



### BRANCH COUNTY

1. Department of Human Services.....517-279-4200
2. Branch County Community Action Agency.....517-279-9325
3. Salvation Army.....269-651-4275
4. Veterans' Trust Fund.....517-279-4322 (ask for Veterans' Affairs)
5. THAW.....800-866-8429

### CALHOUN COUNTY

1. Department of Human Services.....269-966-1284
2. Calhoun County Community Action Agency.....269-965-7766
3. Salvation Army.....269-966-4162
4. Veterans' Trust Fund.....269-969-6735
5. THAW.....800-866-8429

### HILLSDALE COUNTY

1. Department of Human Services.....517-439-2200
2. Hillsdale County Community Action Agency.....517-437-3346
3. Salvation Army.....517-437-4240
4. Veterans' Trust Fund.....517-437-3630
5. THAW.....800-866-8249

### LENAWEE COUNTY

1. Department of Human Services.....517-264-6300
2. Lenawee County Community Action Agency.....517-263-7861
3. Salvation Army.....517-265-2038
4. Veterans' Trust Fund.....517-264-5335
5. THAW.....800-866-8429

### MONROE COUNTY

1. Department of Human Services.....734-243-7200
2. Monroe County Opportunity Program.....734-241-2775
3. Salvation Army.....734-241-0440
4. Veterans' Trust Fund.....734-240-7359
5. THAW.....800-866-8429

### MUSKEGON COUNTY

1. Department of Human Services.....231-733-3700
2. Muskegon County Community Action Agency.....231-725-9499
3. Salvation Army.....231-773-3284
4. THAW.....800-866-8429

### OTTAWA COUNTY

1. Department of Human Services.....616-844-1200
2. Ottawa County Community Action Agency.....800-764-4111, ext. 5697
3. Salvation Army.....616-842-3380
4. Veterans' Trust Fund.....616-399-1023
5. Love, Inc.....616-846-2701
6. Coopersville Cares.....616-997-8602
7. THAW.....800-866-8429

### ST. JOSEPH COUNTY

1. Department of Human Services.....269-467-1200
2. St. Joseph County Community Action Agency.....269-467-7051
3. Salvation Army.....269-651-4275
4. Veterans' Trust Fund.....269-467-5557
5. THAW.....800-866-8429

### VAN BUREN COUNTY

1. Department of Human Services.....269-621-2800
2. Van Buren CAA.....800-968-3905
3. We Care, Inc.....269-637-4342
4. Veterans of Foreign Wars.....269-673-0501
5. The Robert Warren Center (Seniors).....269-637-3607
6. Salvation Army (St. Jude's).....269-628-2219  
(For Gobles & Blomingdale only)
7. THAW.....800-866-8429

NOTE: The Veterans' Trust Fund and Soldiers & Sailors assistance is available only to those who served in the military during war time.

## Contact Us

Michigan Gas Utilities wants to help you manage your monthly energy bills. If you are experiencing payment difficulties, please call us at **800-401-6402**. For emergencies or loss of gas, customers can call anytime 24 hours a day, every day at **800-401-6451**. TTY/TDD (Hearing Impaired) Billing/Service 7:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. For more information about energy use and managing energy costs, visit us at [michigangasutilities.com](http://michigangasutilities.com).

## Home Heating Help Is Available

### Winter Protection Plan

**Contact: Michigan Gas Utilities at 800-401-6402**

The Winter Protection Plan protects **eligible senior and low-income customers** from service shut-off and high utility bill payments during the winter months (November 1 through March 31).

If you're an eligible low-income customer who participates in the Winter Protection Plan, you will not have service discontinued during the winter months if you pay at least 7% of your estimated annual bill each month, plus 1/12 of any past due bills.

If you're an eligible senior citizen customer who participates in the Winter Protection Plan, you are not required to make specific payments between November 1 and March 31 to ensure that your service will not be shut off. However, you are encouraged to pay as much as you can during the winter so you will not have large, unmanageable bills when the protection period ends.

When the protection period ends (March 31), you will need to pay the full monthly bill plus a portion of the amount owed from the winter months.

**You qualify for the plan if you meet one of the following requirements:**

- Are age 65 or older
- Receive Department of Human Services cash assistance
- Receive Food Stamps
- Receive Medicaid
- Have a household income at or below 150% of poverty level (see Income Guidelines)

## Winter Protection Plan

Annual Income Guidelines (2008-2009)

Number of Household Members	150% of Poverty Guidelines Maximum Income
1	\$15,600
2	\$21,000
3	\$26,400
4	\$31,800
5	\$37,200
6	\$42,600
7	\$48,000
8	\$53,400

Add \$5,400 for each additional household member.

