Office of People’s Counsel
RESOURCES GUIDE
Utility Bill Assistance in
FREDERICK COUNTY

Contents:

1-2-3  Utility Bill Assistance at a Glance ....................... 2

Electric and Gas Utility Programs.............................. 3

Energy Assistance Programs—OHEP.......................... 4
• MD Energy Assistance Program (MEAP)
• Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP)

Energy Efficiency and Conservation......................... 5

Energy Assistance Programs— DSS).......................... 6
• Emergency Assistance to Families w/Children (EAFC)
• Flex Funds
• Welfare Avoidance Grant (WAG)
• Special and Local Funds
• Office on Aging

Private Charities & Other Funds.............................. 7
• Fuel Funds
• Private Charities
• Federal Emergency Management Assistance (FEMA)

Tax Credits ......................................................... 8
Mortgage Payment Assistance................................. 9
Telephone Bill Assistance.................................... 10-11
Water Bill Assistance.......................................... 12
Other Assistance Programs................................. 13
Assistance Flowchart ........................................... 14
MD PSC Complaint Form................................. 15-18
Physician’s Certification of Serious Illness ................... 19

For corrections, please contact us by phone or fax (numbers shown above) or send an email to: DespinaS@opc.state.md.us

September 2013
Utility Bill Assistance

1. **Apply for MEAP and EUSP energy assistance.**

Limited-income customers may be eligible for Maryland state energy assistance programs that can help with utility bills. A detailed description of these programs are provided on page four. There is one application for all Maryland state energy assistance programs.

**Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP)** distributes funds for gas, oil, electricity and other home heating and cooling bills to limited income individuals and families.

**Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP)** is a program that helps low-income electricity customers pay their electric bills. Some customers who are not eligible for MEAP are eligible for EUSP.

Enrollment in these programs is not automatic. You must meet eligibility requirements and apply with a local assistance agency. Local assistance offices are listed in this guide. For locations in other counties, contact the Maryland Office of Home Energy Programs (1-800-352-1446).

2. **Ask about other energy assistance funds.**

Supplementary assistance may be obtained from a local Fuel Fund, or other state or local programs. Information about some of these programs is included in this packet and can be obtained from your local energy assistance office.

Agencies that may be able to provide assistance include those entities that work with senior citizens, persons with disabilities or faith-based organizations.

3. **Try to work out a payment arrangement.**

If you still owe money to the utility after applying for energy assistance, or did not qualify for assistance, you should contact your utility to work out a reasonable payment arrangement for the past due amount. If you try to work out a reasonable payment arrangement and are not successful, contact the Public Service Commission (PSC) at 410-767-8028 (press “1” at the prompt) to make a complaint. The PSC complaint form is enclosed in this packet.

---

**IMPORTANT! Utility Shut-Offs and Serious Illness & Life Support:**

If you have received a shut-off notice and someone in the home is seriously ill or needs life support equipment, contact the utility immediately. Maryland law states that if a physician presents a Public Service Commission **Medical Certification Form** stating termination of electric, gas or both will aggravate an existing serious illness or prevent the use of life-support equipment, a utility may not terminate service for an initial period of up to 30 days beyond the scheduled date of service termination. Once the physician’s certification is presented to the utility, a customer must promptly enter into an agreement with the utility for the payment of any outstanding utility bills. You must send a physician’s certification about the condition to the utility. A copy of the physician’s certification is included in this packet.

Medical Certification Renewals: The certification may be renewed by the customer once another certificate is provided to the utility.

*** NOTE: These certificates do not require the utility to restore service. When the service has been terminated, it is recommend that these medical certifications and/or information regarding serious health issues still be provided to the utility.***
FREDERICK COUNTY RESOURCE GUIDE

Electric and Natural Gas Utilities

**ELECTRIC**

**Potomac Edison**  
(formerly Allegheny Power)  
10435 Downsville Pike  
Hagerstown, MD 21740  
1-800-255-3443  
www.alleghenypower.com

**CITY OF HAGERSTOWN LIGHT DIVISION**  
P. O. Box 1498  
Hagerstown, MD 21740-1498  
301-790-4160  
www.hagerstownlight.org

**THURMONT MUNICIPAL LIGHT COMPANY**  
P. O. Box 17  
Thurmont, MD 21788-0385  
301-271-7313

**NATURAL GAS**

**FREDERICK GAS COMPANY**  
1800 North Market Street  
Frederick, MD 21701  
301-662-2151  
www.wglholdings.com

Electric & Gas Utility Programs

**BUDGET BILLING (EVEN MONTHLY PAYMENTS).**
Utilities offer Budget Billing (an even monthly payment plan) for customers. This allows a customer to pay the same amount every month based on their expected annual usage. This amount may change periodically if you use more or less gas or electricity than expected. The program does not eliminate monthly charges on the bill, but it does even them out. The program is especially helpful if a customer wants to maintain a fairly fixed amount of expenses throughout the year.

