



Utilities Not Included



Bruce Grey Utility Programs

What are “utilities”?

Utilities

Regulated

Electricity

Natural Gas

Unregulated

Furnace Oil

Propane

Cord Wood

Wood Pellets

Municipal Sewer & Water

Not Utilities

Cell phones or telephone

Internet

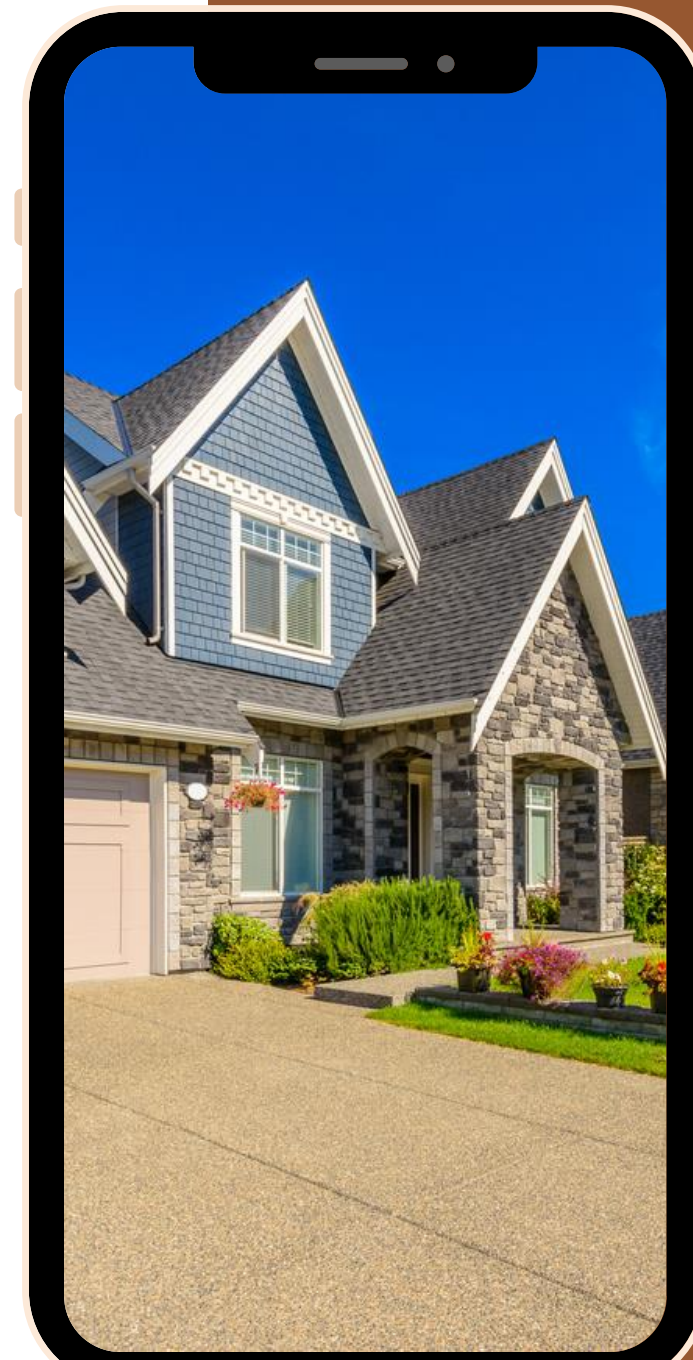
Cable-Streaming

Tenant Insurance

Property Taxes

Hot water tank rentals

Car payments



Agenda



Electricity &
Natural Gas



Propane, furnace oil
Cord wood & pellets



Rules &
guidelines



electricity

Dates to remember

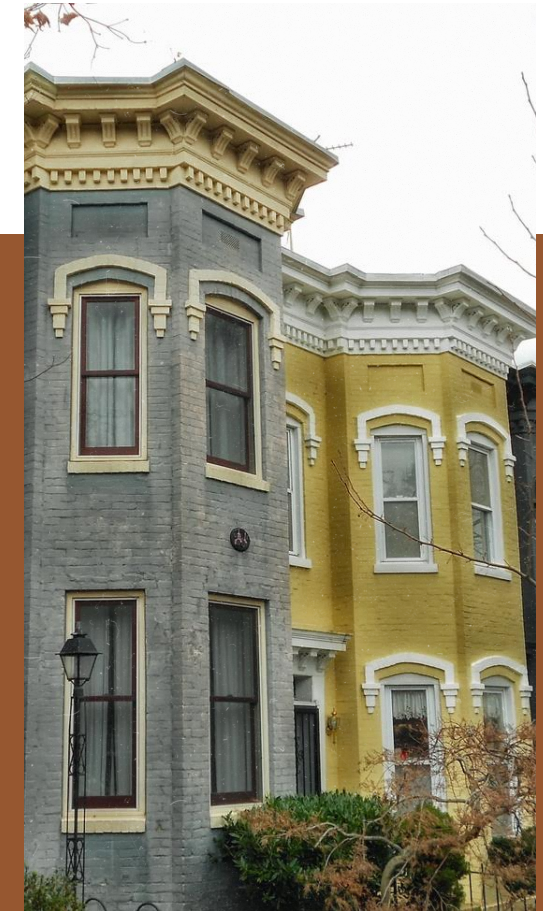
May 1st

winter disconnection ban ends

November 15th

winter disconnection ban begins

People still need to pay the bills
through the winter!





Utility Language

Disconnection

Can only be used if an actual disconnection can happen as per disconnection rules. Language is specific.

Interruption of services

This is the “threat” of pending disconnection – if you don’t pay, you may experience an interruption in services

Estimated bills

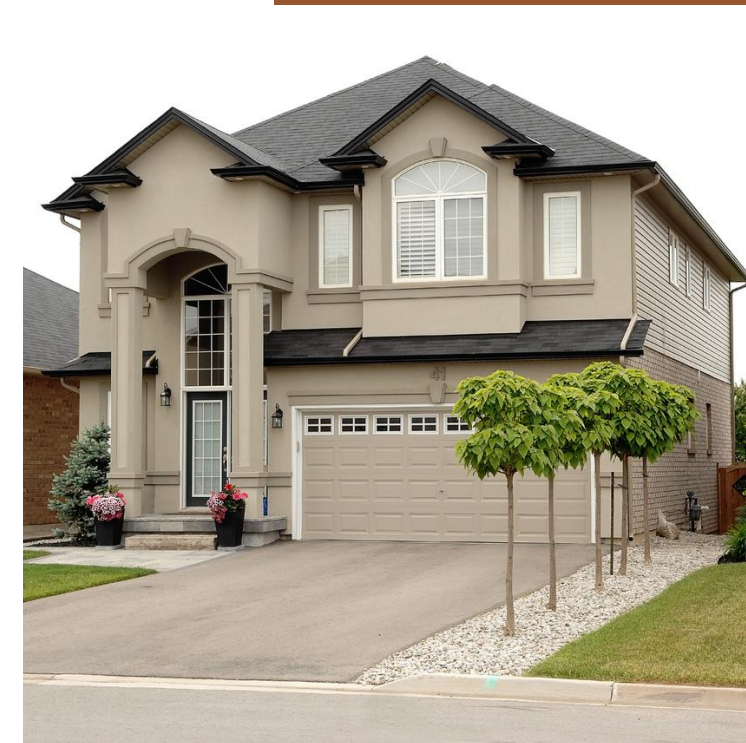
Not really a ‘thing’ for electricity

Utility Program Guidelines

Utility bills **must** be in the applicant's name.
Outstanding amounts ~~must~~ **should** relate to the current address, not the previous address.

