



HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (HEAP) MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR MONEY

Following are three suggestions to help you better manage your finances:

1. **SET GOALS:** All members of the family should have a chance to say what they think is important to spend money on. Then it must be decided which things are most important and should go at the top of the list. Things less important should go at the bottom. This is called setting priorities. It helps the family members to cut out spending money in wasteful ways in order to be able to get the things they really want.
2. **START PLANNING:** Ask yourself:
 - a) Where is the money coming from? (Include all sources)
 - b) How often does it come in? (Weekly, monthly, yearly)
 - c) What do we have to spend it on? (Rent / mortgage, utilities, food, transportation, clothing, laundry, child care, etc.)
3. **MAKE ADJUSTMENTS:** If your monthly balance is short, changes should be made. Hold a family meeting and ask each one how they can help balance expenses against income. When you start having money left over each month, put it in a savings account until there is enough to do what everyone wanted to do when the goals were set. If you stick with it, your money will do more for you than you ever dreamed!

FINALLY. A broad rule-of-thumb concerning the use of income:

- ✓ No more than 70% of net income should be spent on living costs
- ✓ No more than 20% of net income should be spent on credit payments
- ✓ No more than 10% of net income should be spent on yourself (savings, recreation, etc.)

For example, in dollar terms that means:

With a \$1,500 monthly net income

\$1,050 for living costs
\$ 300 for credit payments
\$ 150 for "yourself"
\$1,500 total net income

HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (HEAP)
CHECKLIST OF ENERGY EFFICIENT PRACTICES

TO KEEP WARM DURING THE WINTER AND TO MAKE SURE YOUR FURNACE OPERATES EFFICIENTLY:

- X Put on extra layers of clothing.
- X Keep furnace thermostat set at 68° degrees or lower during the day.
- X Turn the furnace pilot off in the summer time.
- X Never use your oven or range to heat your home.

TO AVOID WASTING HOT WATER:

- X Take short showers rather than baths.
- X Use cold or warm water rather than hot water whenever possible.
- X Set the hot water heater at 120° degrees or medium.
- X Turn the gas hot water heater to pilot or the electric water heater to off whenever your home will be vacant for more than two days.

IF YOU HAVE ANY PROBLEMS WITH YOUR GAS HEATING APPLIANCES, CALL THE GAS COMPANY. THEY WILL CHECK YOUR APPLIANCES AT NO CHARGE.

TO SAVE ON THE COST OF COOKING:

- X Don't preheat oven because ovens reach the right temperature quickly.
- X Never open the oven door during the cooking process.
- X Cover pots and pans when cooking. It helps keep heat in and allows food to cook faster.

TO KEEP COOL DURING THE SUMMER:

- X Keep inside shades and draperies closed during the day to keep the sun out.
- X Set air conditioner temperature at 78° degrees or medium.

TO SAVE MONEY EVERYDAY OF THE YEAR:

- X Turn off all lights when not in use.
- X If you leave a room for more than 5 min., turn off the lights.
- X Don't leave the refrigerator door open any longer than absolutely necessary.
- X Keep refrigerator defrosted so it will work more efficiently.
- X Put full loads in washer and dryer, using cold water wash and rinse most of the time.
- X When using a dishwasher, only wash full loads and let the dishes air-dry.
- X Turn off appliances when not in use.