Hot Summer Put Extra Pressure on Households Facing Shutoffs

This summer was one of the hottest on record in Connecticut, with July being the hottest month for global temperatures since scientists began keeping records in the 1880s, according to the Hartford Courant. There were numerous heat waves, which meant several straight days of unbearable temperatures. It was especially difficult for working families and senior citizens who had fallen behind on their utility bills and were trying to avoid having their electricity shut off for nonpayment. The annual winter moratorium, which prevents households from having their utilities shut off, ended on May 1 and doesn’t resume until November 1, 2016. As such, many households turned to Operation Fuel this summer for help. From July 11 through September 30, 2016, Operation Fuel provided almost $900,000 in energy assistance to over 2,150 households. Some of the requests were from people who had recently lost their jobs or who are on a fixed income. In addition to providing energy assistance this summer, Operation Fuel enrolled or re-enrolled about 300 households in Eversource Energy’s New Start program. New Start can help to eliminate an outstanding balance for customers who meet specific eligibility requirements, including income. After Eversource reviews an eligible customer’s billing history, a payment plan is set up. As long as New Start payments are made, electric service will not be shut off, despite the outstanding balance, and a portion of the balance will be forgiven.
A Word from The Executive Director

Dear Friends,

This winter will mark the start of Operation Fuel’s 40th year of providing emergency energy assistance to Connecticut households. It is also my first winter as the agency’s Executive Director.

Over the past few months, I have had the opportunity to visit many of our fuel banks. We currently have 105 fuel banks located throughout the state. During my travels, I was impressed by the uniqueness of each town and the impact that the local infrastructure and access to education and employment has on local residents as they strive for economic stability.

Our fuel banks are located within municipal social or human services departments and nonprofit community organizations. Their staff are the eyes and ears of their communities and are exceptionally qualified to understand the challenges that many households face. This is why Operation Fuel is so effective throughout the state.

Our fuel banks, in partnership with our donors and community partners, are keeping the heat and lights on for households in every corner of Connecticut. And that is what we mean by “we’re all part of the operation!”

Each one of you is an important part of our efforts! Thank you for making a difference in the lives of so many struggling families and individuals!

Sincerely,

Karen E. Adamson
Executive Director

As Operation Fuel gets ready for the upcoming winter, the nonprofit is asking Connecticut residents to consider making a small donation to help struggling families and individuals stay warm. There are more than 313,000 lower-income Connecticut households that can’t afford their energy bills.

“With your help, Operation Fuel can bridge the gap between high energy bills and the amount that households can afford to pay,” said Executive Director Karen Adamson.

Although the price of home heating oil and natural gas has declined, families and individuals with low and fixed incomes still are vulnerable to energy costs.

Operation Fuel and its fuel banks will begin taking energy assistance applications on December 1 for the upcoming heating season. In preparation, Operation Fuel is holding its annual energy assistance conference and fuel bank training sessions. The conference is a partnership between Operation Fuel, Eversource Energy, UI, Connecticut Natural Gas and Southern Connecticut Gas.

“It is probably safe to predict that last year’s mild winter will be followed by a more typically cold and snowy winter this year. But no matter what kind of weather we have, Operation Fuel will be here to help assure that households throughout the state will have the help they need this winter to meet their basic needs for heat and electricity,” said Adamson.

Donations can be made at www.operationfuel.org or by mailing a check, payable to Operation Fuel, to Operation Fuel, 75 Charter Oak Avenue, Suite 2-240, Hartford, CT 06106. Utility customers can donate to Operation Fuel through the nonprofit’s Add-a-Dollar program when paying their utility bills. Operation Fuel uses 100% of the donations made to the Add-a-Dollar program for energy assistance.

As Operation Fuel will once again be participating in #GivingTuesday on Tuesday, November 29, 2016. Please join us this year for the global day of giving. Your generous donations will provide emergency energy assistance to Connecticut families struggling to stay safe and warm this winter. Visit www.operationfuel.org to make your secure donation and join the global movement that celebrates and supports giving and philanthropy.

