

Are You Eligible For The 2011 Home Heating Credit?

spotlight The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) doesn't want you to miss your chance to receive the Home Heating Credit (HHC) from the state of Michigan! The HHC can help pay your winter heating bills and is funded by federal Low-income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Eligible low-income consumers either do not know about the credit or fail to take advantage of it. If you use a large portion of your monthly income to pay heating costs, you may be eligible for the HHC for the 2011 tax year. The size of the credit may change from year to year depending on the amount of LIHEAP funding.

Who can apply?

Eligible customers must meet the following guidelines:

- Your homestead is in Michigan,
- You own or rent the home (including a rented apartment or mobile home on a lot in a mobile home park) where you live, and
- Your income is within the limits listed in the chart below or you qualify based on alternate guidelines including household income, exemptions, and heating costs. Check the HHC form (MI-1040CR-7 for more information).

Income Guidelines	
Exemptions	Income Ceiling
1	\$11,986
2	\$16,186
3	\$20,387
4	\$24,587
5	\$28,815
6	\$33,014
For each Additional Exemption, add:	\$4,200

**Customers who qualify for the HHC are also eligible for the Winter Protection Plan. Contact your local utility for more information*

How to apply?

You can apply for the HHC by filling out form MI-1040CR-7 for 2011. You do not have to file a Michigan tax return to apply for the HHC. There are many ways to get an HHC form:

- Forms are available on the Michigan Department of Treasury website, michigan.gov/treasury. Enter "Home Heating Credit" in the search box on the left side of the page.
- You can file for your credit online. Visit the Department of Treasury website, Mifastfile.org for additional information.
- You can call the Department of Treasury at 517-636-4486 to receive a copy.
- Paper copies of the forms are also available at most public libraries, Northern Michigan post offices, Secretary of State branch offices, Department of Human Service offices, and other locations where income tax forms are available.
- For hearing or speech impaired, TTY is available through the Michigan Relay Center, 800-649-3777, or 711.
- Some utility companies have forms available and personnel who can help with the forms; call your company to see if they can assist. Your utility company may also have a list of agencies that can help you complete the form.

When to apply?

File your HHC form as soon as you know your household income for 2011. The sooner you file the form, the sooner you will get the credit. *THE DEADLINE FOR FILING THE FORM IS SEPTEMBER 30, 2012.*

Before you send in your HHC form, check to make sure it is complete, accurate, and that you have signed it. Make a copy of it to keep with your records, or keep a copy of the number of exemptions you are claiming, the date you filed it, and the amount of the credit to use in verifying the status of your credit application with the Department of Treasury.

If you have trouble paying your heating bills while you are waiting for the credit and receive a shut-off notice, call your company immediately and tell the service representative that you submitted the HHC form. If your utility company is regulated by the MPSC, you cannot have your heat shut-off while you are waiting for the credit.

When will you get the credit?

It will take the Michigan Department of Treasury several weeks from the time it receives the claim form to process until you receive your energy credit. Once you have filed your credit, you can check on its status by calling 517-636-4486 or online at Mlfastfile.org.