**BILL EXTENDER PLAN.**
Utilities are required to adjust a customer’s bill due date if they receive monthly income through Social Security or another government-sponsored assistance program. This can help avoid late payment fees, since a customer can pay the bill after receipt of their monthly income.

**UTILITY SERVICE PROTECTION PROGRAM (USPP).**
The USPP program is designed to protect households from utility service terminations during the winter. The program, established by the Public Service Commission (PSC), is available to MEAP recipients. USPP provides assistance, such as reconnection fee and security deposit waivers, to off-service customers. A customer must enroll in the company’s Budget Billing program and apply the MEAP grant to the heating company bill.

**PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE UTILITY.**
A customer who is having difficulty paying their gas or electric bills should ask the utility about a payment plan to pay past-due bills over time. A deferred payment plan should take a customer’s individual circumstances into account, including other available assistance, income, and the amount owed. If the utility will not work with the customer to establish reasonable payment arrangements, the customer may contact the Public Service Commission’s Office of External Relations to request help mediating acceptable payment arrangement terms.

**DISPUTES WITH THE UTILITY.**
A customer should contact the utility first to request information or resolve a dispute. If it is not resolved, a customer may file a complaint with the PSC. You should use the complaint form located on the PSC website — http://www.psc.state.md.us/Intranet/info/applications_new.cfm#complaint

**MARYLAND PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION (PSC)**
6 St. Paul Street, Suite 1501  
Baltimore, MD 21202-3486  
Phone: 410-767-8028, press “1” at prompt  
Toll-free: 1-800-492-0474  
Fax: 410-333-6844  
Website: www.psc.state.md.us
FREDERICK COUNTY RESOURCE GUIDE

Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) - Energy Assistance Programs

MARYLAND ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (MEAP)

MEAP is an energy assistance program that helps low-income households with their heating bills, and at times, with their cooling bills. The program is available to households that meet the OHEP income requirements and heat with electricity, gas, oil, propane, wood, or other sources. Grant amounts vary depending on household size, household income, and heating source.

ELECTRIC UNIVERSAL SERVICE PROGRAM (EUSP)

EUSP is a program that helps low-income electricity customers pay their electricity bills. The program is available to households that meet the OHEP income requirements. The program includes bill payment assistance and arrearage assistance of up to $2,000 once every seven years when applicable. EUSP bill payment assistance requires customers to enroll in Budget Billing. The annual EUSP bill payment is then applied through the electric company's Budget Billing program.

OHEP will maintain the existing waiver to the Arrearage Program requirement that allows any applicant who received $300 or less within seven years to apply for additional arrearage funds.

In addition, OHEP will add an additional waiver for ‘vulnerable households’ who received $800 or less within the past 7 years. Vulnerable households will be defined as having a member of the household that is over 65 years of age or under two years of age, and members who are medical fragile. The PSC medical certification form (found in this packet) can be used as proof of medical eligibility.

To apply for any of these programs, contact:

Frederick County Dept. of Social Services
OFFICE OF HOME ENERGY PROGRAM (OHEP)
100 East All Saints Street
Frederick, MD 21701
Phone: 301-600-2410
Fax: 301-600-2690
Monday—Friday 8:00a.m. –4:30 p.m
Walk ins (first 16 people will be seen)
Walk-in 8:00 a.m.—11:30a.m.

Questions or concerns about Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) or Department of Social Services (DSS) should be referred to:

DHR CONSTITUENT SERVICES
Toll-free: 1-800-332-6347

DOCUMENTS NEEDED WHEN APPLYING FOR ASSISTANCE

One-Stop-Shop: There is only ONE application to apply for Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP), Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP), Utility Service Protection Plan (USPP), and the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP).

A customer should plan to bring (or mail) copies of the following documents when applying for grants or assistance:

1. Picture Identification. Driver’s license, MD ID, employment ID, DSS ID, or INS Green Card.

2. Proof of Residence. Property tax bill (for homeowners); lease or rent book (for renters); or mail received at the subject address.

3. Proof of Income. Pay stubs (last four to seven weeks); unemployment insurance check stubs; benefit letter from TCA, SSI, SSDI, VA, Social Security; pension benefits; disability check; worker’s compensation; or any other receipt of income.