We would love to hear what inspires you to give to Operation Fuel! Follow us on Facebook and Twitter to share your story.
Power Lunch 2016: Seeking Ways to Make Energy More Affordable

As Connecticut’s voice for low-income energy issues, Operation Fuel works with its community and business partners to find ways to help make energy more affordable for lower-income households. Operation Fuel met with some of its community and business partners along with representatives of other agencies at its Power Lunch 2016 forum to discuss ratepayer-funded low-income energy assistance, energy efficiency programs and the impact that the energy affordability crisis has on more than 315,000 households in Connecticut who are struggling to keep up with energy costs. Several of Operation Fuel’s partners sponsored the meeting. Keynote speaker David Carroll said the states of New Jersey, Ohio and Massachusetts are good examples of successful ratepayer-funded programs that allow customers to make consistent payments and not face shutoffs and loss of services. “Affordable energy rates usually help about 80% of low-income households with their ability to pay their bills,” added Carroll, the Managing Director for APPRISE (Applied Public Policy Research Institute for Study and Evaluation).

He also said energy conservation is essential to lower energy expenses and that some of the money used for the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) should be allocated for households to use for energy efficiency. The state of Connecticut recently agreed to set aside $1.0 million of LIHEAP funding to use for weatherization for households that are eligible for the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program (CEAP).

“Collectively, we can make a difference…Operation Fuel can’t do it alone. We need all of our partners. I think we have the resources in Connecticut to make energy affordable for everyone,” concluded Patricia Wrice who retired as Operation Fuel’s Executive Director in June 2016.

President Obama, Sen. Coleman Thank Wrice for Her Many Years of Service

Wrice retired from Operation Fuel on June 30 after nearly 19 years as executive director. The presentation was made during a ceremony at Hartford City Hall, where Coleman also presented 14 other Community Service Awards in recognition of exceptional leadership, dedication, and service to the Hartford community.

Adamson Named New Executive Director

Karen Adamson, of Vernon, Conn., joined Operation Fuel at the end of June as the new executive director. She follows Patricia Wrice who retired on June 30, 2016 after nearly 19 years as executive director.

“Karen brings a unique combination of experience to the organization. We are looking forward to working with her. The board also wants to thank Pat Wrice for her years of dedication and passion for Operation Fuel,” said Nancy Bulkeley, chairperson of Operation Fuel’s board of directors.

Adamson has a background in both education and the nonprofit sector. After a career in education, she held several nonprofit positions. Before joining Operation Fuel, Adamson was vice president of community engagement and performance for the Access Community Action Agency in Willimantic, Conn. “Under Pat Wrice’s visionary leadership, Operation Fuel has been a voice for households that cannot afford our state’s high energy costs. The organization’s mission is a great match to my personal mission to help eliminate the barriers to economic stability faced by low- to moderate-income families and individuals. I am honored to be part of the team and to continue this essential work,” said Adamson.

Retired Executive Director Patricia Wrice with Senator Eric Coleman (D-Bloomfield) and the proclamation from President Barack Obama.

This summer, State Senator Eric Coleman presented Operation Fuel’s newly retired Executive Director Patricia Wrice with a Community Service Award and a proclamation from President Barack Obama. The proclamation thanked Wrice for her many years of dedicated service and congratulated her on her retirement.
Operation Fuel Partnership Allows Suffield Fuel Bank to Help Hundreds

The Suffield Emergency Aid Association (EAA) has partnered with Operation Fuel for over 20 years, helping hundreds of Suffield households with energy assistance. Without Operation Fuel, the Suffield fuel bank wouldn’t be able to help as many Suffield residents with energy assistance as it currently does, explains Janet Frechette, Executive Director of the Suffield Emergency Aid Association. “Our relationship with Operation Fuel has served our residents well by providing us with the ability to maximize the resources available to our residents. As a result of the Operation Fuel program, we are able to piggyback various fuel programs to provide the most overall benefit. In doing so, we are able to ensure the safety and well-being of our most vulnerable Suffield residents,” added Frechette.

