

# Looking to save energy?



## HG&E offers homeowners and business owners with the money they need to make energy-saving improvements.

Our Energy Conservation Assistance Programs can provide HG&E customers who own property with the money they need to make energy-saving improvements to their structures.

The program offers interest-free assistance for home insulation projects, installation of Energy Star replacement windows, or for an upgrade of a gas-fired heating system to modern efficiency standards.

The assistance can be repaid over an up to 60 month period, and payments conveniently appear on your monthly HG&E energy bill.

To find out more about this program, visit our website at [www.hged.com/conserve](http://www.hged.com/conserve) or contact us at (413) 536-9300.

## helpful telephone numbers

**HG&E Customer Accounts**  
for general account and incentive program questions **(413)536-9300**

**HG&E Credit Department**  
to discuss past due bills and set-up payment arrangements **(413)536-9374**

**MuniHELPS Audit Hotline**  
for conservation questions or to schedule a residential energy audit **(888)335-7203**



See the Program Application for complete details.

also visit our website at: [www.hged.com/conserve](http://www.hged.com/conserve)

## Conservation Assistance Update

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Eligible Equipment	Required Efficiency Rating
Central Air Conditioning	SEER 13 or greater
Gas Fired Warm Air furnace	AFUE Rating >80%
Gas Fired Steam Boilers	AFUE Rating >82%
Gas Fired Hot Water Boilers	AFUE Rating >82%
Gas Fired Instantaneous	Energy Factor of .82 or higher hot water heaters and electronic ignition
Gas Conversion Burners	Unit must have a flame retention or premix design with electronic ignition.
Indirect Water Heater (attached to a gas fired boiler)*	
Attic insulation*	Final R value shall not exceed R34
Wall insulation*	Final R value shall not exceed R11
Replacement Windows and Doors	Energy Star Rated and a U- Factor of .35 or less*
Replacement Sky Lights*	Energy Star Rated with U- Factor .60 or less
Basement Insulation*	
Heating and Hot Water piping insulation*	
Rim Joist Insulation*	
Storm windows*	
Energy Efficient Lighting** (commercial customers only)	
High Efficiency Manufacturing Equipment**	

\*Residential customers must have an energy audit.  
\*\* Note: Requests for installation of these items handled on a case-by-case basis. Please contact HG&E for additional information.

## Summary of Program Benefits

### Owner-Occupied Single-Family Homes

owners can receive up to \$5,000 in zero-interest assistance repayable over up to 60 months

### Owner-Occupied Multi-Family (4 or fewer apartment units)

owner can receive up to \$10,000 in zero-interest assistance repayable over up to 60 months (maximum \$5,000 per unit)

### Multi-Family Investment Property (non-owner occupied)

owner can receive up to \$20,000 in zero-interest assistance repayable over up to 60 months (maximum \$2,500 per unit)

### Commercial Property (office or manufacturing use)

can receive over \$5,000 in zero-interest assistance repayable over up to 60 months (with HG&E Commission approval)

see the program applications for a full list of terms and conditions. applications are available on our website at: [www.hged.com/conserve](http://www.hged.com/conserve)

# Mainlines

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2007

A newsletter for the customers of the Holyoke Gas & Electric Department

## HG&E Updates Conservation Assistance Programs

In 2006, HG&E provided over \$800,000 in zero-interest assistance to residential and commercial customers to help them make energy efficient upgrades to their homes, offices, and manufacturing facilities.

The program is designed to encourage conservation and can help property owners increase insulation levels, install energy star rated windows and doors, or upgrade their gas-fired heating equipment to new higher efficiency standards.

The program provides up to \$5,000 to single-family properties, and up to \$20,000 in zero-interest funding for multi-family properties. Commercial customers can also receive monies to help them install energy efficient lighting or acquire more efficient natural gas powered manufacturing equipment.

A summary of the updated program terms is printed on page 4 of this newsletter. Customers may obtain applications on our website at: [www.hged.com/conserve](http://www.hged.com/conserve) or by contacting Customer Accounts via telephone at: (413) 536-9300.

see program details on page 4

## HG&E Completes Upgrades to Downtown Electric System

HG&E has just completed a substantial two-year project which upgraded the electrical system which serves customers in the greater Downtown Holyoke area. The project aimed to lower operating costs and increase electric reliability for our customers through conversion of an antiquated non-standard 4,800 volt system to a 13,800 volt design.

Previously, the Downtown electrical grid operated independently from the remainder of the City. In the event of a system failure, backup power could only be provided from a single aging generator located at the Department's Cabot Street Station. But now that the project is completed, there are multiple backup feeder circuits which will provide enhanced electric service reliability to our Downtown customers.

story continues on page 3

## HG&E LOWERS GAS RATES!

Our natural gas rates have been lowered again, starting with this billing cycle.

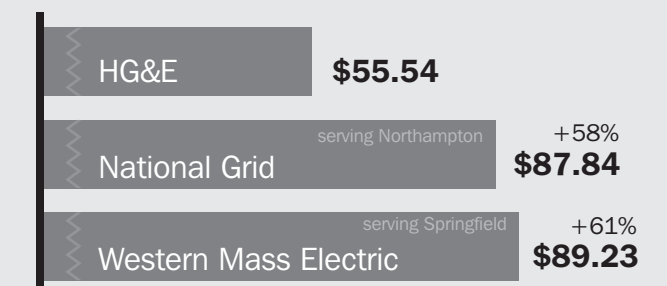
► **The typical homeowner who heats with natural gas should expect to see an average 5.4% rate reduction over their December 2006 HG&E natural gas bill.**

HG&E continues to offer some of the lowest utility rates in the region.

