



Hot Town: Summer in the City

It has been an unusual summer, to say the least: record rainfall, earthquakes, floods, intermittent high heat and humidity, and a stressful economic situation with high gasoline and other prices. Nevertheless, it has been a rewarding time for EnergyCare and its staff.

The annual Summer Cooling Program began on May 1, realizing that there was a need to reach as many medically at-risk, low-income households as possible. This sense of urgency has remained high and our service provider staff has been working hard to protect our most vulnerable neighbors.

Service goals were set at the beginning of the Program which called for a minimum of 400 home visits, to determine client eligibility and need; a minimum of 200 air conditioners installed in medically at-risk households and at least 50 service calls to clean or exchange previously

installed units.

To July 31st, our service providers have made 438 home visits, which resulted in the installation of 194 air conditioning units and the servicing or exchanging of 67 additional units. In human terms, this means that nearly 1,000 medically at-risk low-income elderly St. Louis area residents and families with very young children are remaining safely cool and in their own homes as a result of EnergyCare's efforts to help them.

There was some concern, early on, that EnergyCare might not have enough air conditioning units available to make an adequate impact. Our concerns were alleviated, however, owing to the kindness of several of our donors, most notably First Bank (*see story below*), a generous grant from the Harold F. and Ruth Sher Care Fund of the Greater St. Louis Community Foundation, the con-

cern of our special friends, the *Angels in Action*, as well as individual donations of used and new air conditioning units at the June 21st Air Conditioner Drive at Chaminade Preparatory High School, Creve Coeur, and throughout the summer.

All of us at EnergyCare, to say nothing of our low-income, medically at-risk neighbors in the St. Louis area, are grateful to everyone who has assisted us this summer.



EnergyCare receives the donation of a new air conditioning unit at its annual Air Conditioner Drive, held June 21st at Chaminade Preparatory High School.

First Bank Assists With Cooling Units

EnergyCare and its clients were once again this summer, the recipients of a wonderful act of kindness. First Bank, Hazelwood, and its employees generously took up a collection for the purchase of new air conditioning units to be presented to EnergyCare for distribution among those who are in critical need of summer cooling.

This year, 44 air conditioners were contributed through the kindness of First Bank employees, bringing the total over the past ten years to 280 units.



Mr. Ed Furman (r), Senior Vice President First Bank, presents EnergyCare Executive Director Dennis Kelley (l) with 44 new air conditioning units for distribution among low-income St. Louis area residents.

Through this annual drive, begun by Mr. Ed Furman, Senior

Vice President in 1999, First Bank matches cash contributions by employees and purchases units which are then presented to EnergyCare. This year's presentation took place on July 8th.

EnergyCare's Board of Directors and staff are grateful to our friends at First Bank for their generosity and concern for the well-being of our low-income, medically at risk St. Louis area neighbors!



EnergyCare Mission Statement

EnergyCare promotes healthier, safer home environments and independent living by providing year-round energy-related services in St. Louis communities for low-income households with persons who are elderly, disabled, or chronically ill, and young children.

Our vision is that EnergyCare will:

- * Continually strive to meet energy-related needs of the community it serves;
- * Empower clients through education;
- * Advocate for client's needs;
- * Draw attention to the energy-related needs of the people we serve;
- * Improve our clients' quality of life by promoting efficient use of energy in the home;
- * Promote human dignity through personal interaction with the people we serve;
- * Provide services that are a model of collaboration.

We believe that EnergyCare values:

- * All people as responsible human beings;
- * Clients' desire for self-determination and independence;
- * Social responsibility, financial accountability and good stewardship;
- * Interpersonal relationships with all stakeholders;
- * Conservation of natural resources.

The People We Serve

Valerie and Susan are real people who have received assistance from EnergyCare. They are representative of the many low-income elderly, disabled, ill or very young people EnergyCare helps year in and year out. Service Provider Steve Baer describes his experience working with Valerie and Susan.

On one of the hottest days of the summer, Ken and I rolled up in front of Valerie's home in north St. Louis. Executing the tried and true routine, Ken and I did a type of "fire drill" around the van, gathering the tool box and the air conditioner. "In and Out" had become our summer slogan, and we were determined to make the installations as safe as they could be, while at the same time as quick as possible so that more of our low-income, medically at-risk clients could be reached.

We entered the second floor room, which was ten degrees hotter than outside, and began the install. Susan, Valerie's grandmother, was lying in a bed near the door and was the reason this household was qualified for a window unit. She has diabetes and also suffered a stroke which has left her both deaf and blind. She would loudly speak in phrases and words that didn't make sense to us. Valerie

told us, "She's just talkin'. It's OK."