During the past fiscal year, which ran from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016, EAA provided $16,280 in Operation Fuel energy assistance grants to 39 Suffield households. Frechette said there was a drop in energy assistance applications from the previous year because of the milder winter and lower home heating oil prices. She added that improved weather and lower energy prices “were a nice benefit to our residents experiencing financial challenges and for our seniors living on a fixed income.”

One Suffield resident who the Emergency Aid Association partnered with Operation Fuel to help was an elderly widow who was living on a fixed income. After a lengthy hospital stay she returned home and needed propane to heat her house. Operation Fuel approved the grant request and faxed the authorization to the vendor the same afternoon the application was submitted. The woman received a $500 propane delivery the next business day!

Another Operation Fuel grant was used to help a Suffield couple with two young children. Although the father is working full time, plus overtime whenever it’s available, the family is struggling to pay for basic necessities. Operation Fuel provided the family with a $500 home heating oil delivery.

Brenda Watson, who is Operation Fuel’s Director of Community Programs, said that without the help of Frechette, her staff and the Emergency Aid Association, Suffield residents wouldn’t have access to Operation Fuel’s energy assistance program. She added, “Energy affordability is an issue in all Connecticut communities.”

In addition to the Operation Fuel program, the Emergency Aid Association also administers the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program for lower-income households that meet income-eligibility requirements. There also is a private fuel fund.

Suffield residents who need energy assistance should call the Suffield Emergency Aid Association (EAA) at 860-668-1986.

Gifts of Love Helps Struggling Families

Although the Farmington Valley is considered to be an affluent area, there are a significant number of households that are finding it difficult to make ends meet. Fortunately, Gifts of Love is there to help many of the struggling families and individuals with energy assistance, food, clothing and other basic needs.

Gifts of Love is part of Operation Fuel’s network of fuel banks and administers the emergency energy assistance program to households in Avon, Canton, Farmington and Simsbury. Since July 1, 2015, Gifts of Love has provided over $21,100 in Operation Fuel energy assistance grants to 50 households.

Gifts of Love Volunteer and Outreach Manager Nancy Carlson said some of the families and individuals they help are experiencing a financial crisis as the result of losing their job, going through a divorce or serious illness; while others are retired or disabled and living on a fixed income.

Recently a couple needed help because their electricity had been shut off. Since losing his job, the husband hasn’t been able to find employment. The wife works but her income barely covers their mortgage and basic living expenses. “They were so grateful” for Operation Fuel’s help, said Carlson. This summer, a single mother with two children was in danger of losing her electricity. She works for a local school system so she doesn’t have a paycheck in the summer and had fallen behind on her utility bill. If it hadn’t been for Operation Fuel, the family probably would have been without electricity until she started working again.

In both cases, Operation Fuel was there to offer a quick solution. “The staff at Operation Fuel is most helpful and always tries to meet our clients’ needs,” said Carlson.

IRIS A Unique Fuel Bank

Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services (IRIS) is different than any other fuel bank. IRIS helps refugees establish new lives after fleeing their country of origin due to persecution for their race, nationality, religious belief, or political opinion.

IRIS normally resettles about 250 people annually in the New Haven area but this past fiscal year IRIS has welcomed nearly 500 people, many from Syria. Others are from Iraq, Afghanistan, Sudan, the Congo, and Eritrea. As part of the process, IRIS collaborates with local non-profit organizations and government programs to meet its clients’ needs. Operation Fuel has partnered with IRIS for the past two years. “We are seeing a gradual increase in the need for energy assistance...especially as our clients and our case managers become more familiar with Operation Fuel,” said Linda Bronstein, Senior Case Manager for IRIS.

---continued on page 8
Operation Fuel Helps Elderly Woman Avoid Shutoff

Dona Ditrio, Director of Employment and Regional Programs at New Opportunities of Greater Meriden. New Opportunities administers Operation Fuel’s energy assistance program in Meriden, Wallingford, Southington and Berlin. This past winter (2015-16), the fuel bank provided $53,573 in Operation Fuel energy assistance grants to 133 households. Ditrio said people often find themselves falling behind on their utility and heating bills “as the cost of rent, food, heat, electricity and out-of-pocket medical expenses go up, households try to stretch their dollars and begin to delay paying some bills on the due date thinking they will catch up. But they can’t.”