Can own or rent the property

Must meet income guidelines and **sustainability**.



LEAP – Low-income Energy Assistance Program

Hydro One: Will pay up to \$650.00 every 12 months (Jan-Dec) on an electricity bill. If you *heat* with electricity, it is \$780.00.

Call 1-855-487-5327 to register first.

Westario Power: Will pay up to \$650.00 every 12 months (Jan-Dec) on an electricity bill. If you *heat* with electricity, it is \$780.00.

Funds are processed by **Bruce County Housing**, regardless of location, **800-265-3022**



LEAP Income Guidelines

Household after tax income (\$)	Number of people living in home						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Less than 38,000	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
38,001 - 54,000		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
54,001 - 65,000			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
65,001 - 71,000					✓	✓	✓



LEAP Increase



Grants for LEAP applicants increased March 1st 2024

from \$500 to \$650.00 every 12 months (Jan-Dec)

If you *heat* with electricity, it went from \$600 to \$780.00

If an applicant received \$500 in January, they can apply for the extra funds, if they have the arrears.

LEAP pays **ARREARS** only

Outstanding bill: \$375, current charges \$150, total owing = \$525: LEAP will only pay the \$375

Outstanding bill: \$675, current charges \$150, total owing = \$825: LEAP will only pay the \$650

Equal Billing

Generally renews in July

Is great for people with stable incomes

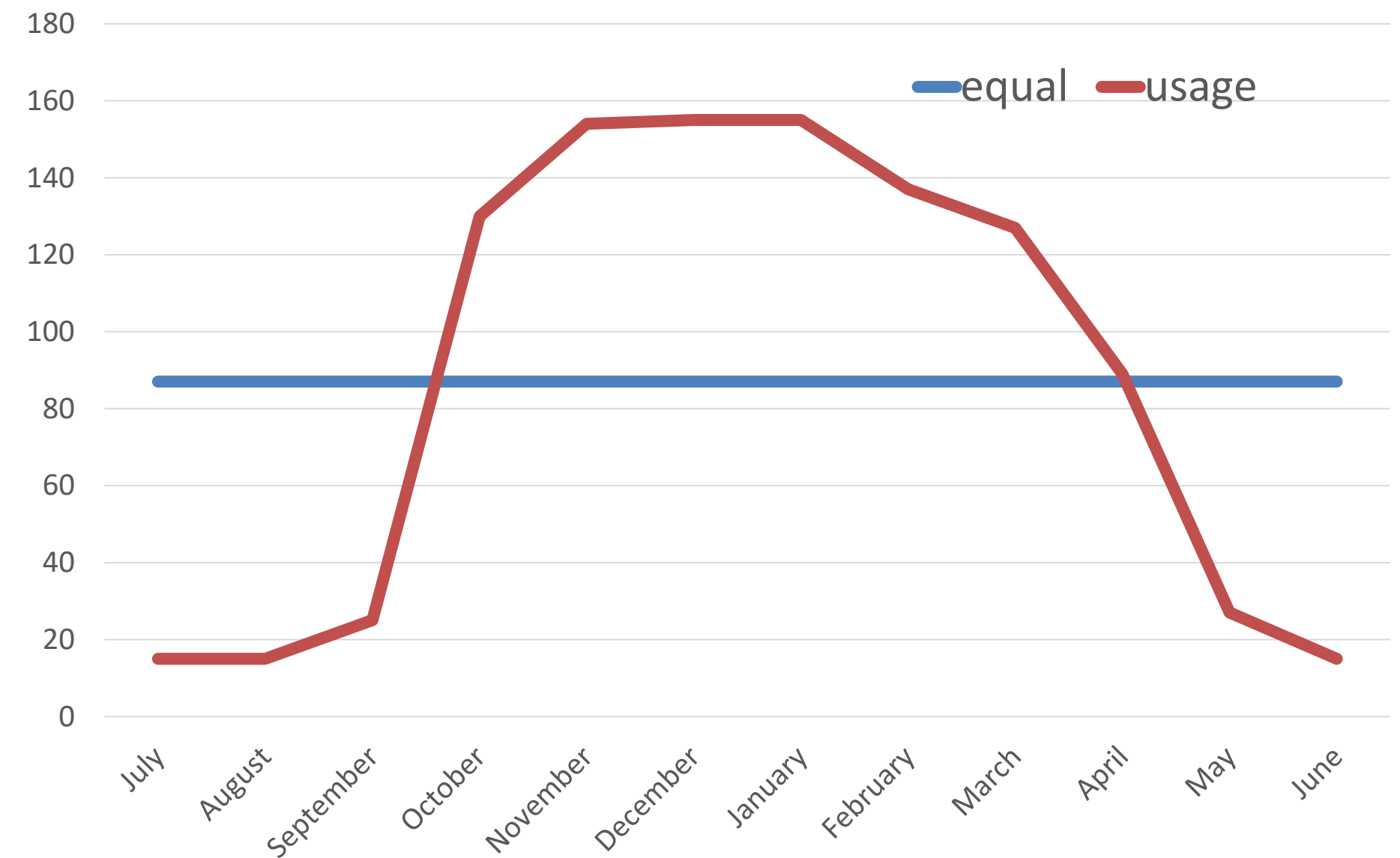
Utility literacy is needed

Understanding the weather impact is needed

'Budgeting' for LEAP

Banking tip

You can pay as many times a month as you wish!



The monthly payment is based on the past year of energy use at the address.