## 2008 Home Heating Tax Credit

Contact: Michigan Department of Treasury at 800-367-6263 or [www.michigan.gov/treasury](http://www.michigan.gov/treasury)

You can apply for a Home Heating Credit for the 2008 tax year if you meet the income guidelines listed below.

If you qualify, the Home Heating Credit (HHC) provides assistance to help pay for your winter heating bills. Eligible customers must meet the standard credit income guidelines or alternate guidelines based on household income, exemptions and heating costs.

Exemptions	Income Ceiling
1	\$11,443
2	\$15,415
3	\$19,386
4	\$23,329
5	\$27,301
6	\$31,242
For each exemption over 6, add \$3,971.	

You may claim an exemption for yourself, your spouse and other dependents. Additional exemptions are available for seniors, disabled customers or customers with 50% or more of their income from unemployment compensation.

The Home Heating Credit claim form must be filed with the Michigan Department of Treasury before September 30, 2009. Forms are generally available wherever other tax forms are provided. You can also call the Michigan Department of Treasury or visit them on the Internet at [www.michigan.gov/treasury](http://www.michigan.gov/treasury).

## 2008 Earned Income Credit

Contact: U.S. Treasury Department, Internal Revenue Service

The Earned Income Credit (EIC) is a refundable federal income tax credit for low-income working individuals and families who meet certain requirements and file a tax return. Those who qualify will owe less in taxes and may get a refund. Even people who do not generally owe income taxes may qualify for the EIC, however they must file a tax return to do so. If they are married, they must file jointly to qualify. Form 1040 or 1040A, with the EIC form attached, is needed to file.

If you are raising a qualifying child in your home in 2008, you may also be able to receive part of the credit in your paycheck during the year with Advance EIC. Form W-5 is available from employers or by calling 800-TAX-FORM.

## Crisis Assistance Program

Contact: Michigan's Department of Human Services (DHS)

### State Emergency Relief Program (SER)

You do not have to be a client of the DHS to apply for help through the SER. This program is available year-round to low-income households that have a heat or electric shutoff notice or a need for deliverable fuel. However, if you receive a DHS cash grant, you may vendor part of that grant towards heat and electric bills. A DHS caseworker can offer information on the advantages of vrending a cash grant.

## Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program

Contact: Local Community Action Agency

The Weatherization Assistance Program provides free home energy conservation services to eligible low-income homeowners and renters. Weatherization may include caulking, weatherstripping, insulating and smoke detectors.

## Medical Emergency Protection

Contact: Michigan Gas Utilities at 800-401-6402

You are protected from service shut-off for nonpayment of your natural gas and/or electric bills for up to 21 days if you have a proven medical emergency. You must provide written proof from a doctor that a medical emergency exists.

## Shut-off Protection for Customers on Active Duty in the Military

Contact: Michigan Gas Utilities at 800-401-6402

If you are or your spouse is the Michigan Gas Utilities' customer of record and either of you is called to full-time active military service by the President of the United States or the Governor of Michigan during a time of declared national or state emergency or war, you may apply for shut-off protection from your electric or natural gas service for up to 90 days. At the end of the active duty period, you must notify your utility company of your status and make payment arrangements.

## Local Assistance Agencies

If you are unable to pay your utility bills, you may be eligible to receive assistance. The county Department of Human Services should be contacted first. If they are unable to assist, then another agency in the county can be contacted. Based on income and/or family size, you may be eligible for refunds from these programs:

- Michigan Home Heating Credit Claim
- Earned Income Credit
- Michigan Homestead Property Tax Credit Claim (renters may qualify)

### ALLEGAN COUNTY

1. Department of Human Services.....269-673-7700
2. Allegan County Resource Development Committee .....269-673-5472 or 800-368-7856
3. Christian Neighbors.....269-694-4775
4. Veterans' Trust Fund.....269-673-0501
5. Salvation Army.....616-392-4461
6. THAW.....800-866-8429

### BARRY COUNTY

1. Department of Human Services.....269-948-3200
2. United Way .....269-945-4010
3. Community Action Agency .....269-948-4260
4. Love Inc/Salvation Army.....269-948-9555
5. Veterans' Affairs .....269-945-1296
6. Commission on Aging.....269-948-4856

### BERRIEN COUNTY

1. Department of Human Services.....269-934-2000
2. Community Action Agency .....269-925-9077
3. Salvation Army.....269-927-1353
4. Catholic Human Services .....269-926-6424
5. Soldiers & Sailors, Don Olivia.....269-983-7111 ext. 8118
6. Veterans' Trust Fund, Dale Jones .....269-983-7111 ext. 8510
7. Area Agency on Aging (Seniors).....269-983-0177
8. Potawatomi Indians .....269-782-8998
9. THAW .....800-866-8429