

UTILITIES

ENERGY ASSISTANCE FOR BGE CLIENTS

SVP helps clients with utility cut-offs. Problems with paying monthly BGE bills are beyond the resources available to St. Mary's/SVP. It is most often true that the amount due BGE to avoid cut-off exceeds the resources SVP can pay. For this reason a client is advised to first seek help through BGE programs for financial support. The BGE operates a number of programs or funding sources to help clients faced with cut-off or difficulty in paying monthly bills. More detailed explanation of these programs can be found on the "BGE Community Resource Guide". The web site is www.bge.com/MyAccount/CustomerSupport/Documents/2018-2019%20English%20Purple_FULL%20Version_WEB.pdf . You may also find the guide by searching "BGE Community Resource Guide" on your browser's search engine. The guide is available in English and Spanish. When seeking help for a cut-off or a monthly bill, it is possible to contact BGE directly (800-685-0123) or the BGE Collections Department (800-685-2210); however, it is preferable to work through the Anne Arundel County Community Action Agency (CAA) with a personal visit. The CAA is the local agent for executing BGE programs. More important, working through the CAA ex-

man Services. The web site is www.dhs.maryland.gov (click on Energy Assistance) or telephone 800-332-6347. OHEP will direct client to apply through one of three options; (1) on-line (setting up an account), (2) download a form for mail application or (3) contact CAA. Contacting CAA directly is the recommended approach.

The Fuel Fund of Maryland (FFM) is also a potential source of help. The FFM is primarily aimed at helping customers pay their monthly bill; however, help with cut-off notices can be obtained. Application for assistance must be made on-line and the customer will be advised of the amount of support available. The wait time is ordinarily 2-3 days. Go to www.FuelFundMaryland.org and click "CONTACT US" at the bottom of the web page or call **410-235-9080**. The CAA is skilled in helping BGE customers access the FFM and it is the recommended method for approaching the FFM.

COVID-19 NOTE. During the lock-down BGE has not executed utility cut-off to households. This policy presently extends to July 1, 2020 This will

change as we transition into a more open environment. The guidelines from local authorities and BGE are defined in detail when they are announced on dates determined by progress in mitigating the COVID-19 pandemic.