4. Social Security Cards for all members of the household over age 2.

5. Energy Usage. Most recent utility bill, heating fuel bill, and/or turn-off notice.

6. Landlord information. Name, address and telephone number of landlord.

FY 2014 OHEP ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES for

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Size</th>
<th>Max. Monthly Income</th>
<th>Max. Yearly Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$1,675.62</td>
<td>$20,107.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$2,261.87</td>
<td>$27,142.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$2,848.12</td>
<td>$34,177.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$3,434.37</td>
<td>$41,212.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$4,020.62</td>
<td>$48,247.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>$4,606.84</td>
<td>$55,282.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For each Additional person, add</td>
<td>$586.25</td>
<td>$7,035.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DHCD Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) / Empower MD Limited Income Energy Efficiency Program (LIEEP)

The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) administers energy efficiency and conservation programs for low-income customers. Limited income households up to 200% of the FPL who own or rent a home are eligible for these programs. Priority is given to households who meet MEAP/EUSP guidelines (p. 4) and are elderly or disabled, have minor children in the home, or have high energy consumption.

Applications: OHEP applicants who are eligible for energy assistance will be referred automatically to DHCD for energy efficiency services unless the applicant opts out of the referral. Other individuals can apply directly to DHCD (see below).

Services:

Energy audits

Measures: Insulation and caulking; replacement windows and doors

Systems: Furnace cleaning and tuning; repair or replacement of furnaces; installation of efficient refrigerators and water heaters

Additional LIEEP Services (electric only):

Lighting retrofits

Related health and safety measures

You must use the OHEP application when applying for WAP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Households</th>
<th>Max. Monthly Income</th>
<th>Max. Yearly Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$2,520</td>
<td>$30,249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$3,296</td>
<td>$39,556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$4,072</td>
<td>$48,864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$4,847</td>
<td>$58,171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$5,623</td>
<td>$67,479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>$6,398</td>
<td>$76,786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>$7,174</td>
<td>$86,093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>$7,950</td>
<td>$95,400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For each Additional person, add $775 $9,307

County WAP: Frederick Community Action Agency Call 301-600-6984

For additional assistance, or for those that are over income for OHEP but meet WAP / Empower MD LIEEP income guidelines - Call DHCD – WAP 1-855-583-8976 or 410-514-7621.

Potomac Edison
(formerly Allegheny Power)

Watt Watchers Program:

Rebate Programs: Rebates for qualifying dishwashers, room air conditioners, clothes washers, refrigerators, dryers, freezers, central air conditioners, programmable thermostats, heat pumps, and compact fluorescent lights (CFLs), and more

Recycling Rebates: Rebates for recycling qualifying room air conditioners, refrigerators, and freezers.

Home Performance with Energy Star: Comprehensive home energy audit; Quick Home Energy Check-Up; Online Analyzer.

1-877-928-8928; http://www.energysavemd.com/

Other Energy Efficiency Programs:

Maryland Energy Administration (MEA)

MEA Home Performance Rebate Program http://energy.maryland.gov/allincentives.html

The MEA provides several energy-efficiency–oriented incentives which change from time to time including loan programs, grants, and credits

Department of Social Services (DSS) - Energy Assistance

Each local DSS agency has discretion to allocate the funds described below in different ways. If a customer is not currently receiving services through DSS (e.g. TCA, TEMHA), he or she can still contact the local DSS agency for possible assistance with housing and energy emergencies. Please note that all of these grants are highly discretionary and based on funding availability.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN (EAFC)

EAFC is an emergency grant program that may be accessed once every 24 months. The grant may be used for household emergencies, including utility bills. It is available to families with one or more children under the age of 21, who are related to (and reside with) the applicant. A person does not have to be receiving any state assistance to apply for an emergency grant. However, he or she must document individual circumstances.

FLEX FUNDS

Flex Funds may be available for households in order to maintain or reunify children with their families. These monies are available for a variety of needs, but the goods and services purchased must be related to the child’s or family’s needs. These funds may also be available for vulnerable adults in households without children depending on the situation and need.

WELFARE AVOIDANCE GRANT (WAG)

A WAG grant provides cash assistance to avoid the need for TCA and/or other benefits. Payment is made on behalf of a family with children for immediate and limited work-related needs. This is not an entitlement program. Funding is limited and can only be used for needs directly related to obtaining or maintaining employment such as vehicle repairs and job-related equipment. Persons who receive a WAG cannot receive TCA benefits for a specified time period.

“SPECIAL” OR “LOCAL” FUNDS

“Special” or “local” funds are charitable or local funds available for household emergencies. Local jurisdictions set eligibility criteria and grant amounts. Funds are intermittent and limited and allocated based upon a household’s income and level of need.