Thanks to Operation Fuel, said Ditrio, households that experience a sudden change in their income or exhaust their financial resources still can keep their homes warm this winter and are less likely to have health issues.

An elderly woman was close to having her electricity shut off, when she contacted New Opportunities of Greater Meriden. The woman, who lives on a fixed income, qualified for energy assistance from the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program (CEAP). But even after receiving help from CEAP, she still had a significant balance on her utility bill. Fortunately, Operation Fuel was able to help her with an energy assistance grant for $500. “This reduced her bill to a more manageable payment to avoid shut off and the utility company placed her on a matching payment plan,” explained Ditrio.

She explained, “Operation Fuel is another way we can offer support to our clients as they struggle to get a foothold in their new home. It’s a lifeline we can throw to them when, despite their best efforts, their situation gets a little out of hand.”

A mother and her two young adult children, one of whom has a chronic health condition, were recently helped by an Operation Fuel grant. The family had an apartment for a while but had to give it up when they couldn’t find steady employment. Unfortunately, they left with an unpaid gas bill.

After staying with relatives and friends for several months, the family finally was able to get their own apartment again. But then the mom had to take a one-month leave from her job to deal with a family emergency. As a result, bills went unpaid and the family’s gas was shut off. The previously unpaid gas bill had been transferred to the gas account at the new apartment, so before agreeing to turn the gas back on, the company needed the past-due balance to be paid. “Thanks to Operation Fuel, we were able help pay that past-due balance, and help the family get their gas turned on again,” said Bronstein.

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Operation Fuel Helps Elderly Woman Avoid Shutoff

The staff from New Opportunities of Greater Meriden who enroll clients in Operation Fuel’s energy assistance program. Front row from left: Francis Santiago, Ola Brown, Yahjaria Feliciano-Cordero. Back row from left Jennifer Resto, Dona Ditrio and Beth Rosario.

As far as neighborhood amenities go, a coffee shop may seem to be ordinary fare. But for residents of Waterbury’s Bucks Hill neighborhood, Caffé Benevento offers a local, family-run alternative to the typical chain store options. Located near the lower end of North Main Street, Caffé Benevento has served up Italian coffees, teas, biscotti and cookies since opening six years ago in a vacant building that had once housed a hat store. In that time, it has evolved to become a favorite gathering spot among locals. Owners Rosanna and Claudio Guerrera renovated the store and opened as an Italian coffee shop. As the shop’s popularity grew, the couple added food to the menu and the menu at the urging of their regular customers. Chief among their food offerings is the daily hot special. The daily specials (soups, stews, meatballs, chili, pulled pork) rely heavily on Rosanna’s slow cooker as well as her culinary skills picked up from both her mother and mother-in-law.

Just as important as the menu is the casual atmosphere the owners have cultivated, encouraging customers to stay, relax and commune. “They like to hang out, watch TV together,” explains Rosanna, who often stays open late if customers are still in the shop. The couple runs the business by themselves and, seeking opportunities to cut expenses, recently made energy efficiency upgrades through Operation Fuel’s small business program. The project, which included both refrigeration and lighting measures, leveraged incentives from their utility company’s Small Business Energy Advantage program as well as Operation Fuel’s small business grant. The combined resources were sufficient to cover the entire cost of the energy efficiency upgrades, and the improvements are expected to save the business more than $500 per year in energy costs.

Caffé Benevento

Owners Rosanna & Claudio Guerrera

LOCATION: 2430 N. Main St., Waterbury

PROJECT: Refrigeration, Lighting Upgrades

TOTAL PROJECT COST: $1,220

UTILITY INCENTIVE: ($459)

PROJECT BEST GRANT: ($761)

OWNER’S COST: $0

EST. COST SAVINGS: $522/yr

EST. ENERGY REDUCTION: $2,833kWh/yr
Operation Fuel Honored to Announce Two New Community Partnerships

In May 2016, Operation Fuel received a generous donation of $607 from Joseph Family Markets, LLC. For two weeks in May, cashiers at ShopRite of West Hartford collected donations for Operation Fuel at the store’s registers. The total donation will be used to assist households in need of energy assistance in West Hartford and Canton.

