

# EnergyLines

November 2003

VALUABLE CUSTOMER INFORMATION



## Dear Customer,

Winter weather is here, and with it comes our increasing reliance on electricity and natural gas to keep us warm, brighten our day, and make us comfortable and safe.

The federal government has predicted an increase in energy prices – particularly natural gas prices – this winter. Although NYSEG’s natural gas **delivery** prices are frozen, you pay the market-based **supply** price for natural gas you use. This market-based price is determined by supply and demand. NYSEG makes no profit on natural gas **supply**.

While we cannot predict what will happen with market-based energy prices, we can give you ideas to help you manage your energy costs this winter – and throughout the year.

In past issues of *EnergyLines* we’ve written about the three factors that affect your energy bills: **delivery** cost, **supply** cost and how much energy you use, which is largely due to weather.



Look for this symbol for helpful energy information!

In this and future issues of *EnergyLines*, we’ll bring **information about energy prices and use** to your attention **with the symbol to the left**. For even more information about how to stay warm this winter while staying within your energy budget look for this symbol at [nyseg.com](http://nyseg.com).

James Laurito  
President, NYSEG

▶ A note about the market price of natural gas: While NYSEG’s natural gas **delivery** prices are frozen, the changing market-based price of the natural gas you use (**supply**) accounts for more than half of your natural gas bills. To put market-based **supply** prices in context, natural gas that has been purchased for consumption during the coming heating season cost about double what it did at the same time last year.



# Even out *your monthly energy bills*

with **Balanced Billing**



Looking for a better way to budget your monthly energy costs? Our Balanced Billing Plan lets you spread your energy costs evenly over 12 months. We'll review your account every three months and adjust your payment as needed so you'll have neither a big credit nor a large amount due at the end of 12 months. Sign up online at [nyseg.com](http://nyseg.com) or call us at **1.800.572.1111**.

And don't forget – You can pay your bill online, too. It's convenience with a click!

## Meter readings provide the information *we need to send you an accurate bill*

Here are some ways you can help:

- ▶ If the NYSEG meter is outside, please make sure we have a clear path to the meter.
- ▶ If the NYSEG meter is inside, and it is inconvenient for you to give us access to it on the meter reading date noted on your bill, please let us know.

We can discuss other options for us to gain access to your meter or see if you are interested in our Customer Meter Reading program. For more information on reading the meter, visit [nyseg.com](http://nyseg.com) (click on "Billing and Payment Options") or call us at 1.800.572.1111.

Regardless of the solution we come up with, under Public Service Law we ***must*** have access to your meter at least once a year to inspect it and verify that it is working properly.



Project SHARE  
is a joint effort of  
NYSEG and the  
American Red Cross

More than  
*20 years*  
of sharing



# Tips for using energy wisely

## Tips for heating wisely

- Have your heating system checked every year to make sure it is safe and working properly.
- Clean or replace furnace filters when they get dirty or once a month.
- Keep heating supply and return registers clean and unobstructed by furniture or draperies.
- Set your thermostat at 65° during the day, and lower it to 60° at night. (May not be advisable if you have frail, ill or young persons in your home.)
- Consider installing automatic set-back thermostats.
- Open draperies on south-facing windows during the day to let in heat from the sun. Close them at night and on cloudy days to keep heat in.



## Tips for using electricity wisely

- Turn off electrical appliances and equipment when not in use.
- Use fluorescent, rather than incandescent, light fixtures and bulbs. Fluorescent lights are three to four times more energy efficient.
- Clean your refrigerator's condenser coils frequently to ensure peak efficiency.
- Run your dishwasher only when it's full, and let the dishes air dry.

## TIPS FOR MAKING YOUR HOME ENERGY EFFICIENT

- If your home isn't adequately insulated, you may be wasting energy dollars. It may pay for you to insulate or to have a reputable contractor do the work.
- If you have an older water heater, you can wrap the sides of it with a specially-made insulation blanket to save energy.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions to set your water heater temperature at 120 degrees.
- Install flow restrictors in showers and on faucets to reduce water use.

To learn more, visit [nyseg.com](http://nyseg.com) and click on



Since 1982, Project SHARE has helped more than 23,000 people facing energy-related emergencies. The success of Project SHARE can continue only through your kindness and generosity. To help your neighbors in need, please add exactly \$1, \$2 or \$5 to your NYSEG payment. *For more information, visit [nyseg.com](http://nyseg.com) (click on "About NYSEG," "Our Communities" and then "Caring for our Neighbors") or call us at 1.800.572.1111.*

# Power Partner helps customers *who need it most*

NYSEG's Power Partner program has provided much needed assistance to more than 54,000 income-eligible customers since 1998.

Power Partner services include:

- Reduction in NYSEG basic service charge
- Ideas to reduce home energy use
- Home weatherization assistance
- Reducing overdue balances on NYSEG accounts
- Money management education
- Referrals to other community-based programs and services



For more information, visit [nyseg.com](http://nyseg.com) (click on "Your Home" and then "Power Partner") or call us at **1.800.284.7988**.

# HEAP *financial assistance* can help



Many households receive financial help each year from HEAP – the federal Home Energy Assistance Program. HEAP grants can be used to pay heating bills or for other energy-related emergencies. To

qualify for a HEAP grant, your household income must fall within HEAP guidelines (right).

It's important to apply early, since federal funding for this year's HEAP season is limited. For more information or to apply for a HEAP grant, contact your county's Department of Social Services.

## Income Eligibility Guidelines for HEAP

(as of November 3, 2003)

Household Size	Monthly Income (gross)
1	\$1,729
2	\$2,261
3	\$2,793
4	\$3,325
5	\$3,857
6	\$4,389
7	\$4,489
8	\$4,588
9	\$4,688
10	\$4,788
11	\$5,049