



Ursuline Senior Services

focused on care, committed to personal dignity



Empowering Caregivers

January 2010 Newsletter



In this issue:

This newsletter is to help caregivers who are caring for loved ones who are participating in the Family Caregiver Support Program. This newsletter will be sent monthly and will cover a variety of health and care giving topics. If you have any suggestions for topics, comments, or questions about the newsletter, please email us at caremanagement@ursulineseniors.org.

- * Tips for lowering your winter energy bills
- * Energy assistance programs
- * Glaucoma Awareness Month
- * Frostbite and Hypothermia
- * Cart to Heart Program
- * Apple raspberry spiced cider recipe
- * Winter word search

Low and no-cost tips for lowering your winter energy bills:

- * Wear layers rather than turning up the heat
- * At night, turn down your thermostat and put more blankets on your bed
- * Close your draperies at night to prevent heat from escaping
- * If you have an attic door, make sure that it seals well and closes tightly
- * Make sure that your heating units are not blocked by furniture or other household items
- * Clean the fins and coils of radiators and heaters
- * Lower your thermostat by two or three degrees; each degree lowered saves you 3% on heating costs!
- * Lower your water heater thermostat; each 10° lowered saves you 5% on water heating costs!
- * When you leave your home, set your thermostat at 64 degrees
- * Check your hot water temperature; 120° is usually sufficient
- * Set your refrigerator to between 35° - 40° and your freezer to between 0° - 5°. Too low a setting uses extra energy!
- * Wash your clothes on warm or cold settings rather than a hot setting
- * Use the no-heat air-drying setting on your dishwasher
- * Only run bath and stove fans as long as necessary, as they exhaust heated air from your home
- * Calk leaky windows to prevent cold air from entering your home

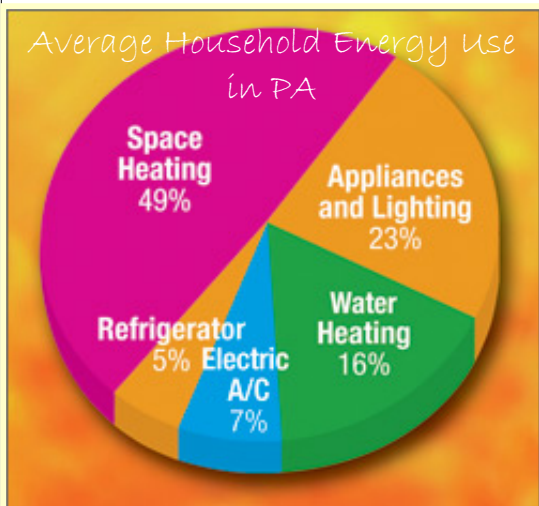
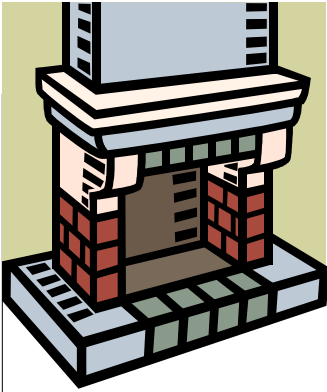


Chart provided by the PA Department of Environmental Protection



Energy Assistance Programs

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The Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging offers a variety of services that provide older adults with energy assistance during the winter months. The following are a list of programs that your loved one may qualify for:

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) provides cash and crisis assistance with residential heating bills to individuals responsible for their home heating costs. **Cash assistance** helps with home heating costs. For Cash assistance, please call (412) 562-2146. **Crisis assistance** can assist with Termination Notices, Service Restoration, delivery of heating fuel, and emergency repairs/replacements to a heating system or to gas or fuel lines. For Crisis assistance, please call (800) 851-3838.

The **\$1 Energy Fund** provides utility assistance to customers who still have a critical need after other resources have been exhausted. In order to qualify, individuals must first apply for LIHEAP and CRISIS. They must have a residential service account and have paid at least \$100 or \$50 for water on their account in the last 90 days. For more information, please call (412) 431-2800.

Low Income Usage Reduction Program (LIURP) provides free weatherization measures to low-income utility customers in an effort to reduce their monthly bill. Participants engage in budget counseling and energy education. For more information about LIURP, please contact your gas or electric company.

Customer Assistance & Referral Evaluation Service (CARES) provides assistance to customers experiencing hardships, such as loss of income due to injury, illness, or death of a primary wage earner. Participants receive affordable monthly payment plans, budget counseling, home visits by CARES representatives, and referrals to other community resources. For more information, please contact your gas or electric company.

Grants and low-interest loans are available for **home weatherization** through ACTION Housing Inc. (412-227-3700), the Steel Valley Opportunities Industrial Center (412-678-8622), and the ACHILP Program (contact Allegheny County Department of Economic Development at 412-350-6337, x 6338).

