

# Instructions For Completing

## Minnesota Energy Programs Application 2008-2009

This is an application for the 2008-2009 Energy Assistance Program, Weatherization Assistance Program and Conservation Improvement Program. It also asks for information about Cold Weather Rule protection. **The Minnesota Energy Programs Application is available in large print, Braille and Spanish by asking for them from your agency.**

**To apply, you must send us:**

- This application** signed, dated and all questions answered.
- Copies of **proof of income** for each household member for the past three months (or tax forms for self-employment or rental income).
- A copy of your **heating bill** and your **electric bill**.

**Failure to provide the required documents will delay the processing of your application.**

### Instructions

#### PART 1. Personal Information

Fill in your name, address, phone number, and contact information, or correct it if the information shown is wrong. Please provide your social security number for identification purposes (optional, but this will assist us in processing the application faster.)

#### Authorized Representative:

An "Authorized Representative" is someone you give permission (in writing) to act for you. This person can get all of your mail for this program, if you include their address.

#### PART 2. Household Information

Fill in all of the information for everyone living in your household. ALL people living in the home are household members.

The Social Security Number is requested for each person in the household who has income. Non-custodial parents may include their children as household members.

#### Sources of Income and Other Assistance

Please let us know if you had any changes in your income during the past three months.

- Report income for each member of the household.
- Attach proof of all household income for 3 full months before the month you apply.

Mark (x) all Sources of Income for all members of your household.

Income is any and all money being paid to anyone living in the house.

Please send copies of your income proof. Originals will not be returned.

#### EXAMPLES OF PROOF OF INCOME:

- **Employed:** Check stubs or a written statement signed by employer stating gross wages.
- **MFIP, TANF, MSA, GA:** Letter showing monthly grant award.
- **Child Support, Alimony:** Checks, printout from the child support office, bank deposits or a signed note stating the amount and dates of received payments.
- **Disability Payments, Veteran's Benefits, Workers' Compensation, Social Security, RSDI and SSI:** Award letters, bank statements showing direct deposits, copy of the check(s)
- **Unemployment Compensation:** Unemployment statement or internet printout
- **Self Employed, Farm, Rental Income:** A complete copy of last year's Federal Tax Return.
- **Interest, Dividend:** Bank statements or copy of your IRS-1099.
- **Student Income Grants:** Full Account Detail/Award letter with the amount used for living expenses.
- **Pension and Annuities:** Copy of benefit check(s) or record of pension or benefit fund.

<p><b>PART 3. Housing Information.</b> Mark the Type of Housing you live in, how long you have lived in your current home, whether you own or rent and monthly housing costs.</p>	<p>If you are a renter, tell us if you receive a housing subsidy from the government, whether you pay heat or electricity, and your landlord's name, phone number and address.</p>
<p><b>PART 4: Heating Sources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put "1" by the heating fuel that you use the most and "2" by all other heating fuel you use in your home.</li> <li>• Wood users, tell us the number of bedrooms, whether you cut your own wood, and how much of your heat the wood provides.</li> <li>• Enter the name of the heating or electric company where you want your payment sent.</li> </ul>	<p>If you heat your home with more than one heating source please let us know. (Electric is not a heat source if just running a furnace.)</p> <p>Circle the percent of wood that you use.</p> <p>Include the name on the account <b>and</b> the account number. Correct the information if it is entered and wrong.</p>
<p><b>PART 5. Local Questions</b></p>	<p><b>Please answer all Local Questions</b></p>
<p><b>PART 6. Cold Weather Rule Protections</b> Complete this section if you use natural gas or electricity to heat your home or if you need electricity to operate your thermostat or furnace fan.</p>	<p>You <b>MUST</b> contact your natural gas or electric companies and arrange for a payment plan to be covered by the Cold Weather Rule. People at this agency can help you arrange a reasonable payment.</p>
<p><b>PART 7. Permissions and Signature</b> Read the permissions part carefully. <b>Go to the end of the application. Sign and date!</b></p>	<p>ANY missing information may delay decisions about your eligibility and benefit amount.</p> <p><b>We must receive your application within 60 days of the date signed and no later than May 31, 2009.</b></p>

Remember that the Energy Assistance Program cannot pay for all of your heating and electric bills.

Arrange for a payment plan with your vendor and make the payments. We will process your application as quickly as we can. We will send you a letter when your application is completed.

Call us **only** if:

- you are shut-off,
- you are unable to get a delivery of fuel, or
- you own your home and your furnace does not work.

