

Making Wise Energy Choices



Presented by:
Kathryn Metz
Senior Outreach and Education Specialist

1



Outline

- Avoid Utility Scams
- Stop Unwanted Calls
- Utility Assistance Programs
- Energy Efficiency Tips



Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel • 65 East State Street, 7th Floor • Columbus, Ohio 43215 • www.occ.ohio.gov

2

2

1

Ohio Consumers' Counsel's Mission

"The Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel advocates and educates to secure for Ohioans affordable, reliable and equitable residential utility services that are essential to their well-being."



Warm up

- Do you have a natural gas or electric utility account?
- Do you know how much your gas and electric bills are each month?
- Have you ever had a problem with your utility services?





Office of the Ohio
Consumers'
Counsel

Common Utility Scams

- Emergency Payment
- Utility Imposter Scam
- False Refunds
- Solar Scams



Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel – 65 East State Street, Suite 700 – Columbus, Ohio 43215 – www.occ.ohio.gov

5

5



Office of the Ohio
Consumers'
Counsel

Payment Arrangement Offer

Service address: 3258 C***

Account ending in: ***372-1-2



Offer Type: **Payment Plan**

You are eligible for our Extended Payment Arrangements

You are eligible for our Extended Payment Arrangement (EPA) plan. The EPA plan allows you to extend your total balance into smaller payments over time.

After looking into your account we recommend the following payment plan:

Payment Plan type: **3 MONTH PLAN**
Monthly Installment: **\$59.30**
Total Setup Amount: **\$237.18**

If you choose to accept this offer, your initial amount of **\$59.29** will be due on or before: **11/21/2025**.

To learn more about Extended Payment Arrangement plans and to see the other plan options available to you, please click the Enroll button below.

Avoid the fee for ACH payments and [sign up for paperless billing](#)

Sincerely,
AEP Ohio Customer Service Team



Download our app



6

6



Office of the Ohio
Consumers'
Counsel

⚠️ **SCAM** ⚠️

From Duke Energy.

"Scheduled Rolling Power Outages Effective 11PM - By Zip Codes and Time. Will remain in effect to Tuesday January 27th due to freeze conditions. Click below for map and details: <http://t.co/YBxzFZXuX5>"...

WE ARE AWARE OF A SCAM TARGETING UTILITY CUSTOMERS. THIS DID NOT COME FROM US. CUSTOMERS SHOULD AVOID CLICKING LINKS FROM UNKNOWN NUMBERS. WE WILL COMMUNICATE GRID CONDITIONS THROUGH OUR OFFICIAL CHANNELS.

Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel

7



Office of the Ohio
Consumers'
Counsel

Reducing unwanted calls

DoNotCall.Gov	Robocalls	Call blocking
Keep personal information PRIVATE	Don't answer unknown numbers	Report offenders

Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel • 65 East State Street, 7th Floor • Columbus, Ohio 43215 • www.occ.ohio.gov

8



Office of the Ohio
Consumers'
Counsel

Energy Marketers

- Beware of anyone claiming they can save you money on your energy bills
- Do not show them your utility bills



Office of the Ohio
Consumers'
Counsel

Call: 1-800-276-5834
Mention Refund ID Number: 2242313896

▼ REFUND AMOUNT ▼
\$100.00

This will appear on your Ohio Edison bill

Last day to call: December 15, 2025

Barberton Utility Customer Information

Your refund is not automatic.
To get started you must call:
1-800-276-5834

▼ REFUND AMOUNT ▼
Approved Amount: \$100.00
Description: ELECTRICITY BILL CREDIT
Last day to call: December 15, 2025
Details for Daniel Gibson

Let's get started.
SmartEnergy would like to issue you a \$100.00 refund. Our phone representative will assist you in enrolling SmartEnergy as your electricity supplier. Then simply remain a customer for at least six months to qualify for a \$100 refund for electric supply charges on your Ohio Edison bill.

- Please call 1-800-276-5834 now to start the process
- Mention Refund ID Number: 2242313896

Thank you from SmartEnergy.
We look forward to refunding you \$100.00 once claimed. This amount will appear in the summary of charges section on your electric bill. To expedite processing when you call, please have your Ohio Edison bill handy.

Questions?
Call: 1-800-276-5834
Mon-Fri: 7am-6pm • Sat-Sun: 8am-4pm EST



Office of the Ohio
Consumers'
Counsel

Utility Assistance Programs

- Summer Crisis Program
- PIPP Plus
- HEAP

2026 Income Guidelines

Size of household*	12-Month Limit	30-Day Limit
	175%	175%
1	\$27,930	\$2,295.62
2	\$37,870	\$3,112.60
3	\$47,810	\$3,929.59
4	\$57,750	\$4,746.58
5	\$67,690	\$5,563.56
6	\$77,630	\$6,380.55
7	\$87,570	\$6,197.53

* For families/households with more than 7 members, please contact your local Energy Assistance Provider.

Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel • 65 East State Street, 7th Floor • Columbus, Ohio 43215 • www.occ.ohio.gov

11

11



Office of the Ohio
Consumers'
Counsel

NEED HELP PAYING YOUR SUMMER ELECTRIC BILLS?

THE SUMMER CRISIS PROGRAM MAY BE ABLE TO HELP!

- ▶ Available July 1 through September 30;
- ▶ Available to households at or below 175% of the federal poverty level that also meet ONE of the following three requirements:
 1. A household member is 60 or older; OR
 2. A member of the household has a medical necessary condition certified by a qualified medical professional; OR
 3. The household has an electricity disconnection notice, has been shut off, or new electric service is being established.

For more utility assistance information visit:
www.occ.ohio.gov/utilityassistance



Office of the Ohio
Consumers' Counsel
www.occ.ohio.gov

AD-805537-062624

12

12



TROUBLE PAYING UTILITY BILLS?

Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP Plus) is an extended payment plan to help eligible customers pay electric and/or natural gas bills for households at or below 175% of the federal income guidelines and served by a utility regulated by the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO). Payments based on income rather than usage.

- Pay 5% of monthly income for electric and/or natural gas service, 10% for all electric homes (\$10 minimum payment)
- Pay on time and in full to receive PIPP credits
- Keep payments current & reverify as needed
- Apply at local Energy Assistant Providers/Community Action Agencies.

Size of household*	12-Month Limit	30-Day Limit
1	\$27,930	\$2,295.62
2	\$37,870	\$3,112.60
3	\$47,810	\$3,929.59
4	\$57,750	\$4,746.58
5	\$67,690	\$5,563.56

* For families (households) with more than 5 members, please contact your local Energy Assistant Provider.

For more utility assistance information visit:
www.occ.ohio.gov/utilityassistance



Office of the Ohio
Consumers' Counsel
www.occ.ohio.gov

AO-ASST-041826

13

13



HIGH HEATING BILLS? HEAP CAN HELP!

Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

Households at or below 175% of the federal income level (see chart) may receive a credit once per winter heating season towards their primary heating source—electric, natural gas, or bulk fuel.

Three ways to apply until May 31, 2027:

- Online at www.energyhelp.ohio.gov
- Appointment with your local Energy Assistance Provider/Community Action Agency
- Mail in an Energy Assistance application from www.energyhelp.ohio.gov

Size of household*	12-Month Limit	30-Day Limit
1	\$27,930	\$2,295.62
2	\$37,870	\$3,112.60
3	\$47,810	\$3,929.59
4	\$57,750	\$4,746.58
5	\$67,690	\$5,563.56
6	\$77,630	\$6,380.55
7	\$87,570	\$7,197.53

For more utility assistance information visit:
www.occ.ohio.gov/utilityassistance



Office of the Ohio
Consumers' Counsel
www.occ.ohio.gov

AO-ASST-073236

14

14

7



Office of the Ohio
Consumers'
Counsel

Which uses less energy?

- A. A gaming PC?
- B. A game console?



Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel • 65 East State Street, 7th Floor • Columbus, Ohio 43215 • www.occ.ohio.gov

15

15



Office of the Ohio
Consumers'
Counsel

Which uses less energy?

- A. Streaming TV shows on a laptop?
- B. Streaming TV shows on a tablet?
- C. Streaming TV shows on a desktop computer?



Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel • 65 East State Street, 7th Floor • Columbus, Ohio 43215 • www.occ.ohio.gov

16

16



Office of the Ohio
Consumers'
Counsel

Which uses less energy?

A. A full refrigerator?

B. An empty refrigerator?



Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel • 65 East State Street, 7th Floor • Columbus, Ohio 43215 • www.occ.ohio.gov

17

17



Office of the Ohio
Consumers'
Counsel

Which uses less energy?

A. Taking a shower?

B. Taking a bath?



Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel • 65 East State Street, 7th Floor • Columbus, Ohio 43215 • www.occ.ohio.gov

18

18



To save energy you should...?

A. Turn your computer completely off ?

B. Put it into sleep mode?



To save energy you should...?

A. Charge your phone only when it needs charged?

B. Leave it on the charger all night?





Energy Efficiency

Adjust the
thermostat

Replace
furnace
filters

Seal air
leaks

Vampire
Energy

Cook
efficiently

Laundry and
dishwasher
tips

Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel • 65 East State Street, 7th Floor • Columbus, Ohio 43215 • www.occ.ohio.gov

21

21



Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel

THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?

Presented by:

Kathryn Metz

Kathryn.metz@occ.ohio.gov

*Senior Outreach and Education
Specialist*

22

1 1