For more information on any of these DSS funds, contact:

FREDERICK CO. DEPT. OF SOCIAL SERVICES (DSS)

100 East All Saints Street
Frederick, MD 21701
Phone: 301-600-2410
Fax: 301-600-2690
Monday—Friday 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m

ASSISTANCE FOR SENIORS

Senior Citizens (or their caregiver) with a utility emergency should call for Information and Assistance from:

FREDERICK COUNTY DEPT. OF AGING

1440 Taney Avenue
Frederick, MD 21702
Phone: 301-600-1605
Fax: 301-600-3554
Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30-4:00
Email: ctrue@frederickcountymd.gov

If you have questions or concerns with DSS, call:

DHR CONSTITUENT SERVICES
Toll-free: 1-800-332-6347
FREDERICK COUNTY RESOURCE GUIDE

Private Charities & Other Funds

FUEL FUNDS

Local Fuel Funds are privately-funded charities that offer financial assistance to limited-income individuals with a utility bill crisis. This includes individuals that have had their service terminated or have received a turn-off notice. Generally, all Fuel Funds use the MEAP/EUSP income guidelines (see pg. 5) for eligibility and require applicants to exhaust all other funding sources. Most, if not all, Fuel Funds partner with the local utility company, which provides 50% matching credits against applicants’ payments and/or charitable contributions paid to the utility within the last 30 days. Matching credits cannot be used with state or federal assistance payments. The local Fuel Fund will determine the maximum dollar amount they can provide to each applicant.

Fuel Fund assistance is only available once in a 12-month period. Many local Fuel Funds require monies to be applied to the primary heating source of the applicant (gas, electric, oil, propane, kerosene, wood, etc.). However, some Fuel Fund monies can only be used to assist with the utility in partnership with the Fuel Fund. Check with your local Fuel Fund for application and program rules.

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA) FUNDS

Each year, FEMA (the Federal agency responsible for providing disaster relief) distributes certain emergency funds to the state. These funds are available in certain local jurisdictions throughout the State of Maryland, and may be used for utility emergencies.

For more information on FEMA funds, call:

Tommy Skaggs,
Director of Community Partnerships
FREDERICK RESCUE MISSION
P. O. Box 3389
419 West South Street
Frederick, MD  21701
Phone:  301-695-6633
Fax:  301-695-6637
www.therescuemission.org

SALVATION ARMY
COMMUNITY CENTER
223 West 5th Street
Frederick, MD  21701
301-662-2311
Fax. 301-662-4787
Office Hours: Mon., - Fri.,8:00a.m.-4:00p.m.
Client Hours: Mon., - Fri., 8:00a.m.– 3:00p.m.
Call for an appointment.
**FREDERICK COUNTY RESOURCE GUIDE**

### Tax Credits

#### Earned Income Tax Credit

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a special federal tax credit for limited income workers. If qualified for the federal EITC, you may be entitled to a Maryland EITC on your state return equal to 50 percent of the federal EITC, as well as a local earned income tax credit. A person may be eligible for a tax credit even if he or she does not owe any taxes. However, a tax return must be filed.

#### Child Tax Credit

The Child Tax Credit is a federal special tax credit for limited income families. A person may be eligible for this tax credit of at least $600 per child even if he or she does not owe any taxes. However, a tax return must be filed.

---

For questions about the EITC or Child Tax Credit or any other federal tax, call:

**Internal Revenue Service (IRS)**
1-800-829-1040

For questions about any Maryland state tax credit, call:

**Office of the Comptroller of MD**
410-260-7980

---

#### Free Tax Services

To take advantage of various tax credits, there are free tax services for elderly, disabled, non-English speaking, and limited income households.

**AARP Tax-Aide**
1-888-227-7669

**1ST CALL FOR HELP**
1-800-492-0618

---

#### Renter’s Tax Credit

The Renter’s Tax Credit (RTC) is a Maryland tax credit offered to limited income renters. Renters who are 60 or over, or 100% disabled, may qualify if their rent amount exceeds the amount set based on their income. Renters under 60 may qualify if they meet the household size income limits as well as other program criteria.

For more information about the program and qualification criteria visit [http://www.dat.state.md.us/sdatweb/rtc.html](http://www.dat.state.md.us/sdatweb/rtc.html)

---

#### Homeowner’s Property Tax Credit

This tax credit is available to Maryland homeowners whose property taxes exceed a fixed percentage of their incomes. The program is available to qualified homeowners regardless of age.

Visit [http://www.dat.state.md.us/sdatweb/htc.html](http://www.dat.state.md.us/sdatweb/htc.html) for more information about the program.

