



NEW MEXICO HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT
P.O. Box 2348
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504-2348

Bill Richardson
Governor

Pamela S. Hyde, J.D.
Secretary

*For further information contact:
Betina Gonzales McCracken (505) 827-6245 or (505) 699-4675*

For Immediate Release

Energy Assistance Available for Low-Income New Mexicans to Help Beat the Heat on Cooling Costs

Santa Fe, July 13, 2005 – With peaking high temperatures in the state, New Mexico Human Services Department (HSD) Secretary Pamela Hyde advises New Mexicans who qualify for the Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), and have not received a benefit since October 2004, to consider applying for assistance to help pay their electricity bill. “Hot temperatures across the state have led to higher electricity bills and LIHEAP can help by paying a portion of, or all of many low-income families’ energy bill,” said Hyde.

Since October, 51,862 families have benefited from LIHEAP, averaging a one-time payment of \$129. Those who qualify are families earning less than 150 percent of federal poverty. This means a family of three earning less than \$1,959 per month could qualify for energy assistance.

LIHEAP applications can be completed at any of the department’s 35 Income Support Division offices. Additionally, families who are already receiving food stamps probably also qualify for LIHEAP assistance.

Applicants should bring with them the following information when applying for LIHEAP:

- Proof of household income for the past 30 days;
- A photo ID of the person filing the application;
- A Social Security Number (SSN) for all household members;
- Citizenship/resident status
- One of the following from the past 12 months:
 - Highest gas or electric bill for 30 days of service;
 - Account history printout from a propane company, or receipts for two propane fills with the fewest days in between;
 - A receipt for the purchase of fire wood;
- A disconnect notice, if you have received one, or the cost of starting utility service at your home.

For more information on LIHEAP, please call 1-800-283-4465, or visit the department’s LIHEAP website at <http://www.state.nm.us/hsd/liheap.html>.

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