



Energy Blog

Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program Extended Through March 2024 (Page 1 of 2)



Water is a basic human need. Unfortunately for many families and individuals in Orange County, access to clean drinking water has been increasingly difficult to afford. Adjusting for inflation, the average California household paid about 45% more per month for drinking water service in 2015 than in 2007. The burden of rapidly rising drinking water costs falls disproportionately on the 13 million Californians living in low-income households, many of whom have seen their incomes stagnate during the same period (American Water Works Association Data, 2007-2015).

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Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program Extended Through March 2024... continued (Page 2 of 2)

For households struggling to pay water and wastewater bills, there is help available.

The Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) is a federally funded program that offers low-income households a one-time payment to help pay residential water or wastewater costs. If you're like many Californians struggling with higher costs on everything from food to gas, LIHWAP could help your family stop worrying about how to pay your water bill and keep the water flowing.

The amount of help that you could get will depend on your residential water and wastewater bills. Households whose utility payments are included in their rent may also be eligible for LIHWAP. In addition, program participation is limited to households receiving services from water and wastewater systems enrolled in LIHWAP to receive the payment of assistance benefits. Recipients of CalFresh, CalWORKs, and LIHEAP are automatically income-qualified for LIHWAP assistance.

LIHWAP can offer a one-time payment to help you:

- Pay your residential water and wastewater utility bills.
- Manage an emergency or water crisis, such as a service disconnection.
- Prevent other adverse effects such as debt collection or placement of liens.

Launched by the California Department of Community Service and Development (CSD) in early 2022, the program was originally meant to end in September 2023. CSD has since extended LIHWAP through March 2024. CAP OC will be accepting applications until March 15. Apply now before the program closes!

Call us today at 714-839-6199 to apply. For more info and to see a list of the water providers enrolled in the program, go to www.capoc.org/water.



Energy Blog

The Department of Energy Finalizes Cost-Saving Efficiency Standards for New Gas and Electric Stoves



The Biden administration has finalized a plan to make new stoves less energy-intensive. The first-of-its-kind directive from the Energy Department requires that gas and electric stoves and ovens manufactured in 2028 or later meet specific standards to make modest improvements to their energy efficiency.

This is in the effort to lower utility bills and improve appliance reliability, as well as limit carbon dioxide emissions from household appliances. The standards will decrease CO emissions by nearly 4 million metric tons cumulatively and save consumers \$1.6 billion in energy costs over 30 years, the Energy Department said in a statement. The rules only affects newly produced stoves and not the ones that are currently in consumers' kitchens nor those currently on the market.

The improved efficiency would save consumers money on their gas and electricity bills in the long run. We will keep an eye on this and update our readers as more details emerge.

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How To Stay Safe From Winter Electrical Hazards (Page 1 of 2)

Winter is here. And while plenty of devices can help you stay warm and cozy in your home, they can also pose serious electrical hazards if not used properly.

According to the [Electrical Safety Foundation](#), electric blankets and heating pads cause almost 500 fires yearly, most by blankets over 10 years old. Also, the [National Fire Protection Association](#) states that improperly used space heaters have contributed to fatal home fires and account for nearly 53% of home heating fires.

It's also important to remember that plugging too many appliances into a single outlet can be dangerous, resulting in a possible power outage. An overloaded power strip or surge protector can overheat, which could start a fire.

By following the simple safety tips from Southern California Edison below, your family will enjoy a safer and warmer winter at home.

Electric Blankets and Heating Pads:

- Never fold your electric blankets, tuck them into other blankets while in use or place anything on top of them because it could cause overheating
- Inspect the electric cords to look for cracks or fraying

Candles:

- Never leave candles unattended and ensure they're not near any highly flammable items

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- Consider using battery-operated candles around your home to reduce fire risk

Space Heaters:

- Space heaters should be kept at least three feet from anything flammable, such as rugs, blankets or paper
- Don't leave your space heater unattended and unplug it when not in use. Consider getting a space heater that has an automatic shut-off

Generators:

