

Make your life easier

Plan now for managing your winter heating costs

ENERGY SPOTLIGHT®

November 2008

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In addition to being the month that brings us the last of the falling leaves and colder temperatures, November is the month that ushers in the busy holiday planning season. Before you become immersed in your shopping, party and travel plans, we recommend that you take a closer look at the Nicor Gas Budget Plan, which can help you manage your gas bills throughout the winter heating season.

A free and simple way to manage winter gas bills

You'll probably be faced with holiday expenses over the next few months. These are also the same months that fall during the coldest part of the year when you may use more natural gas to heat your home. You can help offset higher gas bills through our free cost management plan – the **Nicor Gas Budget Plan**.

How it works

Our Budget Plan spreads out your payments throughout the year, so your personal budget will be spared the expense of higher winter gas bills. Once you sign up, you'll begin paying a monthly

amount that evens out your costs all year long. While you'll pay more than you are accustomed to during the summer, you'll be building up a credit amount to offset higher winter bills. Your payment will be evaluated every four months and possibly adjusted to help you stay in line with your actual usage and changes in gas costs.

Get started today!

To sign up, simply pay the Budget Plan amount listed on your bill payment stub or visit nicor.com/myaccount.

Give from the heart. Give the gift of warmth.

During this season of goodwill, we hope you will consider those who will have a difficult time staying warm this winter because they can't afford to heat their home. While government assistance is available for some in need, many do not qualify due to being just above the income level requirements.

Administered by the Salvation Army, the Nicor Gas Sharing Program provides one-time annual grants of up to \$450 to qualified residential customers who need help paying their gas bill but may not qualify for government assistance. Nicor Gas provides funding to the program by matching contributions, dollar-for-dollar, up to \$175,000 annually. Donations for the program come from our customers, the general public and Nicor employees.

The need for your donation is more critical than ever, since the program's funding has been severely depleted.

Requests currently far outnumber the funding available to fulfill those requests. We want all of our customers to enjoy the comforts of home and keep warm this winter...but we need your help.

Donating is easy. You can make a one-time contribution by simply checking the appropriate box on the front of your monthly gas bill payment stub and then add the amount to what is owed. If you pay your natural gas bill electronically, call 1 888 Nicor4u (1 888 642-6748) to pledge a Sharing Program contribution that will be automatically added to your bill each month.

You can also send a check made out to:

**Sharing c/o The Salvation Army
P.O. Box 30049, Chicago, IL 60630-0049**

Thank you for your generosity!

brookfield zoo

Enjoy the lights and excitement of Brookfield Zoo's 27th Annual Holiday Magic!

Coupon must be presented at gate. Buy one Adult or Child General Admission to Brookfield Zoo and get one General Admission of equal or lesser value free. No refunds or exchanges. Not valid with any other promotional offer or package admissions. Coupon may not be sold or duplicated. Parking is not included.

Valid through December 31, 2008.

BROOKFIELD ZOO

Chicago Zoological Society
Beneficial Corporation Foundation



Come celebrate the holiday season tradition of Holiday Magic, featuring nearly one million twinkling lights illuminating the zoo's walkways, a dazzling laser and light spectacular, ice-carving demonstrations, live musical performances, magicians and much more. If cold winds are blowing, jump aboard the heated Nicor-sponsored Snowball Express bus for a scenic and cozy tour powered by natural gas.

**Holiday Magic is open 4 to 9 p.m.,
December 6-7, 13-14, 20-21 and 26-31**

For more information, visit www.BrookfieldZoo.org or call (708) 688-8000.

Nicor is a proud sponsor of Brookfield Zoo.

Winter Safety Reminders

Illinois law requires that you install carbon monoxide detectors

CO is a colorless, odorless gas that can build up to high levels in homes where fossil fuels are burned with poor combustion or improper ventilation. The most common cause of excessive CO levels is a poorly maintained furnace. Exposure to high amounts of CO can result in serious illness or even death. The symptoms of CO poisoning resemble flu-like symptoms including dizziness, nausea, headaches, and coughing. Other symptoms include irregular heartbeat and pale skin with cherry-red lips and ear tips.

CO detectors come in three varieties – plug-in, battery-operated and hard wired – all of which can be purchased at your local hardware store.

Be sure to follow these precautions:

- Place a CO detector near each bedroom or other sleeping area
- Do not install CO detectors near the kitchen or garage, or in a room with a furnace, as this may cause false alarms
- Test the CO detector at least twice a year to assure it is still operating properly

If your CO detector alarm goes off and you feel ill, leave the house and call 911 or the local fire department. If your detector goes off and you don't feel ill, press the reset button. If the alarm sounds again after five minutes, open the windows, leave the house and call 911 or your local fire department.

Keep Your Gas Meter Clean and Accessible

During the winter, snow and ice may accumulate on your outside gas meter, possibly blocking the regulator vent. This could cause the regulator to operate improperly, creating a pressure build up in your home that may lead to a dangerous situation.

To prevent this from happening, follow these tips:

- Use a broom (not a shovel) to clear snow from your meter and regulator
- Remove any icicles hanging above your meter
- Sweep snow away from natural gas appliance openings outside your home (such as clothes dryer vents)
- If your meter is near a sidewalk or driveway, use extra caution when shoveling snow
- If your meter becomes encased in ice, call 1 888 Nicor4u (1 888 642-6748) immediately

November Natural Gas Cost



Every month, Nicor Gas files a gas supply charge with the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC). It is the price customers pay for gas purchased from Nicor Gas during that month. As a regulated utility, Nicor Gas does not profit from the sale of natural gas. The price we pay for gas is passed on to our customers without markup. Visit nicor.com/gascost to use our "Bill Planning Guide" to get an idea of what your next month's bill might be.

*At press time, this was the price Nicor Gas filed with the ICC. Under ICC rules, the price may be changed up until the first of the month in which it is effective.

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