For questions about the Renter’s or Homeowner’s Tax Credits, contact:

**MD Department of Assessment and Taxation**
301 W. Preston Street, Room 900
Baltimore, MD 21201
(800) 944-7403.

**OR**

Frederick County—Maryland Assessment Office
5310 Spectrum Dr. Suite E
Frederick, Maryland 21703
301-663-8941

*Applications and documents must be received by September 1 of each year.*
## FREDERICK COUNTY RESOURCE GUIDE
### HOUSING AND MORTGAGE ASSISTANCE

### FORECLOSURE ASSISTANCE

If you are in need of help with paying your mortgage or you are facing a home foreclosure, be sure to first contact your lender and ask to speak with the loss mitigation or loan modification department. Try to work out a reasonable loan workout, repayment plan, loan modification or forbearance agreement. In many cases, it is best to get help from an experienced housing counselor who works with lenders and homeowners on a daily basis. There are many different types of foreclosure assistance programs, but their availability is dependent on many factors that include, but are not limited to: who your lender, investor or insurer is, your household income, credit rating, debts and expenses, and type of hardship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mortgage counseling assistance</th>
<th>Foreclosure Timeline and Mediation Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MDHOPE</strong>&lt;br&gt;1-877-462-7555&lt;br&gt;www.mdhope.org</td>
<td><strong>Step 1:</strong> Lender can mail a Notice of Intent to Foreclose (NOI) 45 days prior to filing action to foreclose. This notice is typically sent after 90 days of delinquency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National HOPE</strong>&lt;br&gt;1-888-995-HOPE&lt;br&gt;www.995hope.com&lt;br&gt;24 hours a day / 7 days per week</td>
<td><strong>Step 2:</strong> After 45 days from the date of the NOI, the lender can file an Order to Docket in Circuit Court.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To find a counseling agency near you visit <a href="http://www.hud.gov">www.hud.gov</a> or <a href="http://mdhope.dhcd.maryland.gov/Counseling/Pages/CounselorsList.aspx">http://mdhope.dhcd.maryland.gov/Counseling/Pages/CounselorsList.aspx</a></td>
<td><strong>Maryland’s new Foreclosure Mediation Law became effective July 1, 2010. The law requires mortgage lenders and servicers to be much more responsive to homeowners facing foreclosure. If the home facing foreclosure is a homeowner’s principal residence, the homeowner will have the right to request mediation once the lender initiates foreclosure proceedings with the court system. At that time, the lender must send a “Request for Foreclosure Mediation” form. Homeowners will have 25 days to complete the form and file it with the circuit court. Homeowners must pay a non-refundable $50 fee when they formally file this request for mediation.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foreclosure fraud and rescue scams</strong></td>
<td><strong>Step 3:</strong> At 136 days, this is the earliest that a home can be sold at auction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MD Dept. of Labor, Licensing &amp; Regulation</strong>&lt;br&gt;410-230-6097 /1-888-784-0136&lt;br&gt;www.dllr.state.md.us</td>
<td>(click on “Mortgage Late? Don’t Wait!”)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Loans

**Maryland Housing Rehabilitation Program (MHRP)**- This program provides rehabilitation funds for housing or plumbing repairs for single family, owner-occupied properties and one to four unit rental properties. Loans may be used to correct exterior and interior deficiencies, make accessibility modifications, correct health and safety violations, improve plumbing, wells and sewer, and for weatherization and energy conservation. You must be a Maryland resident who occupies the home as their principal residence, or rents to a family with a limited income at or below 80% of statewide median income.

**Accessible Homes for Seniors (AHFS)**- AHFS loans allow homeowners 55 plus to make needed accessibility improvements. Typical improvements include ramps, widening doorways, installing grab bars, adding a first floor laundry facility or bathrooms, and changing door and sink hardware to lever style handles. The program provides a zero percent interest, deferred loans for a term of 30 years to finance these accessibility improvements. For more information, contact DHCD at (410) 514-7446 or Toll Free (MD only) 1-800-543-4505.
Telephone Bill Assistance

**LIFELINE** is a federal program, funded by all telephone customers, that helps to make telephone service more affordable. The program provides eligible customers with a discount on service or free minutes. The FCC has revised the program effective June 1, 2012. For information, see [www.usac.org](http://www.usac.org).

**Eligibility:** Maryland residents who receive TANF, DTAP, SSI, PAA, MEAP/EUSP, Medicaid, Section 8 or School Lunch Free Lunch assistance, or whose incomes are certified at or below 135% of the federal poverty level.

**Telephone companies:** Lifeline is available to customers of landline (wired) and wireless companies. Verizon offers Lifeline service for either landline or wireless service. All wireless companies must be certified as Eligible Telecommunications Carriers (ETCs) by the MD PSC to market and provide Lifeline service. See [http://webapp.psc.state.md.us/intranet/Info/brochures/lifeline.pdf](http://webapp.psc.state.md.us/intranet/Info/brochures/lifeline.pdf) for a current list of ETCs.