- If you must connect to a generator for electricity, consult an electrician before you bring one home to determine the proper equipment and setup
- If you decide to wire a generator directly to your home, California state law mandates that you notify Southern California Edison
- Follow the directions supplied with the generator - never try to power the house wiring by plugging a generator into a wall outlet, otherwise known as "backfeeding"

Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Alarms:

- Make sure to test your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms to make sure they're properly working
- Check your batteries and charge them every 6 months

Electrical Plugs:

- Be mindful of how many appliances you're connecting to an extension cord - don't overload outlets
- Outlets can wear out over time resulting in a poor connection and increase the risk of fire - licensed electricians should inspect outlets that are loose or discolored

For more information on how to keep you and your family safe, visit [sce.com/safety/family](https://www.sce.com/safety/family).

Source: [SCE.com](https://www.sce.com)



Energy Blog

Client Success Story -- the Sanchez-Jorgenson Family (page 1 of 3)



The multigenerational Sanchez-Jorgenson family

The Sanchez-Jorgenson family was recently helped with our Asthma Remediation and Environmental Accessibility Adaptations (EAA) programs. We have helped many households that have two members, whether husband and wife or siblings, that need asthma remediation or EAA services, but this was the first case where four family members needed asthma services and two of the four needed EAA services.

The Sanchez-Jorgenson home is a multigenerational home, consisting of two children, their parents, their grandmother and their great grandmother. The two kids, their

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Client Success Story -- the Sanchez-Jorgenson Family... continued (Page 2 of 3)

mother, their grandmother and their great grandmother all have severe asthma. One of the children and the grandmother experience mobility issues and needed EAA services.

Through our Asthma Remediation program, we were able to remove and dispose of carpet and padding in three rooms and replace it with vinyl flooring or ceramic tile, remove fabric curtains and replaced with vinyl vertical blinds in multiple windows and sliding doors in the home, install mechanical ventilation in the living room and kitchen area, repair their shower pan leak with caulking and grout, install a range hood with fan in the kitchen, and dry wall patch and paint walls in two bedrooms! The Sanchez-Jorgenson family had a vent in the bathroom that technically “lead to nowhere” aka an attic space. We fixed it and terminated it through the roof for proper ventilation.

The family also received a standard and a handheld HEPA-filtered vacuums (and replacement filters and parts), a dehumidifier, two air quality monitors, two air purifiers, dust-impermeable mattress and pillow covers, dusting sprays and other green, asthma-friendly cleaning products and supplies. These items are all meant to remove or reduce environmental asthma triggers in the home, reduce symptoms and improve lung health.

Through EAA, we installed grab bars in one of the bathrooms. We will be coming back to do another assessment for more EAA installations in the second bathroom.

Although the great grandmother has asthma, she unfortunately does not have CalOptima Health insurance, which is a requirement of the program since we offer the services in partnership with the Medi-Cal health insurer for Orange County. Even so, we were still able to quadruple the Asthma Remediation benefit and double the EAA benefit for the rest of the family. Even without aid for the great grandmother from this program, of course she still can benefit from the products and installations provided.

Client Success Story -- the Sanchez-Jorgenson Family... continued (Page 3 of 3)

Even within a few weeks after the home modifications were completed, the family has enjoyed noticeable health benefits. Everyone agreed that the air quality in the home had undoubtedly improved.

“Everyone notices the difference in here,” the grandmother said. “We can all breathe easier. [Your subcontractor] told us that the air was very stale here (in the living room/kitchen area) but now there is fresh air in here.”

The family claims significantly less wheezing and sneezing. The kids’ school attendance has improved dramatically. The younger child, a daughter, typically misses about a week of school in a month, because of her severe asthma symptoms, but she has barely missed any school this past month. The elder child, a son, for the longest time had a strong “goose” cough that has now disappeared.

We are thrilled that we were able to help the Sanchez-Jorgenson family with these measures, so they can breathe more easily and live more comfortably in their home. It is amazing to see how much your home environment affects your health--even in a few short weeks! We are proud to be able to offer these much needed services in partnership with CalOptima Health and our amazing subcontractor, Greencat, Inc.