



2022-2023 Winter Protection Brochure

State, Federal and Company Assistance is
available for you!

ALPENA POWER COMPANY
401 N 9th Avenue
Alpena, MI 49707
989-358-4900
or toll free 1-866-358-4900

www.alpenapower.com

To help ensure that all Michigan residents have adequate heat throughout the winter of 2022-2023, state and local agencies and utilities have joined in a cooperative effort to provide Michigan residents with information about energy assistance & conservation programs.

Remember.... you are encouraged to call your utility company as soon as you know you will be unable to pay your bill, please don't wait until you receive a shut off notice. Company representatives can advise you about available payment plans and assistance programs, and any additions or expansions to the programs highlighted here.

Contact Alpena Power Company immediately, at 989-358-4900, if you have a payment problem. Our collection department will work out satisfactory payment arrangements with you.

SHUTOFF PROTECTION PROGRAMS

WINTER PROTECTION PLAN (WPP)

Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC)
November 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023
Contact: **Alpena Power Co:** (989)358-4900
401 N. 9th Avenue, Alpena MI 49707

The Winter Protection Plan (WPP) protects enrolled seniors (age 65 and older) and low-income customers whose annual household income is at or below 150% of the federal poverty level, from service shutoffs and high utility bill payments during the heating season (Nov 1 – Mar 31). You may also enroll if you receive any of the following services:

- **MDHHS cash assistance including**
- **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)**
- **Food Assistance (SNAP) or**
- **Medicaid**

If you are low-income, you must pay at least 7% of your estimated **annual** bill each month during the protection period. If an arrearage exists at the time you apply for shutoff protection, you must pay the arrearage in equal monthly installments between the date you apply and the start of the next heating season.

If you are low-income **and** your utility service was shut off before you applied for shutoff protection, the utility cannot require a fee, a security deposit nor an amount greater than 1/12 of your arrearage in order to restore service or participate in the program.

All customers 65 or older are eligible regardless of income. However, you are responsible for all service used. At the end of the protection period, all customers must arrange to pay the outstanding bills before the next heating season. If you are a senior citizen whose utility service may have been shut off before applying for WPP, the utility must restore your service during the heating season without any payments. Although no specific payments are required during the heating season, you are encouraged to pay what you can to avoid large payments when the protection period ends.

Participation does not relieve you from the responsibility for paying for electricity and natural gas usage, but does prevent a shut off during the winter months. At the end of the protection period (March 31), both low-income and seniors participating in the plan must arrange with their utility to pay any money owed before the start of the next protection period.

Note: Winter shut off protections do not apply to customers that are shut off, or who had a pending shut off for unauthorized utility service within the past 2 years at the customer's current address, until all charges are paid or the customer makes satisfactory payment arrangements with the utility company.

INCOME GUIDELINES (2022-2023)	
NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS	150% OF Poverty Guidelines Maximum Income
1	\$ 20,385
2	\$ 27,465
3	\$ 34,545
4	\$ 41,625
5	\$ 48,705
6	\$ 55,785
7	\$ 62,865
8	\$ 69,945
Add \$7,080 for each additional household member	

MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROTECTION

Contact: Alpena Power Company

You can receive a medical hold preventing service from being shutoff for nonpayment on your natural gas and/or electric bill for up to 21 days if you or a member of your household has an existing medical condition that would be aggravated by the lack of utility service.

Your condition must be certified by a physician or public health office on a MPSC approved Medical Certification Form. The form must state the medical condition, medical equipment and specific time period a shutoff of utility service would make the medical condition worse.

If the shutoff of service occurred before a medical emergency is approved, the utility will restore service, at no cost to you, for 21 days. You can obtain an extension of the medical hold and a postponement of shutoff of service for a total of 63 days (3 separate medical holds) in any 12-month period per household member. Annually, the utility is not required to grant shutoff extensions totaling more than 126 days per **household**.

Customers would be granted a 3-business day grace period from shutoff of utility service for time to have the Medical Certification Form completed. A utility shall not require payment for an after-hours reconnect fee or a deposit as a condition of restoring service. The Medical Certification Form is available from your utility or on its website.

CRITICAL CARE PROTECTION

Contact: Alpena Power Company

A customer or household can receive protection from disconnection or have services restored due to inability to pay if there is an identified critical care customer in the home and interruption of service would be immediately life threatening. A critical care customer is somebody who requires home medical equipment or a life support system that must be certified by a physician or public health office on an MPSC approved Medical Certification Form.

Customers will be granted a 3-business day grace period from shutoff of utility service for time to have the Medical Certification Form completed. You will be contacted by the utility when any scheduled service interruptions occur. The utility will also notify you before any remote shutoff of utility services. If critical care status changes, you, or a person in your household, must let the utility know of the status change. If a person's status **does not** change you must submit an updated Medical Certification Form to the utility **annually**. The form is available from your utility or on their website.

ACTIVE DUTY IN THE MILITARY

Contact: Alpena Power Company

If you or your spouse is the utility company customer of record and either of you are called to full-time active military service, by the President of the United States or the Governor of Michigan, during a national or state emergency or war, you may apply for shut-off protection of your electric or natural gas service for up to 90 days. You may also reapply for extensions of this protection. Your utility company may request verification of active-duty status. In addition, you must notify the utility company when your status changes. Contact the utility company to set up a payment plan for all past due amounts to be paid within twelve months. You will still be required to pay for services used while in the program.