---

**Landline (Wired) Services: Verizon**

**Basic:** Single telephone line with a maximum of 30 un-timed local calls per month.

Charge: $0.66 per month

You cannot have any premium services and must pay all applicable federal, state and local taxes. **You will be charged for additional calls.**

**OR**

**Enhanced:** Single telephone line with unlimited local calls. Customer may purchase two value-added services and must pay all applicable federal, state, and local taxes.

Charge: $10.00 per month

*Waiver of Federal Subscriber Line Charges (FSLC) / waiver of installation fee / Collection of deposit is prohibited*

---

**Things to know about the Lifeline program**

- All telephone customers pay for the Lifeline program through a Universal Service Fund (USF) charge on the bill.
- The program reimburses companies with a flat rate of $9.25.
- **Data and optional calling services are much more expensive than voice services, and Lifeline customers must pay for these services,** even if they get free or discounted “voice” minutes or service.
- Lifeline customers get a discount on services or receive free minutes (wireless). **Service discounts can be applied to any service plan,** including bundles of voice and data services and optional calling services.
- There is a new annual re-certification requirement for all Lifeline customers.
- Only one Lifeline connection is allowed per household. This means only one landline OR wireless connection per household. A “**household**” is an economic unit of all adult individuals who contribute to and share income and expenses.
- A resident in a group home, nursing home, assisted living or similar facility can be certified as one household for purposes of Lifeline eligibility. A worksheet must be filled out to establish eligibility at [http://www.usac.org/li/](http://www.usac.org/li/).

**OPC recommends:** Always compare service offers of different companies before you sign up.

FOR MORE INFORMATION call 1-800-525-0145.
Verizon’s Medical and Senior Repair Prioritization Program

On January 25, 2011, the Public Service Commission approved a prioritization program for Verizon’s customers. A Verizon customer who is 65 years or older or who has a medical condition requiring repair priority can be pre-certified for repair priority if the customer is without alternative access to E911 service. For example, alternative access means having use of a cell phone or another telephone line in the household to call Emergency-911 services.

Customers who meet these conditions and file the appropriate certifications will receive priority for repairs (24-hour “out of service” repair commitment) when an outage is reported.

Certificate Renewals

The senior certificate does not need to be renewed, and is valid until the account is closed or a billing name change is made to the account.

The medical certificate is good for one year only if the medical condition is temporary. The customer will receive a notice 60 days before its expiration. If the condition is permanent, the certificate does not need to be renewed yearly.

Medical Certification

The medical certificate may be signed by a licensed doctor, physician’s assistant or nurse practitioner.

Applications for the program can be obtained at: http://www22.verizon.com/Support/Residential/phone/homephone/general+support/request+repair+service/repair+priority/129572.htm.

Certifications must be mailed to:

Maryland Repair Priority Program
PO Box 33082
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
**FREDERICK COUNTY RESOURCE GUIDE**

**Water Bill Assistance**

Most Maryland households receive water and sewer service through a local government or a quasi-government entity. These companies are not regulated by the MD PSC. If you need help with paying your water bill from a public water source, you should contact your county executive or county commissioner’s office for assistance.

**Board of County Commissioners**

Winchester Hall, 12 East Church St., Frederick, MD 21701 - 5447  
(301) 600-3190; fax: (301) 600-1849; (301) 600-9000 (general information)  
e-mail: jgardner@frederickcountymd.gov  

There are small private water companies in some Maryland counties. These companies are fully regulated by the MD PSC. The company should be contacted about working out a payment plan if there is a past due bill or if the bill amount is disputed. If the customer cannot get a satisfactory result, the customer may file a complaint about a disputed bill, or seek mediation assistance, with the MD PSC.

Private water companies in the area:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>AREA SERVED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMELANO WATER</td>
<td>Amelano Subdivision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6719 Ford Road, Route #3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frederick, MD 21702</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact: Kirk Fisher (301) 668-4740</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Department of Social Services (DSS) emergency assistance programs may assist with private and public water company bills especially if a service termination is threatened or has occurred. Contact your local Department of Social Services for assistance (page 6).
**Rental Allowance Program (RAP)**

The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development provides grants to local governments to provide flat rent subsidies to low-income families who either are homeless or have an emergency housing need. The RAP program provides a monthly rental allowance towards a person’s rent for up to 12 months to help move families from homelessness, or temporary emergency housing, into more permanent housing and obtain self-sufficiency.

