

## Low Income Energy Assistance: **EEl Survey Shows Wide-Ranging Industry Support**

**WASHINGTON, NOV. 7, 2003** - The results of a national survey by Edison Electric Institute show that the nation's shareholder-owned electric power companies are offering a wide variety of programs and services for their low-income customers.

In total, the industry is offering over 750 programs and activities nationwide. These include billing assistance, weatherization, efficiency, community development and outreach, and more. Sixty operating companies serving over 62 million residential customers responded to the EEI survey, representing approximately 75 percent of the total number of residential customers served by EEI member companies.

"Given the importance of electricity to the quality of life for all people," said Michael McGrath, EEI's Executive Director, Retail Energy Services, "it is especially important to offer help to those who need it. The recent natural gas price increases, and the potential costs arising from the need to strengthen the country's electric infrastructure make this help all the more vital."

McGrath added that by sharing the survey results, "hopefully we will be able to inspire electric companies in developing new and effective programs for their low-income customers. One extremely important national action we can take is to further encourage the good work being done by the industry to increase Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and Weatherization 2004 funding to \$3.4B and \$281M respectively."

Some of the key findings from the survey include:

- Sixty companies (100 percent) are offering programs or activities targeting some type of billing assistance. Typical programs include LIHEAP, fuel funds (with customer donations), average payment plans, and discounts on energy or customer charges.
- Forty-seven companies (78 percent) are offering weatherization-type programs. Typical programs include attic insulation, window sealing, and/or caulking.
- Forty-two companies (70 percent) are offering general residential efficiency programs or programs targeted to low-income customers. Typical programs include heating/cooling system incentives and rebates, Energy Star high efficiency appliance programs, or energy audits (on-site or on-line).
- Thirty-five companies (58 percent) are providing economic programs. Typical programs include Economic Development Councils (at the local or state level), special tariff/rate riders, or tariff/rate discounts based on specific economic development criteria.

- Thirty-seven companies (62 percent) provide at least one type of community outreach program. Typical activities include food drives, senior citizen programs, or employee volunteer activities (sponsored by the EEI member company).
- Twenty-six companies (43 percent) offer other programs that are targeted to low-income customers. Examples of “other” programs include scholarships, charitable trusts, budget counseling, medical needs programs, and individual development accounts.

EEI surveyed its member companies about their low-income programs during the summer of 2003. Data was compiled and finalized in November 2003. The detailed information from the EEI survey can be viewed at: [www.eei.org/retail/low-income](http://www.eei.org/retail/low-income)

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**Edison Electric Institute (EEI)** is the association of United States shareholder-owned electric companies, international affiliates and industry associates worldwide. Our U.S. members serve approximately 90 percent of the ultimate customers in the shareholder-owned segment of the industry, and nearly 70 percent of all electric utility ultimate customers in the nation. They generated almost 70 percent of the electricity generated by U.S. electric utilities.



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