GIANT bills

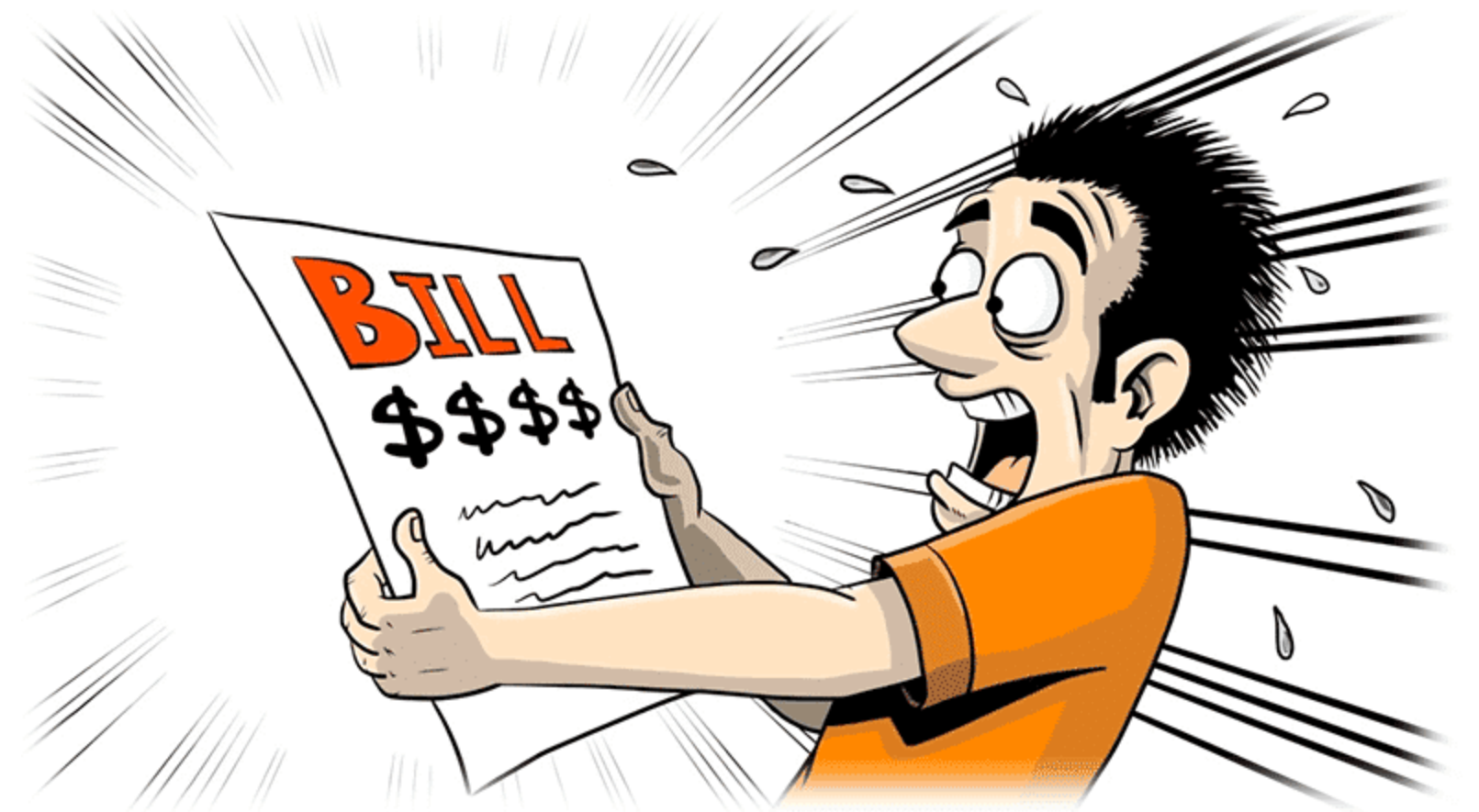
Bills exceeding \$2 000 are a challenge
Can spread the arrears over 18 months with
advocacy from an agency
Must pay the arrears AND the current usage

Owes	\$ 2,237.00
Over 18 months	\$ 124.28
Monthly usage	\$ 129.00
new monthly bill	\$ 253.28

The ESA

Electrical Safety Authority

- Inspection required after 6 months or more of disconnection
- There is a fee for the inspection
- Only in the Bruce Grey region on Tuesdays



Household Supports

County-based programs that are income-tested

Generally once per 12-24 months

Sustainable Housing Benefit (Grey County): The County offers a grant to help with emergency housing needs including critical repairs, rent arrears, utility costs, etc. Call 519-376-5744.

Housing Stability Fund (Bruce County): The County offers a grant to help with emergency housing needs including critical repairs, rent arrears, utility costs, etc. Call 1-800-265-3022 or 519-396-3450





What is a “suite meter”?


Suite meters (unit sub-meter) are electrical meters that a landlord can install in residential rental units to measure how much electricity each unit uses

Where a suite meter is installed in a unit, the meter records **only** the amount of electricity used by that specific unit.

NOT included in the winter disconnection ban, customer service rules are under Landlord Tenant NOT the Ontario Energy Board

LEAP applications can be processed by the providing electricity distribution company.

What is a “suite meter”?



Each unit has its own meter and is billed with full usage and all fees explained on the bill

Hydro One or Westario power meter to the building

Suite meters are electrical meters that a landlord can install in residential rental units to measure how much electricity is used by each unit in a building. Where a suite meter is installed in a unit, the meter records only the amount of electricity used by that specific unit.



Who can help?

NOT included in the winter disconnection ban, customer service rules are under Landlord Tenant NOT the Ontario Energy Board

LEAP applications can be processed by the **supplying** electricity distribution company.

Hydro One supplies the building – LEAP intake

Westario Power supplies the building – Bruce County Housing processes application

May need to coach client as intake staff will not recognize the suite meter company names and decline to support. Lots of new staff.



OESP

Ontario Energy Support Program: O.E.S.P.: Low income households can now receive a monthly credit on their Hydro Bill of at least \$35.00. The credit will continue for 2 to 5 years, depending on income and age. To apply online, visit: <https://ontarioelectricitysupport.ca/>.

The United Way of Bruce Grey can also assist you with the application process.

If applicant is up to date on taxes, and can **PRINT** a document, they can do the application themselves.

Don't qualify based on last year's taxes BUT income has changed – UWBG can 're-state' income and do an application

Applicants can build up a credit – it's not refundable, but if careful and low usage, can get to "free electricity"

No equivalent for natural gas...yet



OESP Income Guidelines

Household Size (Number of people living in household)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7+
\$28,000 or less	\$45	\$45	\$51	\$57	\$63	\$75	\$75
\$28,001 – \$39,000		\$40	\$45	\$51	\$57	\$63	\$75
\$39,001 – \$48,000			\$35	\$40	\$45	\$51	\$57
\$48,001 – \$52,000					\$35	\$40	\$45

The new income thresholds, effective March 1, 2024, are as follows:

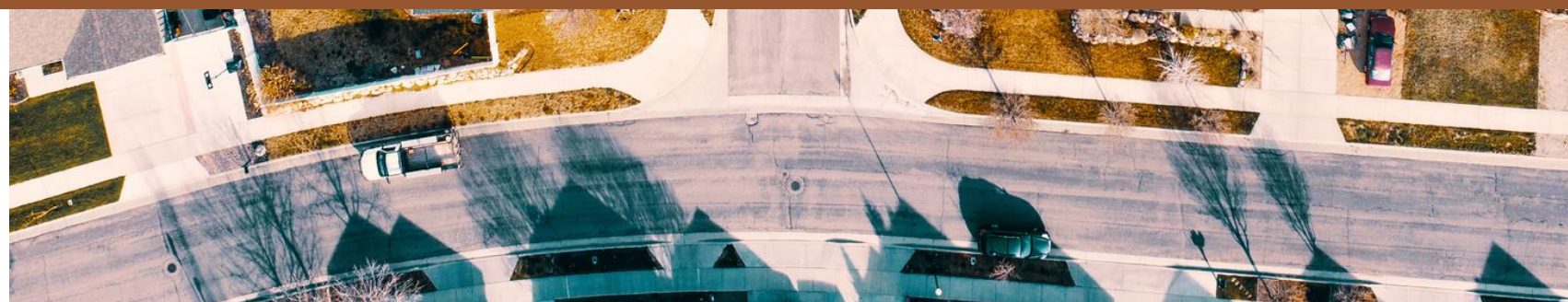
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\$38,000 or less	\$45	\$45	\$51	\$57	\$63	\$75	\$75
\$38,001 – \$54,000		\$40	\$45	\$51	\$57	\$63	\$75
\$54,001 – \$65,000			\$35	\$40	\$45	\$51	\$57
\$65,001 – \$71,000					\$35	\$40	\$45





Question Break

wait what?



natural gas



Dates to remember

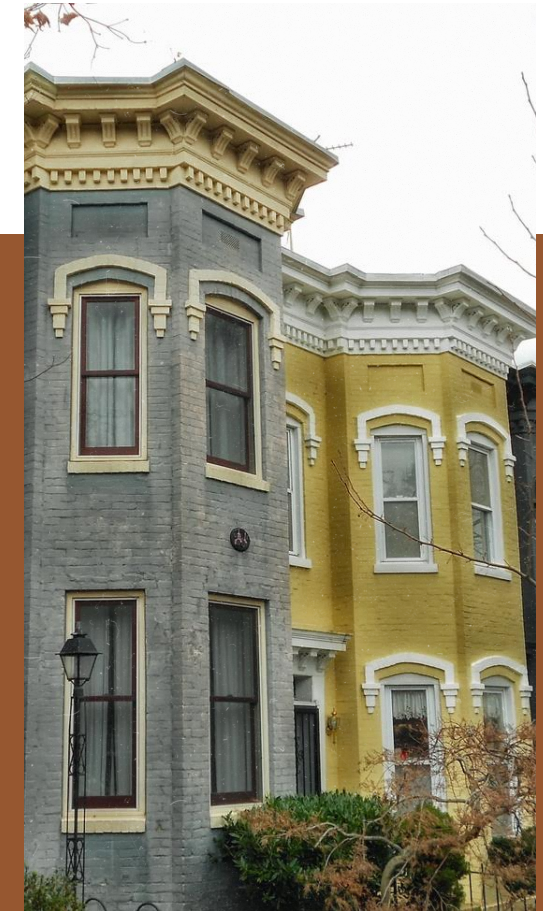
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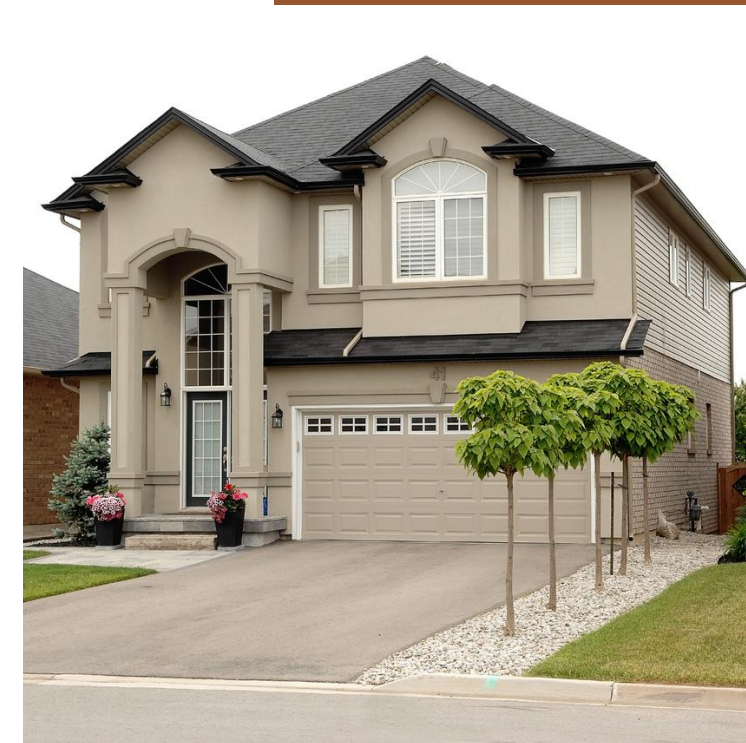


Utility Program Guidelines

Utility bills **must** be in the applicant's name for electricity and natural gas. Outstanding amounts ~~must~~ **should** relate to the current address, not the previous address.

Can own or rent the property

Must meet income guidelines and **sustainability**.



LEAP –

Low-income Energy Assistance Program

LEAP – Enbridge: Will pay up to \$650.00 every 12 months (Jan-Dec) against an Enbridge bill.

LEAP – EPCOR: Kincardine (southern Bruce) Natural gas provider
Will pay up to \$650.00 every 12 months (Jan-Dec) against an Enbridge bill.

Call 1-855-487-5327 to register first.



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Equal Billing

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Is great for people with stable incomes

