



*A personal commitment
to New Mexico*

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February Natural Gas Bills High But Headed Down Slightly; Low-Income New Mexicans Urged to Access Assistance

(ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.) – PNM and the New Mexico Human Services Department are urging low-income New Mexicans faced with high heating bills to access available assistance from Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and the PNM Good Neighbor Fund.

PNM today said the February market price for natural gas remains high. However, lower average consumption in February should mean bills will drop slightly from January levels.

The February Natural Gas Price

Severe weather in parts of the United States has resulted in increased volatility in natural gas prices in recent weeks.

For PNM customers, the result of these market forces is a February price of 59.63 cents per therm. Based on average residential consumption of 127 therms, this will produce an average bill of \$111.08, higher than last February's average bill of \$102.86, when the price was 53.68 cents per therm. However, this is a slight drop from this month's average bill of \$113.39, based on a per-therm price of 59.01 cents.

The cost of natural gas is a pass-through for PNM. PNM purchases natural gas on behalf of its customers and passes the cost directly along through monthly bills.

LIHEAP Assistance Available

"As the heating costs rise, we expect to help more low-income New Mexicans make ends meet," said Pamela Hyde, Human Services Department Secretary. "LIHEAP helps families keep warm by paying one energy bill over the winter months, whether it is natural gas, electric, propane or wood."

Hyde said the department was given \$8.4 million in LIHEAP funds for the current fiscal year, which could provide assistance to 52,000 New Mexico families. So far this fiscal year, the department has assisted 30,000 families.

(more)

Families earning less than 150 percent of federal poverty can qualify for LIHEAP. This means that a family of three earning less than \$1,908 per month could qualify. LIHEAP applications are taken at any of the 34 HSD Income Support Division offices located throughout the state, or by calling 1-800-283-4465.

PNM Good Neighbor Fund An Important Resource

The PNM Good Neighbor Fund helps low-income families, elderly and disabled customers pay their energy bills. It is funded by the generous contributions of PNM customers and employees — and funds donated are matched dollar-for-dollar by PNM shareholders. In most communities, the program is administered by the Salvation Army.

Last year, the PNM Good Neighbor Fund gave out more than \$600,000 in assistance to more than 7,000 New Mexico families.

More information on the PNM Good Neighbor Fund is available at PNM.com or by calling PNM customer service at 246-5700 in the Albuquerque metropolitan area. Customers outside of the area can refer to their monthly PNM bill or their local phone book for the correct telephone number to call.

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