



# State of New Mexico

*Office of the Governor*

**Bill Richardson**

Governor

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## **Governor Bill Richardson Urges Eligible Families to Apply for Assistance for their Cooling Bills**

*Average Eligible Household Could Receive Nearly a \$130 Benefit from the Once-a-Year Program*

SANTA FE – Governor Bill Richardson urges eligible New Mexico families who have not yet received a Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) benefit since last October to apply and get help paying their cooling bills.

“The coldest and hottest times of the year are when families recognize they could use a little help paying their utility bills,” said Governor Richardson. “With temperatures near 100 across the state, now is the time to seek assistance through the LIHEAP program.”

Earlier this year, Governor Richardson approved the state budget that included \$6 million to add to the federal LIHEAP program. The additional funding can help even more New Mexico families make ends meet by assisting with their high energy bills.

Since October 2006, 58,946 families have applied for LIHEAP, with each household receiving a one-time average benefit of \$128.

“Last year the Human Services Department (HSD) served a record number of households, 71,794, so we know there are many more families out there who are eligible and could use the assistance,” said Pamela Hyde, HSD Secretary.

Households can qualify for LIHEAP only one time each year. Most households use their LIHEAP benefits to help heat their home in the winter. However, if the household has

not applied and received LIHEAP since October 1, 2006, they could apply for LIHEAP to help pay their cooling bill.

Households qualifying for LIHEAP earn less than 150 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (see chart below). The benefit can be used to help pay gas, electric, or propane bills.

<i>Family Size</i>	<i>LIHEAP Maximum Monthly Income</i>
<b>1</b>	<b>\$1,225</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>\$1,650</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>\$2,075</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>\$2,500</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>\$2,925</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>\$3,350</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>\$3,775</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>\$4,200</b>

LIHEAP applications can be completed at any of the department's 35 Income Support Division offices. Applicants should bring with them the following information when applying for LIHEAP:

- Proof of household income for the past 30 days;
- Identification of the person filing the application;
- A Social Security Number (SSN) for all household members;
- Statement of citizenship or proof of immigration status for all household members; and
- 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 firewood; or
  - 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.hsd.state.nm.us/isd/liheap.html>.**

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