



Winter's Rollercoaster Hits St. Louis... EnergyCare Responds

We have seen 60 degree daytime highs moving to night-time lows approaching zero, in a period of about two days; spring-like weather to arctic cold. Such has been the winter of 2008-09 in St. Louis.

Determined to protect as many low-income elderly, homebound, disabled and ill St. Louis residents as possible, EnergyCare service providers began contacting potential clients in early September to see if they would be interested in receiving home weatherization services to prepare for the winter.

Weatherizing a home for winter is an easy way to not only eliminate the potential for cold air infiltration into the living space, but it is also a way to help conserve energy and cut energy bills. As implemented by EnergyCare service providers, the process consists of using low-cost materials - vinyl sheeting fastened into self-adhesive channels, door sweeps and caulking - to seal windows, and air leaks around door and window framing to prevent the potentially dangerous infiltration of cold air. Once the sources of the air infiltration have been eliminated, the weatherized room becomes noticeably warmer. Additional components of the weatherization are, as needed in individual circumstances, the distribution of blankets and small portable electric heaters to ensure that the household members are kept warm and

safe during the cold of the winter.

By September 30th, service providers had already conducted 43 home visitations to assess household needs and completed two home weatherizations. During this time they also distributed an additional six weatherization kits to households where there was an able-bodied person who could do the weatherization.

EnergyCare's Winter Warming Program began on October 1st, and volunteer groups were contacted to assist with the home weatherization program. Students from several area high schools and universities volunteered their time on Saturday mornings, from October to February, to assist in home weatherization for elderly clients. We are also privileged to have a group of students who come during the week, twice a month, to perform weatherization services. We are extremely grateful to these students for their time and their efforts which have effectively extended EnergyCare's ability to be of service to those who are in need.

Another necessary task which has been accomplished by volun-

teer groups is the assembly of the "do-it-yourself" home weatherization kits. Volunteers have assembled over 200 of these kits, to date.

An additional component of the Winter Warming Program, available to low-income, elderly home owners, is the arrangement for the minor repair of malfunctioning furnaces. So far this winter, EnergyCare has helped eleven elderly homeowners get necessary repairs made to their furnaces, to keep them functioning efficiently and safely.

EnergyCare is proud to say that the efforts of our service providers and volunteers have had an impact on our low-income neighbors in the St. Louis area. To the end of December, alone, service providers and volunteers have made 414 home visits, performed 69 home weatherizations, distributed more than 165 weatherization kits, 139 heaters and more than 180 blankets. In human terms, these services have touched the lives of nearly 1,000 individuals, who now will remain safely warm for the remainder of the winter.

While effort and dedication has been important in helping to reach these outcomes, none of it would have been possible without the financial assistance of many individuals, corporations and foundations. Thank you for your confidence in us to be of service, and your generosity in giving us the means to do so!



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

Ms. Wendy is a real person who has received assistance from EnergyCare. She is representative of the many low-income elderly, disabled, ill or very young people EnergyCare helps year in and year out. Service Providers Jana Lakebrink and Claire Ewersmann describe their experience working with her.

Shortly before Thanksgiving, we received a call for assistance from Ms. Wendy, a single mother with three children, the youngest of whom is three years old. Owing to the high volume of calls, though we were not able to visit her until early December.

Ms. Wendy lives in north St. Louis City, and has been out of work since she was laid off from her job as a housekeeper at a local hotel in August.

Wendy was eager to find ways to keep her energy bills down. Despite her best efforts, however, she was falling behind on her electric bill, and was afraid her power was going to be disconnected. As her natural gas was already disconnected, this would have left her with no way to heat her home.

Although the weather was relatively mild when we visited her, we noticed that the house was very cold. After she told us about the difficulties she was having to cope

with, we gave Ms. Wendy a space heater and a weatherization kit for her windows, so that she and her children would at least have a little more protection from cold drafts and some additional warmth in the home.

When we returned to the office, we discovered that we would be able to assist her with her electric bill, using funding from the St. Louis City Affordable Housing Trust Fund. This pledge along with the space heater and weatherization materials we provided her, allowed Ms. Wendy and her children to have a warm and happy Christmas.

Ms. Wendy was extremely grateful to EnergyCare for the help we were able to give her. When we called to inform her that we had paid her electric bill, she could not say "Thank You" enough times, and nearly dropped the telephone in excitement. Our time working with Wendy and her children made all of our holidays merrier!

Did You Know That...

In November, the students and staff of John Burroughs School invited EnergyCare to make a presentation on its history and mission at one of their regular assemblies. Following the presentation, they honored their retiring Head Master, Dr. Keith Shahan, by making a donation to EnergyCare, his designated charity, in the amount of \$1,030.00.

