Thank you to our nearly 24,000 donors who supported Appeal 2023," said Adam Sumlin, Ph.D., Appeal 2023 chair. "When we come together, so much good can be accomplished for the many individuals, families and children who rely on the funds raised through the Appeal and the vital services offered. Thanks to your

generosity, families become stabilized and safe, young adults receive their education goals, and individuals find hope and healing through counseling."

To reflect Catholic Charities' full development efforts, the \$9.1 million raised this year also includes nearly \$700,000 in donations specifically to its programs and in gifts via bequests.

Donors can continue to support the work of Catholic Charities and the "Fund for the Faith" at [www.ccwny.org/donation](http://www.ccwny.org/donation).

**More About Catholic Charities**

Catholic Charities has helped individuals and families in need since its founding in 1923. That need is varied and widespread – from emergency assistance to mental health counseling and treatment, and from specialized services for older adults to help with job training and education. Catholic Charities empowers children, families and seniors to achieve meaningful, healthy and productive lives. In all situations, Catholic Charities delivers support to meet immediate needs, and then assesses clients for other needs to ensure long-term success.

An excellent steward of the contributions it receives, Catholic Charities earns high ratings from Charity Navigator for transparency and sound fiscal management and is a Better Business Bureau Accredited Charity. Catholic Charities also receives highest ratings from the Council on Ac-

creditation for quality service.

For more information, visit [ccwny.org](http://ccwny.org).

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