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Consumer Alert: Warning to all NH Citizens

As you are probably aware the prices of fuel have skyrocketed to unprecedented levels. The Office of Consumer Advocate encourages every NH citizen to take whatever steps are necessary to assure your budget and safety during the upcoming winter season.

First, energy conservation is of extreme importance during this time. There are many resources available to NH citizens to figure out the best ways to conserve. You may contact your utility and ask them for suggestions or programs available to you. One helpful website for electric customers is www.nhsaves.com. The NH Office of Energy and Planning, (603) 271-2155 or www.nh.gov/oep, is another resource for conservation tips and information about weatherization and financial assistance programs. Also, the US Department of Energy offers ideas and tips on saving money and energy at 1-800-dial-DOE or www.energy.gov.

Second, renewable energy (i.e., solar, wind, geothermal, wood) could be a solution for you. In addition to the savings you gain from using renewable sources of energy, you may be eligible for rebates or other incentives from your local or state government or as a result of the new Federal Energy Policy Act of 2005. To learn more about local or state government incentives go to The Database of State Incentives for Renewable Energy website at www.dsireusa.org. Once there, click on NH to see incentives for NH residents.

Third, when remodeling your home or buying new appliances, you may be entitled to certain credits or rebates. For example, you could get a rebate for purchasing Energy Star appliances or installing energy efficient windows, or you may be eligible for tax relief for energy efficient investments as a result of the new Federal Energy Policy Act of 2005. A good resource for the learning more about the financial incentives available to the consumer from the new Federal Energy Policy Act of 2005 is the US Department of Energy at www.energy.gov.

Fourth, if you believe that you may be eligible for financial assistance for your utility expenses, do not wait to contact your local Community Action Agency. The funding necessary for many of the assistance programs in NH is limited and may not be enough to assist all eligible people. To learn more about assistance programs offered by your utility contact them or your local Community Action Agency. To obtain the contact information for your local Community Action Agency, contact NH Helpline at 1-800-852-3388.

Lastly, if you would like to help families in need during this difficult time, please participate in the statewide Neighbor Helping Neighbor program. You can contribute to this fund by contacting your local utility or when you make your next utility payment, check the box and add a donation.