Students of John Burroughs School honor Dr. Keith Shahan with a contribution to EnergyCare.



As of January 30th, the Fifth Annual **Blanket St. Louis** blanket drive has brought in over 627 new and gently used blankets for distribution among low-income residents of St. Louis City and County.

Among the participants in this year's drive were Incarnate Word Academy, Our Lady of Providence Catholic Church, Webster Groves

Presbyterian Church, Elliot Chapel of Kirkwood and First Bank, Hazelwood. We offer our thanks and gratitude to everyone who has participated to to this point.

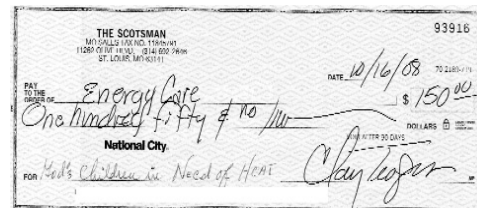
While originally scheduled to end on December 31, the **Blanket St. Louis** drive has been extended to the end of the Winter Warming Program on March 31. If you, your social group, church or organization would like to participate, simply collect new or clean, gently used, blankets (*the kind you wouldn't mind your mother or grandmother using*) and bring them to EnergyCare's offices Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., or contact us to arrange for a pickup time.

In December, the Jewish Student Union of Washington University held an event in celebration of the Festival of Channukah, with the theme of "Lighting Up the Night." Co-sponsoring the event were various community service groups from Washington

University, including: the Alliance of Students Against Poverty, Feed St. Louis and Alpha Phi Omega.

Lighting Up the Night took the form of a casino night and featured live jazz music, food and a raffle with many great prizes. EnergyCare is honored to have been designated the recipient of the proceeds from the event!

In October, one of our donors decided to celebrate EnergyCare's 25th in a special way. Having inherited some silver coins from her aunt, she decided to sell them and donate the proceeds to EnergyCare to provide a little "extra" for our clients: silver to celebrate a Silver Anniversary! We appreciate her thoughtfulness!





Spotlight On Our Volunteers

EnergyCare is so very fortunate to have a corps of dedicated volunteers who assist us in many different ways. They help with the weatherization of our clients homes, with the assembly of weatherization kits, with labeling, stuffing and sealing our various mailings. Without our volunteers, we would be hard pressed to accomplish what we have to this point in our history.

We would like to thank several groups and individuals who, over the past several months, have “pitched-in” to help extend EnergyCare’s reach into St. Louis City and County’s low-income communities. Special thanks go out to the students of **Southview Service Learning Center** and their teacher, **Gloria Rodgers**, who assisted by helping to prepare our winter

appeal mailing and to **Mr. Ray Hood**, who worked tirelessly to ensure that our fall newsletter went out at the proper time.

We also want to thank student groups from **John Burroughs School**, the **University of Missouri, St. Louis, CBC High School**, and **Villa Duchesne/Oak Hill School** who assisted in the direct weatherization of our clients’ homes, and to student groups from **Washington University** and **Maryville University**, as well as **Joe, Dan, and Tim Catanzaro**, who assembled home weatherization kits for distribution among EnergyCare clients.

We are indebted to all of you and appreciate your efforts in helping us to extend our ability to be of service to those in need. MANY THANKS!!

Ways You Can Help EnergyCare

EnergyCare is a private, unaffiliated, non-profit agency and must rely on the generosity of its friends and benefactors, as well as the general public, in order to provide its often life-preserving services to its low-income clients.

While EnergyCare has two main, seasonal programs, the services provided to the low-income community continue throughout the year.

There are a number of ways that our friends can help us to provide for the energy-related needs of the low-income community:

1. Put a stamp on your return envelope. Although we include a donation envelope in each of our mailings, the Post Office charges EnergyCare **50 cents** for each donation received in our return envelopes. In truth, your stamp is an additional gift to EnergyCare!

2. Consider becoming a Monthly Donor to EnergyCare. We will send you a supply of return envelopes. Once a month, write your check - or note your **credit card number and expiration date** in the space indicated on the return envelope - and drop it in the mail.

An easier way is to **become a monthly donor using our Electronic Funds Transfer program.** In this way, you determine an amount that

is taken from your checking or savings account each month, in a bank-to-bank transfer, for as long as you choose. This is perhaps the safest and easiest way of making a gift to EnergyCare.

3. Become an EnergyCare volunteer. With a small staff, there are always a variety of activities, ranging from office assistance to direct service to clients, for which volunteers provide valuable and needed help. Check our website (www.energycare.org) for a full listing of opportunities.