To apply for RAP contact:

Department of Social Services  
100 E. All Saints Street  
Frederick, Maryland 21701  
301-694-2619

**Tenant-Based Rental Assistance Program (TBRA)**

This program is made available through HUD’s HOME program but administered through participating jurisdictions. TBRA is a rental subsidy that can help individual households afford housing costs such as rent, utility costs, security deposits, and/or utility deposits. The rental assistance portion may not exceed two years but may have an option to renew. Each participating jurisdiction is given some flexibility on how they use the funds and typically those that receive assistance have been referred from other community organizations.

**Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)**

This program, created by HUD, is used to address housing needs for low-income persons who are living with HIV/AIDS. Funds are distributed to states and cities by formula allocations and made available as part of the area’s Consolidated Plan. Grantees partner with nonprofit organizations and housing agencies to provide housing and support to beneficiaries. HOPWA funds may be used for a wide range of housing, social services, program planning, and development costs. These include, but are not limited to, the acquisition, rehabilitation, or new construction of housing units; costs for facility operations; rental assistance; and short-term payments to prevent homelessness. HOPWA funds also may be used for health care and mental health services, chemical dependency treatment, nutritional services, case management, assistance with daily living, and other supportive services.

**Low Intensity Support Services (LISS)**

This program is designed to enable a family to provide for the needs of a child or an adult with developmental disabilities. The program provides funding of up to $3,000 per person per year and covers services including, but not limited to, family counseling, personal care, day care, health services, specialized equipment, transportation, and housing adaptations.

For more information or to apply for the program contact:

*Penn-Mar Human Services*

310 Old Freeland Road  
Freeland, Maryland 21053  
FAX: (410)357-4767 / Web Address: http://www.penn-mar.org
CUSTOMER WITH UTILITY BILL

UTILITY COMPANY

OFFICE OF HOME ENERGY PROGRAMS (OHEP)

EUSP (electric assistance)

MEAP (heating assistance)

If customer needs further assistance and,

HAS ADULT-ONLY HOUSEHOLD

ADULT SERVICES
Contact for referral for:
Special Funds or
Flex Funds to Vulnerable Adults

HAS CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLD

DSS
Contact for referral for:
EAFC
Special Funds
Flex Funds
WAG

IS ELDERLY/DISABLED

OFFICE ON AGING
Contact the Local jurisdiction for Information and Assistance to Seniors (or their Caregivers)

FEMA

PRIVATE CHARITIES

FUEL FUND
LAST STOP for assistance to maximize funds. Charitable and private funds may receive 50% matching utility credit for BGE accounts.

ADULT SERVICES
Contact for referral for:
Special Funds or
Flex Funds to Vulnerable Adults
The following forms include:

The PSC— INQUIRY / DISPUTE FORM

The PSC - PHYSICIAN CERTIFICATION OF SERIOUS ILLNESS OR LIFE SUPPORT
**OFFICE OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS**  
MARYLAND PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
WILLIAM DONALD SCHAEFER TOWER  
6 ST. PAUL STREET  
BALTIMORE, MD 21202-6806  
TELEPHONE: 410-767-8028 OR 1-800-492-0474  
FAX: 410-333-6844  
INTERNET: http://www.psc.state.md.us/psc/  

**INQUIRY/DISPUTE FORM**

Everyone must complete this section:
Have you contacted the company regarding your inquiry/dispute? YES NO Date: ______
Have you received a response from the company? YES NO Date Received: ______
(If you received a written response, please provide a copy with this form.)
If you have not contacted the company, you must do so prior to filing a complaint with the Commission. If you contacted the company, you must wait for the company to have time to investigate the matter and respond to your complaint before pursuing the matter with the Commission. If after a reasonable period (2-6 weeks) you have not received a response from the company, you may file

**TO BE COMPLETED BY EVERYONE** [Please print and fill out neatly and completely]

Name as it appears on bill: ______________________________________
Address as it appears on bill: ______________________________________
City: ____________________ State: ______ Zip Code: ______
Mailing address, if different from service address: ________________________
City: ____________________ State: ______ Zip Code: ______
Phone Numbers (please include area code): (home) _____-____-____ (work) _____-____-____
(pager) _____-____-____ (Fax) _____-____-____ (“Can be reached”) _____-____-____
Account Number or Order Number: ______________________________________

Complaint concerns: (Check all that apply)

___ Electric Company  
___ Gas Company  
___ Local Telephone Co.
___ Gas Supplier  
___ Electric Supplier  
___ Long Distance Co.

