



# Help for Ohio customers with higher winter bills

Winter brings colder weather, which can bring higher energy bills. That's especially true if you use natural gas for heating – as natural gas prices are rising across the globe. These rising prices could have impacts for some electric customers, too. Our money-saving programs, tips and guidance can help you control your energy usage and reduce your energy bills.

## WHY IS YOUR ENERGY BILL INCREASING?

Several factors can impact your bill. It's important to know that:

- As the weather turns colder, you may be using more natural gas.
- The commodity cost of natural gas has more than doubled since January 2021, impacting overall market prices for energy supplies.
- This cost is set by financial markets that are influenced by national and international events such as weather events, exports and changes in supply and demand.
- Duke Energy does not control the commodity cost of natural gas and does not make a profit on it.
- Duke Energy purchases energy at the best possible price and then passes this cost directly to customers.
- If you are an Ohio customer using a non-Duke Energy supplier, check with your supplier to understand how rising natural gas prices could impact your energy bills.

## LOW- TO NO-COST ENERGY-SAVING TIPS

Natural gas use usually spikes in the winter since it is typically used as a heating source. Here are some tips to help prepare for cold weather and manage your energy use.

- **Learn how to reduce energy use.** The first step to reduce energy use in your home is to identify and prioritize energy-saving improvements. This can be accomplished through a certified auditor or by performing your own energy audit.
- **Seal your home.** One of the quickest energy-saving tasks you can do is caulk, seal and weatherstrip all seams, cracks and openings to the outside. This can save up to 20% on your heating and cooling bills.
- **Seal air ducts.** Make sure the air ducts from your home's furnace and central air conditioner are properly sealed. Ducts that leak into the attic or crawl space can substantially increase your heating and cooling bills.
- **Manage water heating.** Set your water heater temperature to 120 degrees Fahrenheit or consider installing an on-demand or tankless water heater that only heats water when you need it.
- **Change air filters regularly.** A dirty air filter makes a heating system work harder, which uses more energy.
- **Operate ceiling fans in a clockwise direction,** which pushes warm air back down into the room.
- **Leave drapes or blinds open** during sunny winter days to allow the sun to warm the house. Close them at night to help insulate your home.
- **Install smart thermostats.** Install a "smart" or programmable thermostat to reduce your energy use while you are asleep or away.
- **Consider insulation.** Consider whether you need to add insulation to your ceiling, floors and walls. Insulation between the indoors and outdoors reduces energy demand, saving you money while improving the comfort of your home.

## DUKE ENERGY PROGRAMS

### Budget Billing

Budget Billing allows you to pay a predictable monthly amount to help better control your budget. Your monthly Budget Billing amount is based on the average of your actual bills over the last 12 months and is periodically reviewed and adjusted. Learn more at [duke-energy.com/BudgetBilling](https://duke-energy.com/BudgetBilling).

### Pick Your Due Date

With Pick Your Due Date, you can choose the date you want your energy bills to be due each month. Learn more at [duke-energy.com/PYDD](https://duke-energy.com/PYDD).

### Installment Plans/Payment Plans

Installment plans give you more flexibility to pay back balances over longer periods of time. You can request a few extra days or restructure your entire balance into a monthly payment plan. Learn more about the options available by visiting [duke-energy.com/MoreTime](https://duke-energy.com/MoreTime) or calling us at 800.544.6900.

Find more information to help you manage winter bills at [duke-energy.com/WinterBills](https://duke-energy.com/WinterBills)

## LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

If you need assistance paying utility bills this winter, these programs may be able to help.

### Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

LIHEAP is an income-based program that allows those earning below certain thresholds to qualify for federal energy bill assistance money. More information is available by calling the Ohio Department of Development at 800.282.0880 or by visiting [duke-energy.com/LIAssistance](http://duke-energy.com/LIAssistance).

### Winter Crisis Program

The Winter Crisis Program helps income-eligible Ohioans who have pending utility disconnections, current disconnections or less than a 25% supply of bulk fuel in their tanks to maintain their utility service. The program is available Nov. 1 to May 1. More information is available at [https://development.ohio.gov/is/is\\_heapwinter.htm](https://development.ohio.gov/is/is_heapwinter.htm) or by calling the Ohio Department of Development at 800.282.0880.