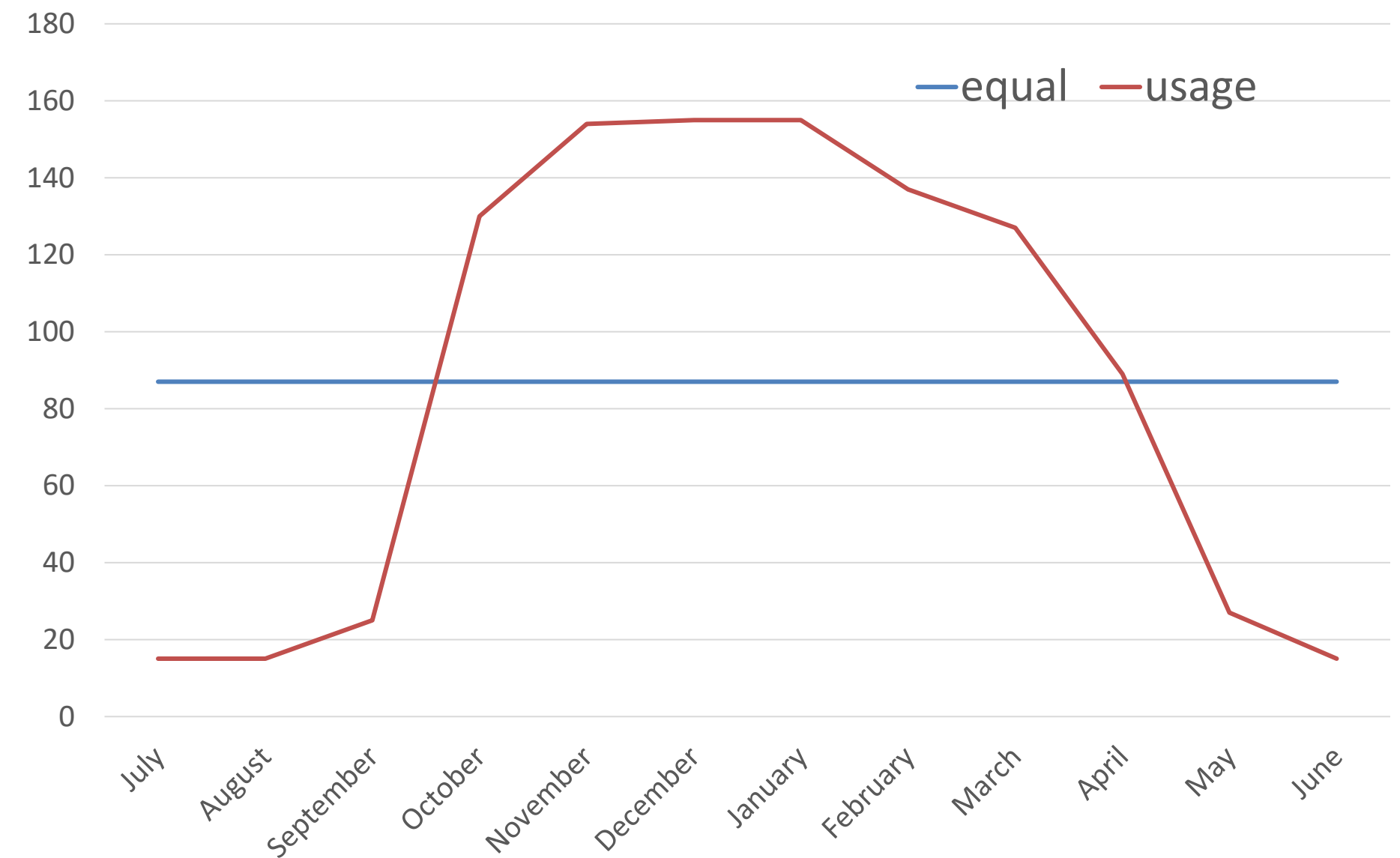
Utility literacy is needed

Understanding the weather impact is needed

‘Budgeting’ for LEAP

Banking tip

You can pay as many times a month as you wish!



The monthly payment is based on the past year of energy use at the address.

Other Issues

Utility companies can go as long as 4 months using estimated billing.

Not an issue for most electricity

A problem for Enbridge

Can result in BIG catch-up bills from under estimating usage

HIRE ME



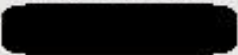
SMELL GAS? 1-866-763-5427

For Inquiries: 1-877-362-7434 enbridgegas.com
Make Payments to: PO Box 644 Scarborough, ON M1K 5H1
Enbridge Gas Inc.

UNITED WAY OF BRUCE GREY
380 9TH ST E
OWEN SOUND ON N4K 1P1

Service Address
380 9TH STE OWEN SOUND ON N4K 1P1

Account Number



Bill Date
Dec 13, 2023

WHAT DO I OWE?
Billing Period Nov 14, 2023 - Dec 11, 2023

Total Amount
\$336.00
(Taxes Included)
Due Date
Jan 02, 2024

EMPP Installment

• See page 2 for details •

HOW MUCH GAS DID I USE?

Meter Reading

Meter Number:
Estimated:
Previous:

5988
5691

You used	This cost you
839m³ approx. 29.96m ³ per day	\$419.10 approx. \$14.97 per day

Did you know?

Your average daily use is less this year than last year. Choose eBill to access your last 24 bills: enbridgegas.com/ebill

991m³
2022

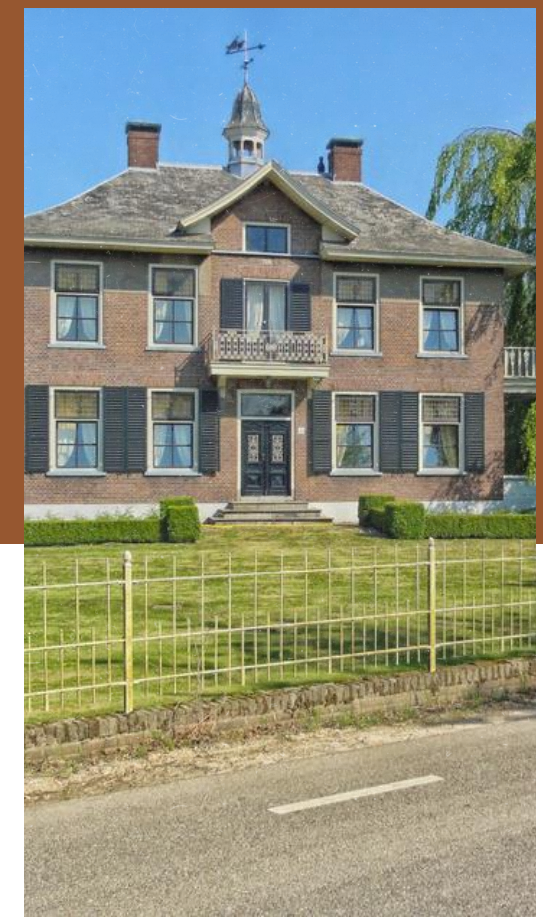
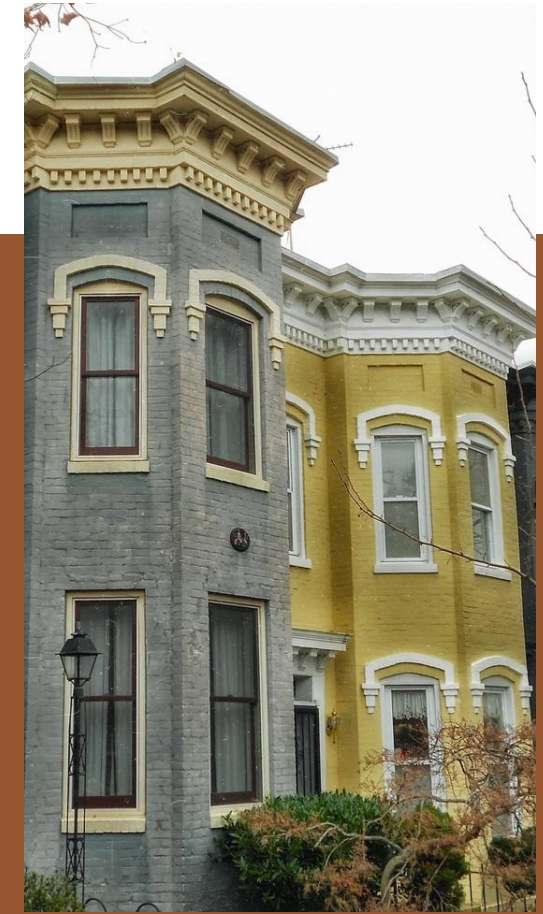
839m³
2023

Helping clients navigate all of this!

