

ENERGY ASSISTANCE FOR BGE CLIENTS – amended 7/09/2020

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](http://www.bge.com/MyAccount/Customersupport/Documents/2018-2019%20English%20Purple%20FULL%20Version%20WEB.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 exposes the client to an extraordinary range of programs beyond energy assistance.

Eligibility for the programs discussed below depends upon family income and requires photo ID, Social Security card, proof of residence and proof of income.

The need for collecting and validating these documents is another reason the personal visit to CAA is the recommended approach for help. The staff is highly experienced in the nuance of helping clients with challenging problems.

The CAA is located at 251 West Street (Tel: 410-626-1900; website www.aac-caa.org). During this time of social distancing the office is closed; however, they are available by telephone and are actively serving clients.

The basic program addressing the problem of BGE cut-off is the Maryland Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP). The OHEP is funded through the Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP) and the Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP). The former is Maryland and BGE funded and the latter is federally funded. The OHEP can be contacted on line at the Office of Home Energy Programs within the Maryland Department of Human 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 August 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.