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## **APPLICATIONS TO BE ACCEPTED FOR LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

HICKORY -- Low-income elderly or disabled persons in Catawba County may apply for help paying their heating bills at the Salvation Army in Hickory beginning Dec. 1.

The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) is offered each year, with low-income elderly or disabled persons receiving first priority. Even those who have received LIEAP funds in the past must reapply each year.

Households including elderly or disabled persons have first priority and may apply Dec. 1-March 31, or until the funds are exhausted. Only households containing an elderly person age 60 or older, or a household with a disabled person receiving services through the Division of Aging and Adult Services are eligible to apply during this priority period. Disabled persons are defined as those receiving SSI, SSA or VA disability. Applicants must apply in the county where they live.

Payments will be sent directly to the primary heating provider, such as the electric, gas, or heating oil company.

Assistance is based on household income and the number of persons living in the household. To be eligible, households must have total resources of \$2,250 or less. "Resources" may include checking and savings accounts, cash, certificates of deposit, etc. The household must be responsible for paying the heating bill.

Eligibility is based on income. The income of everyone in the household is counted. For example, if there is one person in the household, the maximum monthly countable income must be \$1,276 or less; two persons, \$1,726 or less; three persons, \$2,177 or less; four persons, \$2,628 or less; five persons, \$3,078 or less.

Low-income households that do not include an elderly or disabled person may apply for LIEAP funds Jan. 2-March 31, if funds are still available at the time.

To apply, you must bring verification that you meet these criteria to the Salvation Army. You should bring identification, Social Security numbers for everyone in the household, verification of income/resources and your most current heating bill. Those applying under the early deadline must also bring proof of age, disability, and services received from the Division of Aging and Adult Services. For additional information about this program, contact Catawba County Social Services at 828-695-5625.

**CONTACT:** Karen Heffner at [karen@catawbacountync.gov](mailto:karen@catawbacountync.gov) or 828-695-5625