- Do not leave it to the last minute
- Pay what you can, when you can
- Budget for supports
- 211 knows all
- There are regulations, they do have to follow
- Life stabilization funding **MAY** help with utilities

Other changes

- Westario would run out of funds, no longer allowed to “run out of funds” (\$25 000)
- UWBG paid an additional \$11 725 (2019–2023) for Westario bills



Who makes the rules?

The Ontario Energy Board is Ontario's independent regulator of the **electricity and natural gas sectors**. They protect consumers and make decisions that serve the public interest. Their goal is to promote a sustainable and efficient energy sector, for today and tomorrow.

Set guidelines and parameters for the LEAP program

Consumer Complaints

Try and work it out first with the company

By phone 1-877-632-2727
publicinformation@oeb.ca

FAWG

The Financial Assistance Working Group is responsible for developing guidelines relating to the delivery of emergency funding to low-income energy consumers.

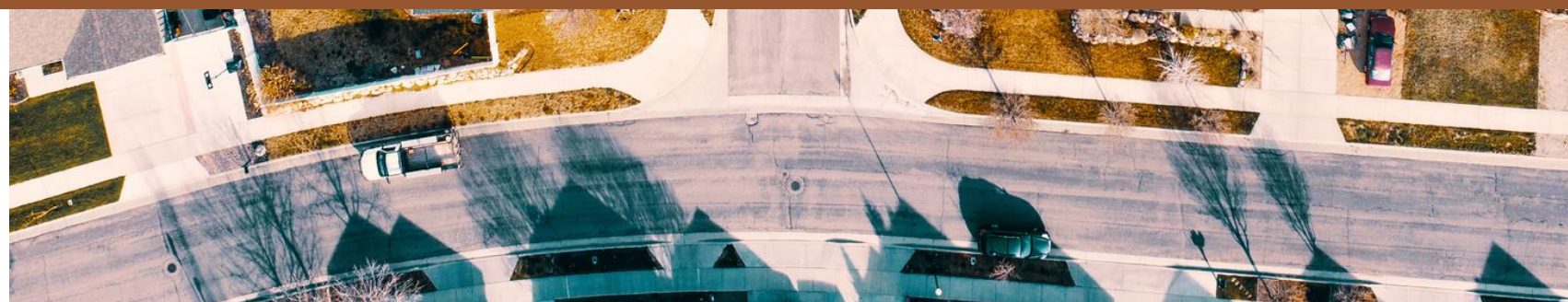


**ONTARIO
ENERGY
BOARD**



Question Break

wait what?





Water and Sewer Arrears

Meaford: disconnects renters and owners

Owen Sound: disconnects renter

Other Municipalities:

Owners: adds the outstanding to the property tax bill

Renters: collection activities, may invoice the landlord -> could result in justification for eviction

Paying bills monthly helps a lot.

A leaky toilet or water pipe – Owen Sound has a one time forgiveness, must prove the problem was fixed

United Way Utility Program Guidelines

Can own or rent the property

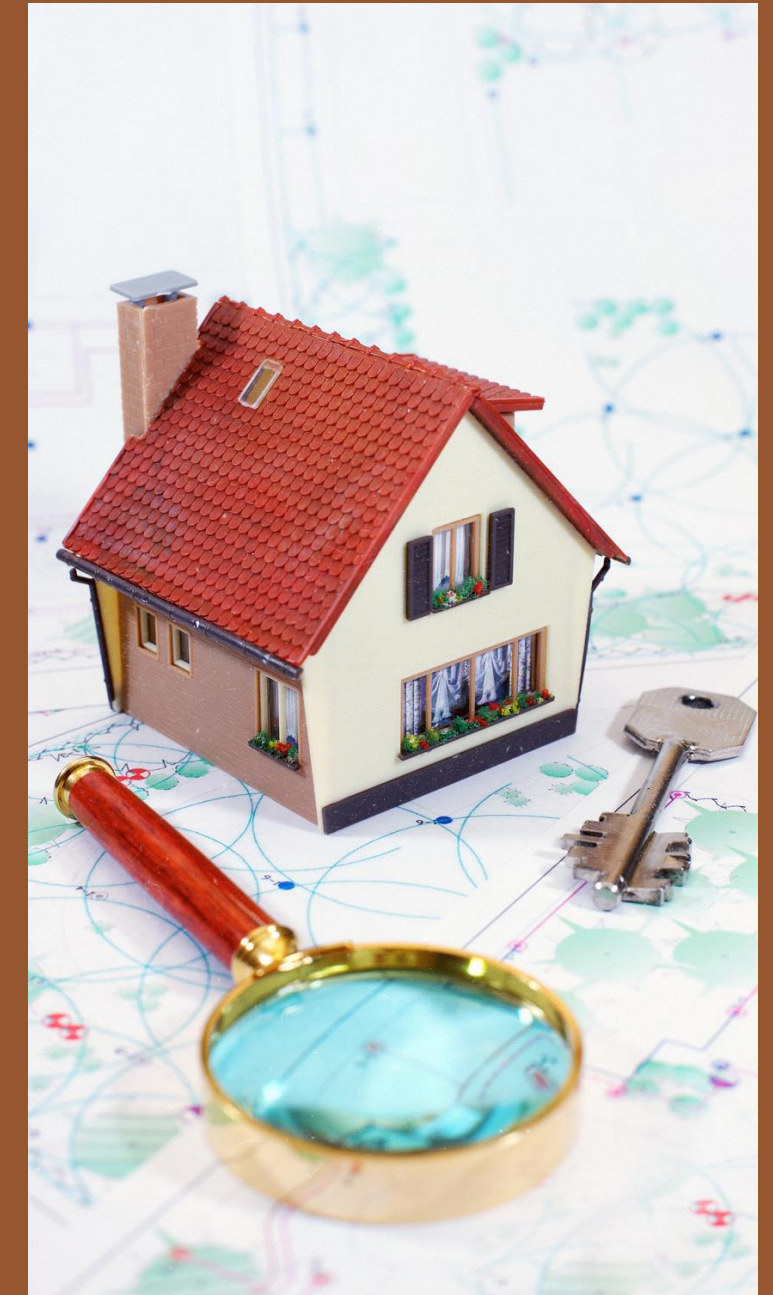
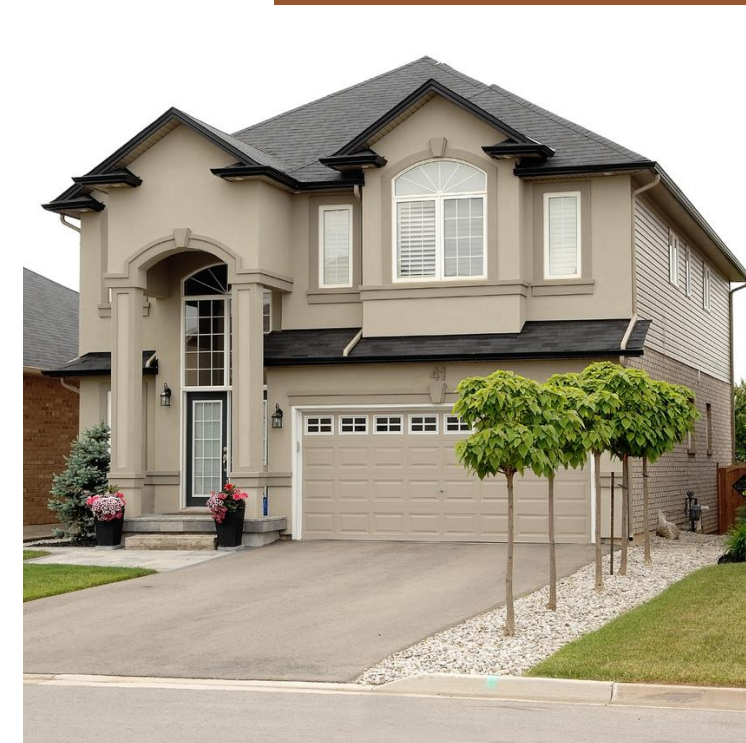
Must meet income guidelines, same as LEAP, with
circumstantial 'wiggle room'