Ken paused and asked how one might communicate with her. Valerie's eyes lit up as she held up her grandmother's hand and tapped it a couple times to get her attention. She drew lines with her finger into Susan's palm, and her grandmother was able to identify that it was Valerie who was speaking to her. "Valerie?" her grandmother asked, to which Valerie replied with one tap.

It was incredible to see how the love that Valerie and her grandmother have for each other inspired them to make up their own personal way of communicating. Especially in this day and age, when people who do have the ability to speak and listen seem to be so distant from each other, it was heart-warming to see a relationship like this one. As is so often the case, we went to help our clients, and our clients ended up helping us more than they will ever know.

Odds and Ends from EnergyCare

Energy Assistance And EnergyCare

As the cost of energy - both electricity and natural gas - rises, more and more of our area's low-income residents are feeling the effects of rate increases.

In an effort to help these most vulnerable of our neighbors remain in their homes and connected to their heating and cooling utilities, EnergyCare has sought grants from federal and local sources to help with the payment of energy bills.

Making use of funds granted through the Emergency Food and Shelter Program of FEMA as well as from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund of the City of St. Louis, EnergyCare, through the end of July, has made pledges totalling over \$36,000.00 to 168 low-income St. Louis City and County households since April of this year. In human terms, this means that more than 400 individuals have been assisted and remain safe from the effects of harsh weather and in their own

homes. EnergyCare will continue to apply for grants from federal, state and local sources so that this much needed assistance can continue to be offered to our clients in need.

EnergyCare Celebrates 25 Years

On September 1st this year, EnergyCare will celebrate the Silver Anniversary of its founding by the late Sr. Pat Kelley, CCVI. Rather than sponsor a major "event" to mark the anniversary, the Board of Directors and staff want to simply give thanks for the insight and vision of Sr. Pat, and do what they can to continue enflashing that vision through service to the underserved in St. Louis City and County.

EnergyCare owes a debt of gratitude to those in our community who share Sr. Pat's vision of service to those who, through no fault of their own, so often "fall through the cracks": the low-income elderly, disabled, homebound, those who are chronically/seriously ill, and families with very young children.

Without the assistance of our dedicated and generous donors and supporters, these past 25 years would not have been possible. We are honored to have your support and confidence in our ability to be of service to those who are in need!

New Website Launched

As mentioned in our spring newsletter, EnergyCare's website has been updated and given a new and fresher look. It also includes several new features including the ability to donate to EnergyCare online, using the popular "PayPal" feature.

Other features include links to energy-related websites and other resources, a guestbook, an on-line "assistance request" for our clients, descriptions of volunteer opportunities as well as access to helpful brochures and articles.

Stop by, sign the guestbook and check out the updated website!

Simply use your computer to go to:

www.energycare-stl.org



Spotlight On Our Volunteers

EnergyCare is fortunate to have the support of many volunteers throughout the year. Without the help of such dedicated volunteers, we wouldn't be able to reach as many people as we do. One such volunteer group is the **Volunteer Plus Program of the St. Louis County Office of Family and Community Services**. The mission of Volunteer Plus is to find meaningful volunteer experiences for adults with developmental disabilities.

Jim Laughlin, the coordinator for this program, says that the volunteers in the group feel good about

being able to contribute to the community. Volunteer Plus has been working with EnergyCare for four years now, providing help to staff at critical times.

Recently, eight different Volunteer Plus sites volunteered for EnergyCare. The volunteers ranged in age from 23 to 96 - once again proving that people of all ages and abilities can contribute to their community. For more information about either individual or group volunteer projects, please contact

EnergyCare at (314) 773-5900 or contact us by e-mail at: developmentdept@sbcglobal.net

*Volunteers
expand the
possibilities*

EnergyCare Accredited By BBB

In April of this year, EnergyCare was awarded the Wise Giving Alliance Standards for Charity Accountability seal by the Better Business Bureau of Eastern Missouri and Southern Illinois. What this means is that EnergyCare voluntarily submitted documentation on its organization and fundraising practices and meets all 20 of the accountability standards developed by the Better Business Bureau dealing with how a charity governs its organization; the ways in which organization money is spent; in the truthfulness of the organization's representations; and in its willingness to disclose basic information to the public.

The Standards for Charity Accountability were developed to assist donors in making sound giving decisions and to foster public confidence in charitable organizations. The standards seek to encourage fair and honest solicitation practices, to promote ethical conduct by charitable organizations and to

advance support for philanthropy.

The Standards for Charity Accountability were developed with professional and technical assistance from representatives of small and large charitable organizations, the accounting professions, grant making foundations, corporate contributions officers regulatory agencies, research organizations and the BBBs. The BBB Wise Giving Alliance also commissioned significant independent research on donor expectations to ensure that the views of the general public were reflected in the standards.