### Winter Rule

The Winter Rule, available Oct. 18, 2021, to April 15, 2022, allows a residential customer who is disconnected or has a pending disconnection to pay a maximum of \$175 to have their service restored or maintained. A customer may use this option once each winter heating season. Additional information is available online at [duke-energy.com/FindHelp](http://duke-energy.com/FindHelp) or by calling us at 800.544.6900.

### Percentage of Income Payment Plan Plus (PIPP)

PIPP Plus is an income-eligible program that allows qualifying customers to pay a percentage of their income toward their energy bills, regardless of monthly usage. Information is available by visiting [duke-energy.com/PIPP](http://duke-energy.com/PIPP) or by calling the Ohio Department of Development at 800.282.0880.

### Patriot Plan

The Patriot Plan allows Ohio military reservists and National Guardsmen deployed on active duty to avoid utility disconnections for nonpayment. Visit <https://puco.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/puco/utilities/electricity/resources/patriot-plan> for more information or contact the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio at 800.686.7826.

### Duke Energy Weatherization Program

Weatherizing your home can help lower heating costs by keeping cold drafts out and reducing the amount of warm air that escapes. People Working Cooperatively manages the enrollment and qualification for free home weatherization improvements. To apply, call 513-351-7921.

### Federal Assistance

Customers having trouble paying housing or utility expenses due to pandemic hardships may find help through new and existing assistance programs. Learn more at [duke-energy.com/Help4You](http://duke-energy.com/Help4You).

## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

**United Way** – United Way can refer you to other organizations that may provide assistance with utility bill or other needs. Learn more by visiting [211.org](http://211.org).

**Council on Aging** – If you're 60 or older and may have problems paying your heating bills this winter, contact the Council on Aging by calling 513.721.1025.

**Community Action Agencies** – Emergency funds may be available for utility bills through Community Action Agencies. Find out more by calling the agency in your area.

Adams County: 937.378.6041

Clermont County: 513.732.2277

Hamilton County: 513.569.1850

Brown County: 937.378.6041

City of Franklin: 937.746.7791

Highland County: 937.393.3458

Butler County: 513.868.9300

Clinton County: 937.382.8365

Warren County: 513.695.2100

Find more information to help you manage winter bills at [duke-energy.com/WinterBills](http://duke-energy.com/WinterBills)



BUILDING A SMARTER ENERGY FUTURE®



## No- to low-cost energy-saving tips

Cold weather can mean more energy use and higher energy bills. That's especially true this winter as natural gas prices are rising across the globe. Fortunately, there are some no- and low-cost ways to save energy around the home and help lower your bill.

- **Seal your home.** Some of the quickest energy-saving tasks are caulking, sealing and weatherstripping all seams, cracks and openings to the outdoors. This can save up to 20% on your heating and cooling bills. Check out these easy tutorials on how to [install weatherstripping](#) on doors and windows, or how to [caulk around doors and windows](#).
- **Seal air ducts.** Make sure the air ducts from your home's furnace and central air conditioner are properly sealed. Ducts that leak into the attic or crawl space can substantially increase your heating and cooling bills.
- **Manage water heating.** Set your water heater temperature to 120 degrees Fahrenheit or consider installing an on-demand or tankless water heater that only heats water when needed.

### NEED MORE HELP PREPARING FOR THIS WINTER'S BILLS?

Visit [duke-energy.com/winterbills](https://duke-energy.com/winterbills) for resources, including information about [Budget Billing](#), our free program that levels out your bill and helps you avoid seasonal bill spikes.



BUILDING A SMARTER ENERGY FUTURE®

# Budget Billing

Stop the billing roller coaster.



# PREDICTABLE MONTHLY PAYMENTS MAKE BUDGETING EASIER.

Fluctuations in weather conditions can cause natural gas use – along with natural gas bills – to increase as we try to keep our homes more comfortable. Level out your bill year-round and know what to expect with Budget Billing.

## How your monthly payment is determined



Your amount is based on actual account history over the last 12 months. If there is less than 12 months of billing history, installments are calculated based on building size, heat source and age of the building.



### Choose from two plans:

**Annual Plan:** Provides 11 months of equal payments with a settle-up in the 12th month



**Quarterly Plan:** Provides quarterly review and adjustment of your budget billing amount to prevent a settle-up month



## ENROLL TODAY.

Residential customers, visit [duke-energy.com/BudgetBill](https://duke-energy.com/BudgetBill).

Business customers, visit [duke-energy.com/BusinessBudget](https://duke-energy.com/BusinessBudget).