# **Your Rights and Responsibilities**

## **PRIVACY NOTICE**

**Also known as the Tennesen Warning**

**Privacy Act Provisions:** Federal and state law requires us to tell you about your rights and responsibilities before we collect and use information about you that is classified as private or confidential. This form provides you with important information that complies with the federal Privacy Act of 1974, 5 USC section 552a (e) (3) and the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minn. Stat. §13.04 subd. 2.

Please read this *Privacy Notice* carefully before completing and signing the *Minnesota Energy Programs Application*, and keep this *Privacy Notice* in your records for future use. This *Privacy Notice* applies to the Energy Assistance Program, Weatherization Assistance Program and Conservation Improvement Program, also known as Energy Programs.

### **Why do we collect the information on the application?**

We will use your information to research, evaluate and administer the energy assistance programs.

We need the information:

- To know you from other individuals
- To see if you qualify for assistance
- To allow us to get federal or state funds for the assistance you receive
- To meet federal or state reporting requirements

### **What happens if you do not give us the information?**

You have the right to not give us the information we ask for; however, if you do not provide the information, you may not be able to get services or help with energy bills.

### **Who will see this information?**

Staff working in the following agencies or companies who need access to the application information to do their jobs in connection with the Energy Assistance, Weatherization, Community Action and Conservation Improvement Programs will see and share information related to your energy assistance application:

- Local Energy Programs agencies under contract with the Minnesota Department of Commerce
- Local Community Action Agencies under contact with the Minnesota Department of Human Services
- Local Energy Programs' auditors as required by OMB circulars
- Minnesota Departments of Commerce, Administration, Human Services and the Office of Enterprise Technology
- United States Departments of Health and Human Services and Energy
- Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
- Minnesota Legislative Auditor
- Minnesota Attorney General's Office, as needed for litigation purposes
- Your energy vendor for affordability and Energy Assistance Programs
- Federal and State law enforcement authorities, as needed for litigation purposes
- Other agencies or entities as allowed by federal or state law

### **Why do we collect social security numbers?**

We use social security numbers in the administration of the energy assistance programs and to assure that eligible applicants and their household members receive only allowable benefits. Federal law allows us to ask you to provide your social security number in order to process your application more quickly and to prevent, detect and correct fraud and abuse. 45 CFR 96.84; 42 U.S.C. 405 (c)(2)(C)(i). You are not required to provide it but it will assist us in processing your application more quickly.

### **Why do we ask for information about your race?**

This is voluntary information. It is compiled and recorded for statistical purposes only. The program can not discriminate for reason of race or ethnic background, religion, gender, sexual orientation or political affiliation.

### **What if you think the facts in your file are wrong?**

Talk to your Energy Assistance Program (EAP) Service Provider about what you think is wrong in your file.

### **What happens if you give false information?**

The EAP or the department may check out any of the information you give. You may be held civilly or criminally liable under federal or state law for knowingly making false or fraudulent statements in your application.

### **You have these responsibilities:**

You must tell us if you:

- Received help with your energy bills earlier this winter
- Move to a new address (tell us within 30 days of the move)
- Change your fuel dealer or gas or electric companies

**You must pay your fuel bills.** This program will pay only part of your bills. You must pay the rest.

### **You have certain rights to get help:**

You have the right:

- To apply again if you get turned down
- To apply for more help if you need it
- To know what the rules are and how we decide what help you get
- To receive a response within a reasonable time of submitting all information
- To appeal within 30 days after you know the results of your application if:
  - You get turned down.
  - You think we used the wrong facts to make the decision.
  - You do not get the help you were promised.

### **How do you complain?**

If you think your energy payment was not what it should be, or you did not get the services you thought you would, you may write to the local EAP agency listed on the application. Keep a record of the address and telephone number.

If you are not satisfied with their response, write to:

Appeals Officer  
Energy Assistance Program  
Minnesota Department of Commerce  
85 East 7<sup>th</sup> Place, Suite 500  
St. Paul, MN 55101-2198

If you feel you have been treated differently because of your color, race, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, political beliefs, or physical, mental or emotional disability, write to one of the following:

Minnesota Department of Human Rights  
190 East 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
St. Paul, MN 55101

-OR-

U.S. Department of Health and Human Service  
Office for Civil Rights, Region V  
233 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 240  
Chicago, IL 60601

### **Ask for Assistance:**

Call the local EAP Service Provider listed on the application to request the application in large print or Braille. If you do not understand the information in this document, call the local EAP Service Provider listed on the application and ask to have it explained to you.