January is Glaucoma Awareness Month!

Glaucoma is a group of eye diseases that gradually steal sight without warning. Although the most common forms primarily affect the middle-aged and the elderly, glaucoma can affect people of all ages.

Glaucoma is the second leading cause of blindness in the world, according to the World Health Organization. Moreover, among African-American and Hispanic populations, glaucoma is the leading cause of blindness. According to the Glaucoma is 6 to 8 times more common in African-Americans than Caucasians. In the most common form, there are virtually no symptoms. Vision loss begins with peripheral or side vision, so if you have glaucoma, you may not notice anything until significant vision is lost.

The best way to protect your sight from glaucoma is to get a comprehensive eye examination. Then, if you have glaucoma, treatment can begin immediately.

Do your part this month: Talk to friends and family about glaucoma. If you have glaucoma, don't keep it a secret. Let your family members know.

Information retrieved from www.glaucoma.org.

Frostbite

Frostbite occurs when parts of the body freeze, most commonly the nose, ears, chin, fingers or toes and causes permanent damage to the body.

Recognizing Frostbite

- * Redness or pain in any skin area
- * A white or grayish-yellow skin are
- * Skin that feels unusually firm or waxy
- * Numbness

What to Do

- * At the first signs of frostbite, get out of the cold or protect any exposed skin
- * Seek medical care
- * Determine whether the victim also shows signs of hypothermia
- * Unless absolutely necessary, do not walk on frostbitten feet or toes

- * Immerse the affected area in warm water (the temperature should be comfortable to the touch for unaffected parts of the body)
- * Or, warm the affected area using body heat
- * Do not rub the frostbitten area with snow or massage it at all



Hypothermia

Hypothermia, or abnormally low body temperature, occurs when the body is exposed to cold temperatures for a prolonged period of time. It is most likely at very cold temperatures, but it can also occur at cool temperatures if a person becomes chilled from rain, sweat, or submersion

Warning Signs of Hypothermia

- * Shivering, exhaustion
- * Confusion, fumbling hands
- * Memory loss, slurred speech
- * Drowsiness

What to Do

- * At first signs of hypothermia, take the person's temperature— under 95 means it is an emergency
- * Get the victim into a warm room or shelter
- * If the victim is wearing wet clothing, remove it

- * Warm the chest, neck, head, and groin of the body using an electric blanket or skin-to-skin contact under loose, dry layers of blankets, clothing, towels, or sheets
- * Warm beverages can help increase the body temperature (non-alcoholic). **Do not try to give beverages to an unconscious person.**

A person with severe hypothermia may be unconscious and may not seem to have a pulse or to be breathing. In this case, provide CPR while the victim is being warmed until the victim responds or medical aid becomes available.

All information retrieved from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Has grocery shopping become difficult or impossible for you or someone you know? Ursuline Senior Services is now offering grocery shopping services to those who are age 60 or older, live in Allegheny County, are homebound or unable to leave without assistance, and who have no other means to obtain groceries through it's **Cart to Heart** program!

The **Cart to Heart** program:

- Provides shopping service once or twice a month
- Delivers groceries right to your kitchen, where a volunteer can assist with putting groceries away
- Provides a friendly visit from a volunteer.

There is a \$4 to \$7 fee based on income. For more information call 412-683-0400 x.236. For information on other shopping programs refer to the table on the right.

Name	Fee (without groceries)	Phone Number
Hands 2 Help	Varies	(412)466-2535
Pittsburgh Town Shopper	\$39 plus tax	(412)650-9094
Care.com	\$10-\$30/hour	Www.care.com
YourPittsburgh-Shopper.com	10% of cost of order or \$10 minimum	(724)727-2001
Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers	No fee, limited service area	(412)345-7420
Highmark Pals	No fee, must have Medicare and Highmark product	1-800-988-0706

Apple Raspberry Spiced Cider

Makes 8-10 servings



Ingredients:

- * 2 quarts apple cider
- * 1 can frozen raspberry cocktail concentrate
- * 2 cinnamon sticks, broken in half
- * 2 cups frozen raspberries

In a saucepan, stir together apple cider, raspberry cocktail concentrate, and cinnamon sticks. Bring to a boil over medium heat, then reduce the heat to low and let simmer for about 10 minutes. Stir in raspberries and serve directly from the saucepan or transfer to a Crock-Pot to keep warm. Serve with additional cinnamon sticks for stirring, if desired.

Winter Word Search

Words go vertically, horizontally, and diagonally



boots	cold	December	earmuffs	February	windy	skis
freezing	frost	icicle	snowman	jacket	January	icy
mittens	plow	scarf	shovel	skating	sled	snow
sliding	slippery	snowball	winter	snowboard		



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