“As a family-owned business in West Hartford, our team constantly strives to make a positive impact on our associates, customers and community right around our store. We are proud to support Operation Fuel’s important work, providing year-round energy assistance for local families in need,” said Chuck Joseph, owner of the ShopRite stores in West Hartford and Canton.

The ShopRite stores of Canton and West Hartford are owned and operated by Joseph Family Markets, a locally-owned business founded in 2010 by Chuck and Debbie Joseph. The mission of Joseph Family Markets is to positively impact its associates, customers and community while upholding its core values of integrity, self-realization, family, service, enjoyment and sustainability.

“We are so grateful for Joseph Family Markets’ efforts to raise money and awareness for Operation Fuel. Through this partnership we were able to raise needed funds and educate ShopRite customers about our services,” explained Operation Fuel Major Gifts Officer Clayton Jason.

In related news, Operation Fuel received a $1,000 donation from The Duncaster Retirement Community Outreach Committee in June 2016 to provide energy assistance to Bloomfield households. Duncaster is a boutique continuing care retirement community. Its mission is to offer an engaging independent lifestyle to senior adults through excellence in living, life enhancement events and person-centered service. Duncaster has a strong commitment to making the greater community a better place to live. Residents and staff give their time and support to community service projects.

“Duncaster and its Community Outreach Committee are honored to extend a grant of $1,000 to Operation Fuel to support Bloomfield families. We believe it is important for others to understand that the need for fuel assistance is a year-round need, not something that happens only in winter months. As this summer’s recent heat wave demonstrated, a loss of power in the summer puts families at risk for heat related health issues. We are happy and proud to be a small part of the solution!” stated Vanessa Giannasi, Duncaster’s Director of Foundation and Community Relations.

“Operation Fuel is so thankful for The Duncaster’s generosity and service to the town of Bloomfield. We are thrilled to be able to serve additional Bloomfield residents in need of our services,” said Kim O’Brien Green, Director of Development at Operation Fuel.

Local organizations that would like to help Operation Fuel, should contact Clayton Jason at 860-243-2345, ext. 3313, or clayton@operationfuel.org.

Connex and Operation Fuel Partner in Coins-for-Change

Operation Fuel is currently partnering with Connex Credit Union. From October 1 to December 31, the Meriden Connex branch will be raising funds for Operation Fuel through their coin cashing machines. The machines charge a 5% fee to Connex members and a 7% fee to non-members. Connex will donate 100% of the collected fees to Operation Fuel during the three month Coins-for-Change fundraiser. Please visit the Meriden Connex branch to cash in your coins and help raise funds for Operation Fuel today!

On Tuesday January 24, 2017, Operation Fuel will be the beneficiary of a fundraising event at The Flatbread Company in Canton, CT. The Flatbread Company will donate $3.50 for each large flatbread and $1.75 for each small flatbread sold during the benefit that night. We hope to see you there. Stay tuned for more details!
Operation Fuel Elects Three Board Members

Operation Fuel elected three new board members during its annual board of directors meeting in September 2016. The new board members are Charles “Chuck” Anderson, Public Assistance Consultant, State of Connecticut Department of Social Services; Daniel Canavan, Regulatory Counsel, UIL Holdings Corp., and Camilla Jones, Director of Social & Youth Services for the town of Bloomfield. Canavan and Jones previously had served on Operation Fuel’s board.

2016-2017 Board of Directors

Nancy Bulkeley, Chair
Dominion Nuclear Connecticut

Matthew Service, Vice Chair
Ultimate Nutrition, Inc.