The overarching principle of the BBB Wise Giving Alliance Standards for Charity Accountability is full disclosure to donors and potential donors both at the time of solicitation and thereafter. The standards also recommend ethical practices that go beyond the act of disclosure in order to ensure public confidence and to encourage giving. As voluntary standards, they also go beyond the requirement of local, state and federal laws and regulations.

EnergyCare is honored to have been awarded this seal of accreditation!

Views From The Executive Director

On a hot day in late July, I came up from the basement where I had been inspecting and cleaning window air conditioners prior to their distribution to the needy in the St. Louis community. I was met by our development department staff and informed that "strange sounds" had been emanating from the direction of the four ton condensing unit in the rear of the EnergyCare building. The air on the east side of our offices felt warm and slightly humid. It was apparent that the EnergyCare staff on that side of the building did not have the benefit of air conditioning.

Tom Gardner, our development director, and I headed out to the rear parking lot. After a quick field inspection I confirmed the obvious—the compressor was not working. I called our local HVAC contractor and, fortunately for our staff, they were able to send a technician out within the hour. Sweating and straining for about a half hour in direct sunlight, Brian was able to install a temporary measure that brought the compressor back on line. For the short term, a cool environment had been restored to the EnergyCare offices. Sadly, the long term diagnosis was that the 16 year old unit needed to be replaced as soon as possible.

This was one of those times in life when the phrase "Physician Heal Thyself" echoed in my brain. While it is unclear whether or not a routine, spring air conditioner inspection and tune-up would have prevented the temporary outage, I still felt that we had dropped the ball by not ordering a check-up on our cooling system prior to the onset of summer heat. At the very least, we know better.

I would urge you to have your heating system checked this Fall prior to the arrival of winter's cold. Being without heat in January, as you know, is something that can be avoided. Similarly, a cooling system inspection, scheduled for next Spring, can keep you cool next summer without interruption. Believe me, it's already on my work calendar for 2009!

As always, thank you for your continued concern and generosity.



This seal ensures donors that EnergyCare is responsible and ethical in its fundraising practices.



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Improving lives by degrees

Remembering EnergyCare in your Will helps us continue to provide our services to low-income St. Louis area residents for years to come.

Since the last issue of **The Connection**, EnergyCare has received memorial and tribute gifts honoring the following:

Memorials

Ralph Amelung
 Ryan M. Arnold
 Hosea Atwater
 Aloisia Bartolowits
 Mr. and Mrs. Raymond E. Bauer
 Virginia B. Bramman
 William P. Bumberry
 Aimee Burns
 Arthur Campbell
 Vincenza Carosello
 Sarah Elizabeth Coleman
 William H. Dahman
 Larry L. Dolan, Sr.
 Benjamin C. Downs
 Sister Adela Eiken
 Catherine G. Fuhr
 Lorraine Gass
 Gilbert A. Gennari
 Humbert Ghio
 Marie Globig
 Ted Godar
 Joseph Grams, Jr.
 Richard and Rosemary Hagerty
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JoAnn Chott Hatley
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 Lyle R. Jeffers
 Robert Kaiser
 Lucille Kaiser
 Dick Keefe
 Sister Patricia Kelley, CCVI
 Mary Carolyn Klotz
 Stella and Edward Koziatek
 Joseph and Frances Laramie
 Mary Lischko
 Marian Loida
 Robert and Virginia May
 Clifford M. McNames
 Leo and Ida Meyer
 Elmer A. Meyer
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 William and Edith Murray
 Michael J. Murray
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 Loretta Pinkston
 Norbert Quante

George C. Rankey, Jr.
 Jack and Karen Ann Richards
 Sister Ann Julia Roddy, CSJ
 Michael and Anna Schmidt
 Florence & Valentine Schodroski
 Norma and Walter Schuchardt
 William Shelley
 Mary Ann Sitek
 Jane and Mary Jo Sumner
 Jean M. Toombs
 Lee A. Tyson
 Michael and Anna Vogel
 Rachel, Wife and Mother

Pierre Lauzon
Recovery
 In Honor of EnergyCare's
 25 Years of Caring
 United Hebrew Congregation
 Religious School Students

Birthdays:

Elmer H. Austermann
 Howard Elliott, Jr.
75th Birthday
 Jack O'Brien
5th Birthday
 Sheldon Hoffman
 Connie Sorkin's new grandson

Anniversaries:

Mr. & Mrs. Don Bradford
25th Wedding Anniversary
 Msgr. John Shamleffer
25th Ordination Jubilee

General Tributes:

Thanksgiving for a cool house
 Thanksgiving for blessings
 Special Intention

Tributes

Individual Tributes:

Dorothy Hoffman
 Roy Bohley
 Archbishop Raymond Burke
His support for Life
 Stanley T. Bjurstrom
Father's Day
 Joseph J. Destito
Father's Day
 Mrs. Ann Steinbrueck
Mother's Day