4. Make an on-line donation to assist EnergyCare’s efforts. While you are reading the latest news from EnergyCare on our website (*see web address above*), you can make a donation using the secure PayPal option, or your credit card. All donations are acknowledged by mail.

5. Remember EnergyCare in your Estate Planning. A final gift, through your will, by means of an insurance policy, or through designation as a beneficiary of a Trust can help to assure that EnergyCare and its programs will be available to those in need for years to come!

For additional information, please contact EnergyCare’s Director of Development, Tom Gardner, at (314) 773-5968 x 23, or email him at:

tom@energycare.org

Views From The Executive Director

I want to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for your gift to EnergyCare during 2008. I think your concern and generosity have been exceptional given the uncertain times in which we live.

Your most recent gift allows us to continue to assist those who are among the poorest of the poor in our community. Many of these families walk a financial tightrope. When the cost of food, gasoline and utilities fluctuate, they, in turn, teeter on the brink of disaster.

Some of the families we assist are comprised of working parents with school aged children. Some are extended families that include not only dependent children, but older adults who can no longer live independently. By contrast, some families are headed by grandmothers raising another generation and forgoing their leisure years.

Many young mothers and fathers labor daily at low-wage service jobs to put food on the table. Some have learned the lesson that the last one hired is often the first one fired—that is, laid off because of a sluggish regional economy.

Some individuals we assist are out of the job market due to advanced age or physical disability. They subsist on low, fixed incomes in the form of their monthly social security or disability check.

Your generous gift, delivered to these families as weatherization materials, blankets, heaters or home heating bill payments, is a beacon of hope. Your concern, conveyed by an empathetic EnergyCare service provider or an eager, young volunteer, is a reassuring message for an over-burdened older adult.

I know they would thank you personally if they could. That’s why I’m doing it for them. **Thank you for your continued concern and generosity.**



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Remembering EnergyCare in your Will today helps to provide our services to low-income St. Louis area residents tomorrow.

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

Memorials

Elva and Eugene Anderson
Ryan M. Arnold
Aloisia Bartolowits
Mr. and Mrs. Raymond E. Bauer
Sandra Benedict
Thomas and Pearl Bill
Carolyn Anne Bjurstrom
Edwin Bolesta
Audrey M. Bothe
Mr. Dale Brooks
Arthur Campbell
Frank and Carmel Cavataio
Theresa B. Conran
Pat and Mike Cusick
Mary C. Cusick
Lou DiGiacomo
Larry L. Dolan, Sr.
Eileen Doyle
Roy and Rita Dreiling
Floyd and Anna Ellis
Emma
Charles and Anna Falk
Deceased of the Huck and Kinsella Families
Deceased of the Flanagan Family
Catherine G. Fuhry
Gilbert A Gennari
Mary Ghio
Deceased of the E. P. and K.L. Gibbons Family
Jane Giles
Melvin Giles
Joseph Grams, Jr.
Paul Guetschow, Sr.
Fred and Mary Guilbault
Dick Hammer
Walter H. Hansman
Roger L. Hantak
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Robert Kaiser, Sr.
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John and Arline Keefe
Joseph and Ruth Kelley
Tom Kelley
Sr. Patricia Ann Kelley, CCVI
Joan C. Kemp
Edward Kessell
Donald Knebel
Timothy Korobey
Edward and Stella Koziatek
Joseph and Frances Laramie
Edwin Lawrence
Gene Leonard
Helen and Sidney Levine
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Don Ottersbach
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Paul Quante
John and Bertha Quinlan
George C. Rankey
Dr. Edward H. Reinhard
Jack and Karen Ann Richards
Sr. Anne Julia Roddy, CSJ
Margaret Roseman

Diane Rothermel
Michael and Anna Schmidt
John A. Solari
Jim Swanston
James P. Sweney
Jane Thole
Jean Marie Toombs
Gladys, the mother of Jeanne and Ken Truemper
Edward and Florence Weseman
Donald J. Weyerich
Louis and Viola Wright
"Sissy"

Tributes

Christmas Greetings:

Sr. Mary Geraldine
Dr. William K. Hall
Matt Leonard
Luke and Charlotte Meatte
Mark Meatte
Lorraine Thompson
Charles and Alice Todt

Birthday Greetings:

Thomas F. Hilgeman
Mrs. Jackie Kriegshauser
Chris Lamkin
Dan and Julie Rupp ~ *40th Birthday*
Vinsel Donald Scrivner ~ *96th Birthday*

Special Tributes:

Bishop Robert J. Hermann ~ *Support for Life*
Rev. Michael J. Lydon ~ *Ordination Anniversary*
Dr. Keith Shahan ~ *Retirement*
Todd and Julie Lazarus ~ *"Just Because"*
Mitzie Lynch
In Honor of Divine Providence