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Current LIEAP participants to receive supplemental funds for summer utility bills

Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) Secretary Phyllis Gilmore announced Thursday that the federally funded Low Income Energy Assistance Program, administered by DCF, will provide a supplemental benefit to help with summer utility bills to those already participating in the program.

The payments are made to the participants' utility providers, not to beneficiaries.

"The summer heat can take an incredible -- sometimes fatal -- toll on our most vulnerable populations -- the elderly, disabled and struggling families," said Secretary Gilmore. "This supplemental payment will help beneficiaries pay their bills, to keep them safe and comfortable during periods of temperature extremes."

The Low Income Energy Assistance Program provides an annual payment to help qualifying households pay winter heating bills. Individuals with disabilities, elderly persons, and families with children are the primary groups assisted. In the winter of 2012, nearly 54,000 Kansas households received an average benefit of \$182.

This year, funding is available to provide an additional payment to the utility providers on behalf of participant households for energy costs incurred during the heat of summer.

This is not a new application period; individuals who applied and received the benefit during the regular application period will automatically be issued a supplemental benefit of approximately \$340, bringing the average benefit for the year to over \$522.

Funding for the Low Income Energy Assistance Program is provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Community Service through the Federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program.