View the graphs below to see how much HG&E customers save when compared to their neighbors who live in surrounding cities.

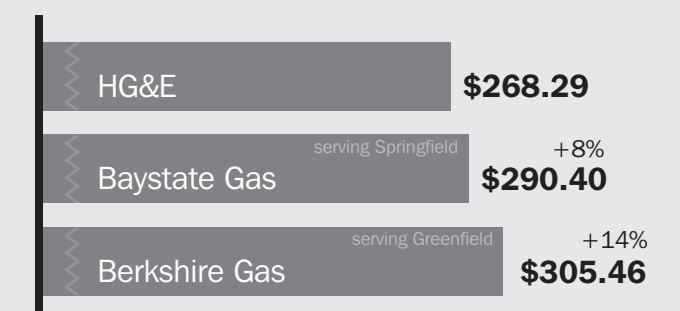
## Electric Rate Comparison

January 2007 - Residential customer consuming 500 kwh per month. Amounts shown include all discounts and use the fixed default generation supply price.



## Gas Rate Comparison

January 2007 - Residential gas heating customer consuming 186 ccf of natural gas. Amounts shown include all discounts.



## Insulate your home from high heating costs this winter.



gas | electric | steam | telecom

### FOUR TIPS FOR HOME WEATHERIZATION

- 1 Electric outlets let cold air into the house. Install special foam gaskets (available at hardware stores) behind electric outlet and switch plate covers on all exterior walls. Also use special insulating plugs in all outlets that are not being used.
- 2 Keep warm air from leaking outside by sealing your windows and doors with caulking and weather-stripping. It's important to seal and weatherize before adding insulation.
- 3 Close your fireplace damper once a fire is safely out. Keeping the damper open lets warm air flow right out of the house just as if you had left a window open.
- 4 Heat only the area you are in. Use a blanket to curtain off hallways and rooms without doors to keep heat in the occupied area. This low-cost fix can make a big difference in your heating costs and comfort.

visit our website at: [www.hged.com/conserv](http://www.hged.com/conserv) for more energy saving tips

## HG&E Can Install a Digital Setback Thermostat in Your Home for Just \$75

Looking for a way to save money on your heating and cooling bills? **Studies show that turning back your thermostat from 72° to 62° each night can save you 10%.** And if you set back the temperature while you're away at work, those savings can climb to 15% off your heating bills.

Digital setback thermostats make it easy to control the temperature in your home automatically. **And HG&E now offers convenient in-home installation of these thermostats for just \$75.**

The package includes a PSG Medallion Series digital thermostat capable of two setback commands with weekday and weekend schedules.

The thermostat is easy to use, and is Energy Star compliant. The large backlit LCD display is easy to read in a darkened room. The thermostat can control both heating and cooling systems.

**For Residential HG&E Natural Gas Heating Customers only.** Thermostat suitable for standard low voltage control systems only. Other non standard control systems may require an alternate thermostat model at a higher price. Offer expires 3/31/07.



Above: An easy-to-use digital setback thermostat installed by HG&E.

**To schedule an installation appointment call 536-9300**  
select option 1 from the menu

## Winter heating help

These agencies have programs to help needy families pay their winter heating bills.

Contact them directly at the telephone numbers listed below or please call the HG&E Credit Department at 536-9374 for more information.

**Valley Opportunity Council**  
fuel assistance programs

**552-1545**

**The Salvation Army**  
Good Neighbor Energy Fund

**532-6312**

**Citizens Energy / Distrigas**  
Heat Assistance Program

**866-427-9918**  
(a toll-free telephone call)

### Energy Conservation Help

You may also wish to contact our MuniHELPS energy conservation hotline, toll-free at 888-333-7525 where representatives can discuss simple measures your family can take to help reduce your home's energy consumption.

## Downtown Electric System Upgrade

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The Department employed the services of PowerComm, an outside contractor, to aid in the installation of over 15 circuit miles of electric cabling and the related equipment necessary to facilitate the upgrade.

Ongoing work will also include the removal of double pole lines, and thus effectively fully integrates the distribution system acquired from Holyoke Water Power in 2001 into our larger HG&E electric delivery network.

The area benefitting from this upgrade roughly includes the area bounded by Holyoke High School/I-391 to the Connecticut River when traveling from west to east; and from the southernmost point of the 3rd Level Canal

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

### Melanoma Fundraiser

Start celebrating St. Patricks day early this year, come join Sailing for Success melanoma fundraiser March 10th 7pm at the Holyoke Elks Lodge.

Live Irish entertainment by the Highland Rovers Band and Holyoke's own Caledonian Pipe band. Great food, entertainment and raffles.

Call Joanne Roy at (413) 536-2772 for Tickets (\$25 per person). Not only will you have a Great time you will be supporting a great cause.

## A convenient new location to pay your HG&E bill...

We have added a payment dropbox at the **Stop & Shop Supermarket on Northampton Street. Payments made at this location are credited to your bill on the next business day.**

### Payment Drop-Box Locations

- CVS/Pharmacy, 223 South Street, 536-1432
- Brooks Pharmacy, 1504 Northampton St, 533-7985
- Stop & Shop, 28 Lincoln Street, 536-1247
- Wally's BP Shop, 297 Apremont Highway, 533-1631
- Arrow Prescription, 492 Westfield Road, 536-5506
- Stop & Shop, 2265 Northampton St, 536-9287

(closest to the River) north to Walnut Street. This area encompasses the Flats, South Holyoke, and the Historic Downtown Canal District.



above: a Downtown area where duplicate electrical poles are slated for removal as part of this upgrade project