The Reverend Hopeton Scott, Treasurer
First Baptist Church of Bridgeport

Richard Schauster, Assistant Treasurer
Empire Industries, Retired

Lynn Vasquez, Secretary
Eversource Energy

Charles “Chuck” Anderson
State of CT Department of Social Services

Arianna Baret Peralta
Eversource Energy

John Bowman
F.F. Hitchcock Oil Company

Daniel Canavan
UIL Holdings Corporation

Monika Doshi
Saath

Laura Gonzalez
First Baptist Church of Bridgeport

Camilla Jones
The United Illuminating Company

Allan Smith
Bloomfield Social & Youth Services

Susan T. Wakefield
Energizer Personal Care, Retired
### Assistance Provided

![Map showing assistance provided in different regions](image)

### Financials

#### Statement of Financial Position

<table>
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<th>For the year ended June 30, 2016</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ASSETS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cash and Cash Equivalents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Certificates of Deposit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants and Other Receivables</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepaid Expense</td>
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<tr>
<td>Security Deposit</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Current Assets</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>OTHER ASSETS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Property &amp; Equipment</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Net of Depreciation)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Assets</strong></td>
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#### Liabilities and Net Assets

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<tr>
<th>2015-2016</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LIABILITIES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deferred Revenue - Small Business Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charitable Gift Annuity Payment Liability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Current Liabilities</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **NET ASSETS**                      |
| Unrestricted                        | 1,824,139|
| Temporarily Restricted              | 2,370,571|
| **Total Net Assets**                | 4,194,710|
| **Total Liabilities and Net Assets**| 4,483,433|

#### Revenue and Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For the Year Ended June 30, 2016</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>REVENUE AND SUPPORT FOR PROGRAMS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy Related Industry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Governmental Grants - State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add-a-Dollar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation Grants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility Shareholder Match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporations and Small Businesses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faith Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Contracts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fines and Settlements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest Income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total Revenues and Support</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **EXPENSES**                        |
| Energy Assistance Programs          | 3,935,573|
| Management                          | 288,051  |
| Fundraising                         | 254,538  |
| **Total Expenses**                  | 4,478,162|

#### Finances by Category

- Energy Assistance Programs: 87.9%
- Management: 6.4%
- Fundraising: 5.7%
- Fines and Settlements: 43.4%
- Governmental Grants - State: 33.8%
- Add-a-Dollar: 7.7%
- Foundation Grants: 4.1%
- Utility Shareholder Match: 2.2%
- Faith Communities: 0.9%
- Corporations and Small Businesses: 0.8%
- Program Contracts: 1.3%
- Interest Income: 0.1%
- Energy Related Industry: 0.5%
- Individuals: 5.9%
How to Contribute

SEND A CHECK
Send a check payable to Operation Fuel, Inc. to:
Operation Fuel, Inc.
75 Charter Oak Avenue, Suite 2-240
Hartford, CT 06106
Or make a check payable to Operation Fuel, Inc. and enclose it with your utility bill. The utility companies will forward all checks to Operation Fuel.

ADD-A-DOLLAR
Support Operation Fuel through the Add-a-Dollar program with your utility company. You may donate $1.00 by adding the amount to your utility bill, both paper bills and electronically. 100 percent of funds raised through the Add-a-Dollar program are used for energy assistance grants. The utility companies also match a percentage of Add-a-Dollar funds raised. You may contact your local utility companies to donate more than $1.00 or to become enrolled in an automatic Add-a-Dollar program.

DONATE ONLINE
Donate online through Operation Fuel’s secure Web site, www.operationfuel.org. Click on the “Donate” button at the top of the page.

MATCHING GIFTS
Take advantage of your company’s matching gifts program. Contact your company’s human resources department for more information.

ESTATE PLANNING / PLANNED GIVING
Plan for the future security of Operation Fuel by considering a planned gift through your estate plans, such as gifts of stock, real estate and life insurance policies. For more information please contact Kim O’Brien Green, Director of Development at 860-243-2345, x3303.

BE PART OF THE OPERATION
If you are a corporation or business wishing to partner with Operation Fuel please contact Kim O’Brien Green, Director of Development at 860-243-2345, x3303.