



Are You Prepared for Higher Utility Bills This Winter?

The Metropolitan Utility District (MUD) has predicted that natural gas heating prices will jump by at least 15% (and possibly 20%) this winter. What does that mean for families on DCHA's program? **You will pay more.** The table below presents a snapshot of what you might expect if you are responsible for heating your home or apartment this coming winter.

2008	2009 (15% more)	2009 (20% more)
\$75/month	\$86.25/month	\$90/month
\$85/month	\$97.75/month	\$102/month
\$100/month	\$115/month	\$120/month
\$125/month	\$143/month	\$150/month

What can you do to keep your heating bills lower? Here are a few tips:

- If you lower your thermostat from 70° to 66°, you can lower your consumption by 13%.
- Clean or replace the furnace filters more often (ask your landlord about this).
- Talk to your landlord about a programmable thermostat; you can set the temperature lower when you are away during the daytime.
- Talk to your landlord about covering the windows with clear plastic to eliminate drafts.
- If you live in a single family home or town home, ask the landlord about the temperature of the water heater, and set it to 120°.
- If you have your own washer and dryer, wash and dry full loads.
- If you don't have a programmable thermostat, simply turn down the thermostat at night.
- Wear layers of clothing ~ put on another sweater or sweatshirt, even around your rental unit!

Remember to pay your utility bills each month. If you receive a shut off notice the landlord will notify DCHA and you will be required to provide proof that your utilities are connected. Failure to maintain the utilities can result in termination of assistance.

A Message from the Chief Executive Officer



Joan Bertolini, CEO

Agency Annual Plan Process

This is the time of the year when the Douglas County Housing Authority (DCHA) begins preparing its Agency Annual Plan as required by the Department of HUD. The process requires public input. Therefore, the plan is reviewed by the clients and

There is also a Public Hearing scheduled for December 10, 2008 at 6:00 PM at the central office at 5404 No. 107th Plaza. This hearing will be published in the Public Notice section of the Omaha World-Herald by October 22, 2008. The hearing will give the general public an opportunity to express their opinions and comments on the Agency Annual Plan document prior to submitting it to the Department of HUD.

Need Resident Advisory Committee Members



The Douglas County Housing Authority is soliciting clients/residents interested in attending a Resident Advisory Committee meeting on October 10, 2008 at 11:30 AM at our main office. This is an opportunity for our clients/residents to provide input for the Agency Annual Plan development and to learn more about the Strategic Planning process being conducted by the Board of Commissioners. A box lunch will be provided for those participating this this meeting.

Those attending this committee meeting will also hear about the Action Plan being developed by the Board Policy and Strategic Planning Committee. The Action Plan will lay out the goals and objectives to be implemented over the next 5 years. This plan will be approved by the Board of Commissioners at its October 2008 board meeting.

If you are interest in serving in this capacity please call Joan Bertolini, CEO, at 444-6227 by September 30, 2008.

Staff Recognition

The Douglas County Housing Authority established the Educational Assistance Program to provide qualified full time staff college tuition reimbursement. The Personnel Committee reviews all applications and makes the selection. The college courses must be directly related to some phase of the applicant's present job position and/or responsibilities. The college course must also directly improve the applicant's skills and knowledge for his/her position within the agency.

DCHA is proud to announce the first staff recipient of the Education Assistance Program award. **Jennifer Determan** has been working toward a bachelors degree in Organizational Communications in an accelerated program at Creighton university. She has maintained a 3.60 GPA and received a 4.0 for the course for which she is receiving the tuition reimbursement award. The Board of Commissioners and the staff of the Douglas County Housing Authority are very proud of her and applaud her dedication to achieving a college degree! Jennifer is an example of what is possible for others who are determined and dedicated to higher education. Jennifer will expand her knowledge and increase her earning potential by pursuing a college degree. Congratulations, Jennifer, and keep up the good work!

Section 8 News

Join us to learn more about homeownership!
Come out and learn how you can invest in your family's future!

When: Tuesday, October 7, 2008, 6:00 pm

Where: Douglas County Housing Authority
5404 North 107th Plaza, Omaha NE

Special Guest: Michelle Torrence, N.P. Dodge Real Estate Group

Minimum Qualifications for Section 8 Homeownership Include:

- * Employment of at least 30 hours per week
- * Employed for at least one (1) year
- * Income of at least \$13,100 per year
- * Credit score of 620 or higher
- * Disabled families minimum income of \$637/month
- * Must have been on Section 8 program at least one year.

SEATING IS LIMITED! Call Beverly Valasek at 444-6203, Ext 15, by Friday, October 3, 2008 to reserve your seat! This will be an information meeting designed to let you know what is required for you to become a homeowner.

Welcome Our Newest Section 8 Housing Specialists



Cindy Dean
Alphabet: H—L
Phone: 444-6203, Ext 20
cindy@douglascountyhousing.com



Tabitha Lane
Alphabet: M—Z
Phone: 444-6203, Ext 11
tabitha@douglascountyhousing.com

Exercise Your Right to Vote

We are moving closer to the general election that will take place on November 4th. It is important to find out for yourselves which candidate best represents your values and beliefs. Every candidate has a web site and you can find many other resources to research their voting records. Don't just listen to the journalist who analyze candidates from their own biases, however, be informed by getting the facts! If you haven't registered to vote call the Douglas County Commission office at 444-8683 to get information on registering.

There are many important things to consider when you place your vote.

- ⇒ Condition of the Economy
- ⇒ The war in Iraq
- ⇒ Terrorism
- ⇒ Energy Concerns



DCHA
Douglas County Housing Authority
5404 North 107th Plaza
Omaha NE 68134-1100

PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE PAID
OMAHA, NE
PERMIT #1315

Maintenance Department News!

Fall Cleanup

Douglas County Housing takes pride in appearance of its properties, both interior and exterior. We hope you have notices that an independent contractor has been trimming shrubs and trees, and cleaning up the landscaping. Your help to maintain this pride is strongly encouraged. One way is to begin year cleanup.

- ⇒ Remove vegetation from bushes and flower beds.
- ⇒ Clean out your gutters
- ⇒ Make sure downspouts are properly connected
- ⇒ Disconnect hoses before winter
- ⇒ Rake up leaves



Emergency Response Calls Is it really an emergency?

It has come to our attention that many calls are coming into our emergency call desk for routine maintenance requests. Please use the after hours response phone number when you have an emergency such as:

- ⇒ Flooding/Broken Pipes
- ⇒ Toilet not flushing
- ⇒ Water Backup
- ⇒ No heat

Non emergency work hours can be placed after hours by calling the DCHA office number and dial extension 10 to leave a work order request. The work order request will be retrieved on the next busy day.

A blue rectangular graphic with the number '911' in white, serif font.