UWBG will consider a lease that has supply in a
landlord's name or other extenuating
circumstances

Pays up to \$500 once July to June every 12 months

Owen Sound and Meaford **ONLY**

Call 211 to apply





Household Supports

County-based programs that are income-tested

Generally once per 12-24 months

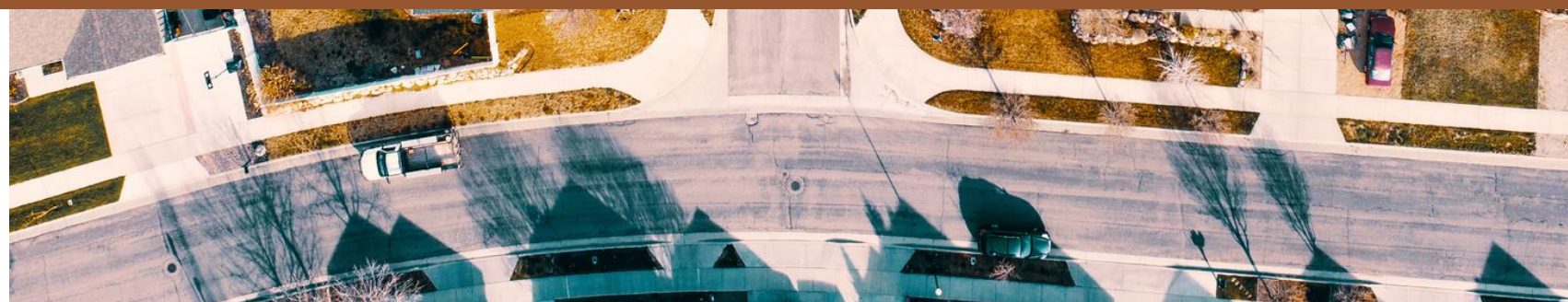
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Question Break

wait what?



The image features a close-up, top-down view of a large pile of wood pellets. The pellets are small, cylindrical, and light brown in color, with some showing darker, charred ends. They are scattered across a dark, textured wooden surface. On the right side of the image, there is a white, stylized graphic of a flame or fire, which is partially cut off by the edge of the frame. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image, to the left of the flame graphic.

Wood pellets

Wood

Propane

Furnace oil

United Way Utility Program Guidelines

Can own or rent the property

Must meet income guidelines, same as LEAP, with
circumstantial 'wiggle room'

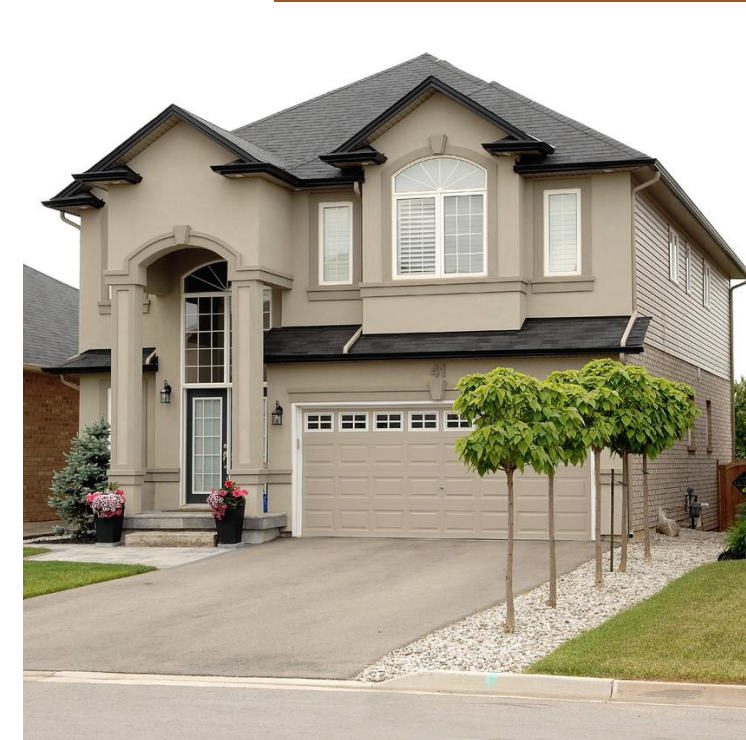
Furnace oil, propane, cordwood or pellets:

Call 211 to apply

UWBG will consider a lease that has supply in a
landlord's name or other extenuating circumstances

The program does not pay arrears – buys the 'truck'

Cord wood – please call 211 in July – often run out by
February





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NEW! – ODSP Life Stabilization funding MAY support help with utilities if worrying about utilities interferes with getting a job

Quirks of heating

Propane:

The company owns the tanks

One company cannot fill another company's tanks

Some companies "lock in" price in the fall – good credit

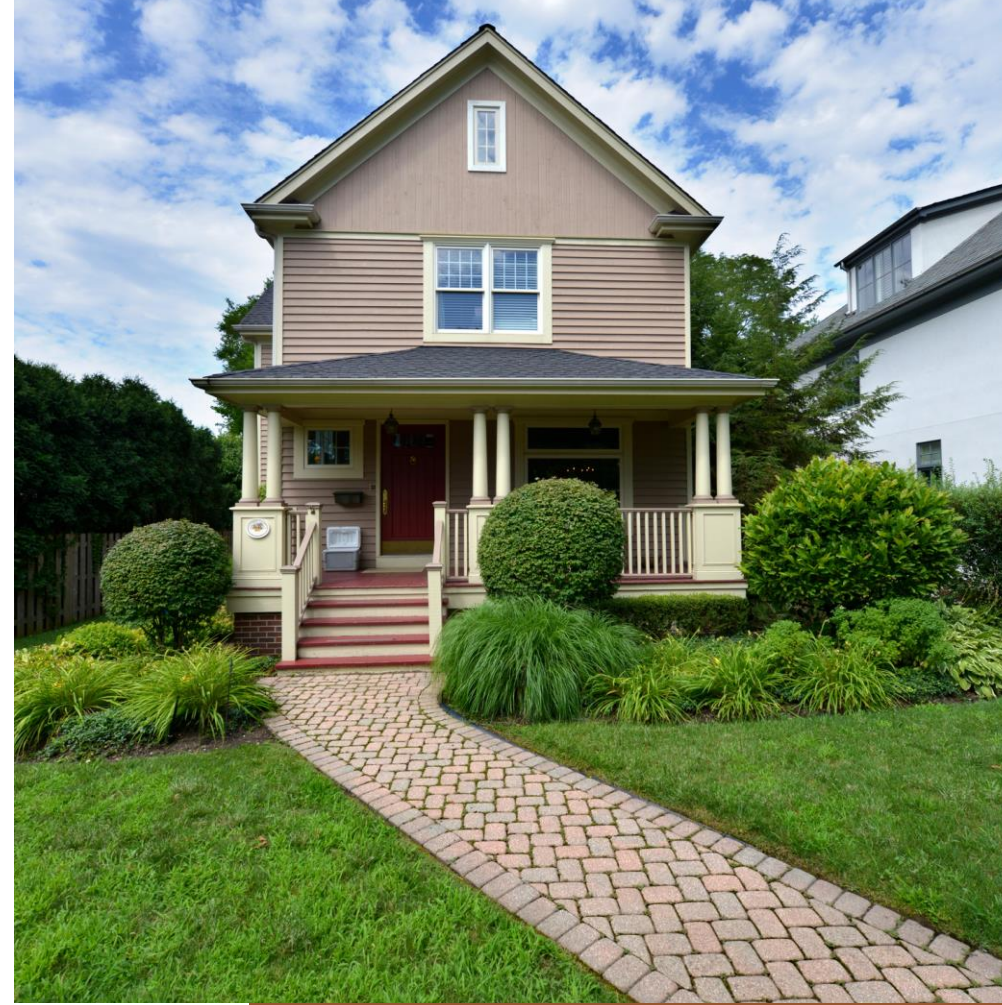
Buyers groups in certain geographies to lock in price

Furnace Oil

The homeowner owns the tank

Inspections required

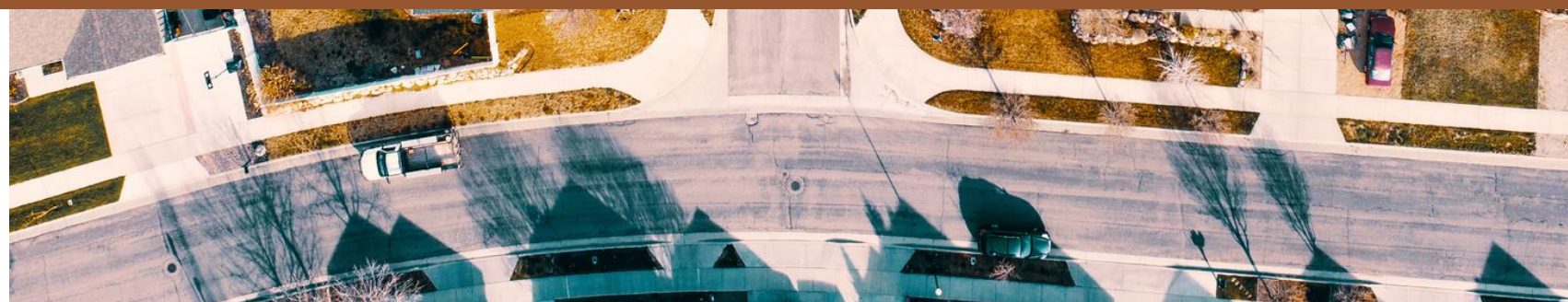
If company 'hopping' inspection needs to be on file





Question Break

wait what?





**Repairs &
prevention**

Household Supports

County-based programs that are income-tested

Repairs

Ontario Renovates: For Homeowners – Both Counties offer a grant to help with major critical home repairs and/or renovations such as roofing, heating, plumbing etc. Call 1-800-265-3022 or 396-3450 in Bruce or 376-2208 in Grey. **Cannot be behind in property taxes!**

Application made **BEFORE** expenses incurred – funds are limited, renews April 1st annually



Scam and fraud alert!

Save on Energy does not endorse door-to-door sales. Only authorized delivery agents can deliver our programs and will never show up unannounced.

Enbridge Gas has discovered a suspected scam where fraudsters have created fake Enbridge Gas websites with false contact numbers. The scammers impersonate Enbridge Gas contact centre agents and trick callers into providing them with personal information such as credit card, account balance and other payment information over the phone claiming to pay their gas bill (sometimes at a discounted rate) but instead use the information for their own malicious purposes.

Enbridge Gas does not offer discounts on natural gas bills, take credit card payments over the phone, and we would not require verification of customer banking information to access your gas account. Make sure you call **1-877-362-7434** for questions about your bill.

Visit our the Enbridge Gas website for more information and tips to protect yourself from potential scams.



Energy Affordability Program

The Energy Affordability Program provides support to income-eligible electricity consumers by helping them to better manage their monthly electricity costs and to increase their home comfort.

There are two types of support available through the Energy Affordability Program: **Comprehensive Support** and **Energy Saving Kits**.

People who live in Ontario (including those living in grid-connected First Nations communities) and are responsible for paying their monthly electricity bill as a homeowner or as a renter may qualify for this program.

1-844-770-3148



Landlords

A landlord cannot turn off a tenant's utilities to penalize them for failure to uphold any responsibilities they hold as a tenant, such as payment of rent or maintaining the condition of their rental unit.

Key duties of a landlord include keeping rental units fit for habitation in compliance with health, safety, housing, and maintenance standards, and ensuring a reasonable supply of utility services.

Tenant's responsibility

Pay rent and utilities as outlined in a lease

Landlord's responsibility

Vital services capital assets:

Heating system (furnace, baseboards etc)

Oil tanks

Repairs within a reasonable time frame



Is there any financial help
for my utility bills?

Just Dial 2-1-1

 DIAL 2-1-1

 211 Ontario

 United Way
Centrale de

Ontario 



Keeping people connected to their utilities

Electricity

Households: 69
\$37,495 provided in grants

Natural Gas

Households: 30
\$14,443 provided in grants

Keeping People Warm

Furnace oil

Households: 43
\$28,580 provided

Propane

Households: 70
\$38,899 provided

Wood

Households: 113
\$77,223 provided

Adults: 382
Kids: 198
Seniors: 79

Impact

659 people in 327 homes
received assistance

Summary

Total grants: \$204,038
Total households: 327
Average income: \$20,255
July 1st 2022-June 30th 2023



United Way
Bruce Grey
Change starts here



Questions

wait what?

