



DOA Local Government Report

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Resources for Propane

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On January 25, Governor Walker declared a State of Emergency in response to the propane shortage that has impacted Wisconsin this season. The declaration puts all state agencies on alert to be prepared to assist as needed in response to the cold weather snap and propane shortage. Following the declaration, the Governor has:

- Directed the Department of Administration's Division of Energy Services to release an additional \$7 million in Crisis Benefits to counties and tribes that have households who use propane to heat their homes. The state will make funds available in anticipation of receiving additional federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funds that were included in the recent federal omnibus budget bill. This was in addition to the \$1.5 million that was released for Energy Benefits.

- Instructed the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) to move forward with \$5 million loan guarantee program. WEDC will provide loan guaranties to banks up to 80% of new or expanded lines of credit to propane dealers in Wisconsin. As wholesale prices rise in the Midwest, propane commercial retailers have exhausted their current lines of credit to meet their customer's rising demand for propane.

- Directed the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) to proceed with \$3 million loan guarantee program. WHEDA will provide loan guaranties to banks of 50% of a total loan for dealers to purchase propane, but not to exceed \$50,000 guarantee amount. This will require approval by WHEDA's Members Loan Committee. WHEDA expanded the program to include small businesses impacted by propane supply/price – with a \$25,000 cap.

The Governor has also been proactively seeking help from the federal government to mitigate this and any future occurrences.

What Citizens Can Do

1. Call the non-emergency number of your local sheriff's department if you need the location of a local warming shelter or other local resources. As always, call 911 for an emergency.
2. Check on friends, neighbors and loved ones to ensure everyone has a warm place to stay.
3. Call toll-free 1-866-HEATWIS (432-8947) for information about where you can purchase propane in your area, or to apply for assistance towards your propane heating bill. To apply for heating assistance through the WHEAP program, go to www.homeenergyplus.wi.gov. Your local agency will determine eligibility for heating benefits based upon your household income, size, and the home's heating costs. If you are eligible, the WHEAP program will make a payment directly to your fuel supplier towards the cost of your propane. These benefits are available through May 15, 2014. Your local agency will also determine if you are eligible for Crisis Benefits.
4. If you leave your home for an extended period, turn off the water and drain your pipes to ensure they pipes do not freeze in your absence.
5. If you need assistance with your pet, please call your local warming shelter/human services agency as some warming shelters also offer pet shelter.
6. Please donate to the Keep Wisconsin Warm Fund (KWWF) to help those impacted by the crisis. Credit card donations accepted online at www.kwwf.org/donate or by phone at 608-333-0809.