Senior Citizens

The account holder who is an eligible senior citizen, age 65 and older, is protected from disconnection of service during the heating season (Nov 1-Mar 31) at the customer's documented personal residence. The utility will restore service for the customer during the heating season without payment of the amount due, deposits, reconnection fees, or other charges. At the end of the heating season, the account will be placed on a payment plan and payment must begin immediately. **Contact the utility directly to enroll on the WPP.**

ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

State Emergency Relief Program (SER)

Contact: MDHHS at www.michigan.gov/mdhhs

State Emergency Relief is a crisis intervention program that provides assistance for energy-related expenses such as heating fuel, electricity and home repairs. SER is supported by the Federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

Eligibility is based on one of the following:

- Demonstration of immediate need (past due/shut off notice)
- Declared need for a deliverable fuel
- Verified need for energy-related home repair
- 150% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL)
- Up to \$15,000 in cash assets and \$15,000 in material assets

Apply online: <http://michigan.gov/mibridges>

For help with applying:

<https://newmibridges.michigan.gov/s/isd-find-community-partners>

Michigan Energy Assistance Program (MEAP)

Once a State Emergency Relief (SER) application has been submitted, additional assistance can be sought through agencies that provide MEAP energy assistance programs that include services that will enable participants to become or move toward becoming self-sufficient, including assisting participants in paying their energy bills on time, budgeting for and contributing to their ability to provide for energy expenses, and assisting participants in being energy efficient.

Need help applying for State Emergency Relief? Contact 2-1-1 or find a MI Bridges Navigator near you: <https://newmibridges.michigan.gov/s/isd-find-community-partners>.

MEAP is supported by the state's Low-Income Energy Assistance Fund (LIEAF). An electric utility that chooses not to collect for the LIEAF shall not shut off service to customers for non-payment between November 1 and April 15.

For a list of electric providers that opted-out of collecting the LIEAF, go to:

www.michigan.gov/energyassistance

Home Heating Credit

Contact: Michigan Department of Treasury

Apply for a Home Heating Credit (HHC) for the 2022 tax year to help pay winter heating bills if you meet the listed household income guidelines and exemptions. You may claim an exemption for yourself, spouse, and other dependents. Additional exemptions may also be available. HHC is supported by the Federal LIHEAP.

Forms are generally available in mid-to-late January where tax forms can be found. Call Treasury at (517) 636-4486, or visit the website at www.michigan.gov/treasury. Some local agencies or utility companies may provide assistance in completing the form, due no later than **September 30th** of each year. To find an agency that assists with tax preparation, **contact 2-1-1**.

Customers of utilities regulated by the MPSC receive protection from shutoff of their heating fuel service from the time of filing of HHC form with Treasury until the time Treasury issues the credit. However, you must contact your utility company to let them know you filed for the HHC. Keep a copy of the HHC form you file with the number of exemptions claimed and the amount of the credit to use when requesting the status of your application. You will still be required to pay for the electric and natural gas services used during the shutoff protection period.

INCOME GUIDELINES 2022 – 2023	
Number of Exemptions	110% of Federal Poverty Income Ceiling
0-1	\$ 14,949
2	\$ 20,141
3	\$ 25,333
4	\$ 30,525
5	\$ 35,717
6	\$ 40,909
7	\$ 46,101
8	\$ 51,293
Add \$5,192 for each additional exemption	

United Way 2-1-1

2-1-1 is a one-stop, 24-hour free phone and online service that links people with information or agencies that can help with utility assistance and other needs such as rent payment help, child and elder care, emergency shelters, job training, counseling, etc. Simply dial 2-1-1 on your phone or visit mi211.org and click Search Resource Database to get connected to available services.

Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)

Contact: NE MI Community Service Agency (989) 358-4700 • 2375 Gordon Rd • Alpena

Michigan's Weatherization Assistance Program is a federally funded, low-income residential energy conservation program providing free home energy conservation services to eligible homeowners and renters with a household income at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. You are also eligible if you participate in the Department of Health and Human Services Family Independence Program or receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI). These weatherization services can help reduce energy use and lower utility bills.

If you qualify, a trained inspector will assess your home and determine which measures will be the most beneficial for you. Measures may include adding caulk and weather stripping; wall, basement, and attic insulation and ventilation; and smoke detectors. Contact your local Community Action Agency or go to:

mcac.memberclicks.net/agency-locator-map

for more information or to find the community action agency in your area.

For additional information on saving energy and money, visit: www.energy.gov/energysaver

Michigan Veterans Trust Fund Emergency Grant Program

Contact: MI Veterans Trust Fund at (800)642-4838 or www.michiganveterans.com.

The Trust Fund provides temporary assistance to veterans and their families facing a financial emergency or hardship including the need for energy assistance.

LIFELINE

Contact your local telephone company for details

Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)

The ACP is a Federal Communications Commission program that provides a monthly discount on internet service for qualifying households and one device discount on a laptop, tablet, or desktop computer. Up to a \$30/month discount on your internet service and associated equipment rentals (such as modems, routers, hotspot devices and antennas). Enhanced Tribal Benefit: Up to a \$75/month discount if your household is on qualifying Tribal lands.

A one-time discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, tablet, or desktop computer (with a co-payment of more than \$10 but less than \$50) where available. Only one monthly service discount and one device discount is allowed per household. **Apply:** online, by mail, or through a participating provider [Home - ACP - Universal Service Administrative Company \(affordableconnectivity.gov\)](http://Home-ACP-UniversalServiceAdministrativeCompany(affordableconnectivity.gov)) If you have a disability and need assistance with your application, contact the ACP Support Center at (877) 384-2575.