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Governor

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Director

For Immediate Release

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HEAP Winter Crisis Program Begins November 1

Heating assistance available to eligible households

COLUMBUS – As the leaves change and the temperatures begin to fall, the Ohio Development Services Agency (ODSA) wants to remind Ohioans that heating assistance is available this winter to eligible households through the HEAP Winter Crisis Program. Administered by the ODSA's Office of Community Assistance, the program assists qualified Ohioans with winter heating costs November 1, 2012 through March 31, 2013.

"With winter right around the corner, it is important that we provide Ohioans with assistance to maintain their heating source," said Christiane Schmenk, director of the Ohio Development Services Agency. "The Winter Crisis Program is a valuable resource for Ohio's most vulnerable residents and is an important part of our mission to support Ohio's communities."

The HEAP Winter Crisis Program provides assistance once per heating season to eligible households that are threatened with disconnection, have been disconnected or have less than a 10-day supply of bulk fuel. Approximately 155,000 households were served during the 2011-2012 Winter Crisis Program.

Qualifying for HEAP is dependent upon the size of the household and the total gross household income for either the past three or 12 months, which must be at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines. The following are the Program Year 2012-2013 guidelines:

Size of Household	Past Three Months' Income	Past 12 Months' Income
1	\$5,585	\$22,340
2	\$7,565	\$30,260
3	\$9,545	\$38,180
4	\$11,525	\$46,100
5	\$13,505	\$54,020
6	\$15,485	\$61,940
7	\$17,465	\$69,860
8	\$19,445	\$77,780

Households with more than eight members should add \$1,980 per member to the quarterly income or \$7,920 to the annual income.

Individuals interested in receiving HEAP Winter Crisis assistance must have a face-to-face interview at their local provider agency. Qualified Ohioans also can call the toll-free hotline at (800) 282-0880, Monday through Friday for a referral to one of Ohio's 56 local service providers. Hearing impaired customers may dial (800) 686-1557 for assistance. More information about the HEAP Winter Crisis Program also can be found at http://development.ohio.gov/is/is_heapwinter.htm.

Also, an important reminder for those Ohioans receiving assistance through the Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP Plus): Winter Crisis assistance may be applied to outstanding PIPP Plus payments. However, if the total outstanding PIPP Plus payment is more than the \$175 Winter Crisis

payment available to customers of regulated utilities, the balance must be paid by the PIPP Plus customer. PIPP Plus standardizes year-round utility payments, making it easier for customers to budget and helping good-paying customers get rid of old utility debt and avoid accruing new debt. For more information on PIPP Plus, please visit <http://development.ohio.gov/Community/ocs/pippplus/>.

*The Ohio Development Services Agency's **Office of Community Assistance** administers the HEAP Winter and Summer Crisis Programs, the redesigned electric Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP Plus), and other state and federally funded programs that benefit Ohio individuals and families. The Office of Community Assistance, housed within the Community Services Division, coordinates its programs to form a comprehensive strategy to build stronger, healthier communities throughout the state.*

*The **Ohio Development Services Agency (ODSA)** works with partners across business, government, academia, and the nonprofit sector to build strong communities that support job creation. The Agency provides financial, informational, and technical assistance to those making an investment in Ohio, ensuring a vibrant economic future for all Ohioans. Visit www.development.ohio.gov. Also, follow us on Facebook www.facebook.com/OhioDevelopment and Twitter www.twitter.com/OhioDevelopment.*

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