



National Fuel Announces Expansion of Neighbor for Neighbor Heat Fund Guidelines in New York

(Feb. 13, 2012) WILLIAMSVILLE, N.Y. — National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation ("National Fuel" or the "Utility") announces new guidelines for its Neighbor for Neighbor Heat Fund to include Western New Yorkers receiving unemployment benefits.

The Neighbor For Neighbor Heat Fund, a first-come, first-served home-heating assistance grant program, has re-opened for the season to provide assistance to low-income Western New Yorkers to help pay for energy-related expenses. Qualifying Western New Yorkers may receive a one-time grant of up to \$400.

In order to qualify for a grant, applicants must fall into at least one of the following classifications: Be at least 55 years old; a member of their household must be handicapped or have a disability that reduces the household's income; have a certified medical emergency; or be receiving unemployment benefits. Applicants must have made at least four payments to their heating bills within a 12-month period from the date of application. Monthly income and expenses will be verified, and grant applications are processed by administering agencies. Applicants must reside in National Fuel's service territory; however, they are not required to be a National Fuel customer.

"National Fuel is firmly committed to sustaining the Neighbor for Neighbor Heat Fund as, each year, it continues to assist members of our community who need a helping hand with their heating bills," said Anna Marie Cellino, President of the Utility. "Our hope is that this community-supported initiative will continue to make a difference and we encourage those who need additional support to take advantage of the program."

Eligible families or individuals in need of payment assistance are encouraged to contact the following to find the nearest agency and determine the necessary documentation to bring to the application interview:

- The Salvation Army at 716-883-9800, extension 230; or
- Catholic Charities at 716-856-4494 or 716-218-1400 (ask for Parish Outreach).

In Chautauqua County, eligible families or individuals should contact the following:

- The Salvation Army at 716-664-4108;
- Catholic Charities at 716-856-4494 or 716-218-1400 (ask for Parish Outreach); or
- Chautauqua County Office For the Aging at 716-753-4471 if **age 60 or over**.

(more)



The Neighbor For Neighbor Heat Fund is funded by contributions from National Fuel Gas Company, its customers and employees, and other private entities. This fund was established by National Fuel in 1983 and has offered grants to more than 16,000 Western New Yorkers, totaling more than \$4.5 million.

The Utility also offers other programs and services and referrals to other third-party assistance programs to customers who are struggling with their heating bills. For example, the Low-Income Customer Affordability Assistance Program (LICAAP) offers an opportunity for National Fuel's customers to benefit from discounted bills and forgiveness of past due balances. To find out more, call 1-800-365-3234 between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, or visit www.nationalfuelgas.com and look under the "For Home" section of the website. If you are having any difficulty paying your bill, call National Fuel as soon as possible. Our experienced representatives can work with you to find a payment plan or an assistance program.

National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation is the Utility segment of National Fuel Gas Company, a diversified energy holding company that is engaged in a number of natural gas-related activities. The Utility provides natural gas service to approximately 500,000 customers in 11 counties throughout Western New York. Additional information about National Fuel and its customer services is available at www.nationalfuelgas.com or by calling 1-800-365-3234.