PLEASE NOTE: The Maryland PSC does not regulate the following companies: wireless, paging, oil, propane, Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, and cable television providers. If your dispute concerns a wireless or paging co. you should file your dispute with the Federal Communications Commission at 1-888-225-5322 or you can contact the Attorney General’s Office, Consumer Protection Division at 1-888-743-0023. If your dispute concerns cable television service please check the back of your cable bill for the local franchise office in your area. You should file your complaint with the franchise office listed on the bill or call the company and obtain that information. If your dispute concerned oil or propane companies, call the AGO at 888-743-0023. Finally, if your dispute concerned WSSC, you should file the dispute with the Manager of Customer Service for WSSC.

Name of Company(ies) Against Whom You Are Complaining: ______________________________________

____________________________________

____________________________________
If you are not the customer of record, please complete this section.

Name: ___________________________ Relationship to the customer: __________
Address: ___________________________
Daytime Phone No.: ________________ Explain why customer cannot complete form: __________

Note: you must have the customer’s permission to file a complaint on their behalf. The PSC Investigator has the right to refuse to respond to a complaint if it cannot be verified that the customer of record gave you permission to file the dispute or his/her behalf.

Are you have a billing dispute, please specify the amount in dispute? $____________
Did you pay the disputed bill? ___ YES ___ NO

PLEASE COMPLETE IF YOUR COMPLAINT CONCERNS A TERMINATION NOTICE:

Is your service currently on? ___ YES ___ NO
If your service is off, when was it turned off? __________________________
How much money is the utility requiring to restore service? ________________
If your service is on, do you have a turn-off notice? ___ YES ___ NO Notice Amount? ______

If you are requesting an extension on a turn-off notice, and/or Alternative Payment Arrangements, you MUST indicate how much you are able to pay as a down payment, and list the amount and date(s) when you can make additional payments to reduce the past due amount. Any amount you list must be paid, in addition to your current bill.

My total past due bill is: $______________
My down payment is $______________ to be paid by ____________
I would like to pay the remaining bill as follows:

$______________ to be paid by ______________
$______________ to be paid by ______________
$______________ to be paid by ______________
$______________ to be paid by ______________

Do you agree to participate in Budget Billing? ___ YES ___ NO
Have you paid a security deposit? ___ YES ___ NO Indicate Amount paid $____________
Is anyone in your household seriously ill or on life-support? ___ YES ___ NO
Name: ___________________________ Description of illness: ___________________________
(Please have your doctor submit a letter or your behalf.)
If applicable, how many children are in the household? ____________ Ages: ____________
Have you applied for the Maryland Energy Assistance Program? ___ YES ___ NO
If yes, specify amount of grant expected/received: $______________
Have you applied for the Electric Universal Service Program? ___ YES ___ NO
If yes, amount of grant expected/received $______________.
Are you now or have you ever participated in the Utility Service Protection Program (USPP)? ___ YES ___ NO
TO BE COMPLETED BY EVERYONE: [If your complaint concerns a billing dispute, you must include copies of the disputed bills.]

Below briefly describe the basis for your dispute. If this is a billing dispute explain why you are disputing your bill. If you need payment arrangements, explain why you have fallen behind on your bills. If you are contacting us for any other reason, please use this space to state why you are contacting us today and how you would like us to assist you.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Please attach additional sheets if necessary. Also attach any relevant documentation (i.e. a copy of the bill(s), canceled checks, receipts, etc.) which will support your position.

Date: __________________ Signature of Customer: _____________________________

Signature of person completing

Date: __________________ form (if different): _____________________________
PHYSICIAN CERTIFICATION OF SERIOUS ILLNESS OR LIFE SUPPORT

This is to certify that __________________ is a resident of:

Street Address: ____________________________________
City, State, Zip: _________________________________

Telephone Number: ______________________________
Relationship to Customer ___________________________
Account Number: ________________________________

THIS SECTION IS TO BE COMPLETED BY A LICENSED PHYSICIAN ONLY

I hereby certify that termination of electric and/or gas service will either (check applicable box or boxes):

☐ aggravate an existing serious illness* or

☐ prevent the use of life support equipment by the person named above.**

(Please print)
Physician’s Name  ___________________________________________
License No.  ___________________________________________
Title  ___________________________________________
Address  ___________________________________________
Office Number  ___________________________ Fax Number  _______________
E-Mail Address (optional)  ___________________________________________

Physician’s signature  ___________________________________________ Date _________

This medical certificate is only valid for a period not to exceed 30 days.

* "Serious illness" means an illness certifiable by a licensed physician to be such that termination of service during the period of time covered by the certificate would be especially dangerous to the health of the person certified to be seriously ill.

**"Life-support equipment" means any electric or gas energy-using device certified by a licensed physician as being essential to prevent, or to provide relief from, a serious illness or to sustain the life of the customer or an occupant of the premises.