

Deadline to Apply for LIHEAP Recovery Crisis Grants is August 31

By Senator Scavello

PEN ARGYL - Pennsylvanians who are struggling to pay utility bills during the COVID-19 pandemic can still apply for assistance through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Recovery Crisis program. <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/providers/Providers/Pages/LIHEAP-Recovery-Crisis-Program.aspx>

The program offers payments directly to utility companies or fuel providers for renters and homeowners who have been severely impacted by the pandemic.

The program is scheduled to end on August 31. Applications are available online or by contacting your local County Assistance Office. <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Pages/CAO-Contact.aspx>

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Ken Field

Owner of Slate
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Exclusively in the Blue Valley Times Warranty and DIY Ramblings

Everybody loves the thought of a lifetime warranty. In your mind you say "well, that's the last one of those I'll have to pay for". In reality that warranty is very specific and can be invalidated by so many things it's not funny. Lately, if we install an air conditioning system and the equipment is not registered with the manufacturer within 30 days, the 'lifetime' warranty is shortened drastically. Like down to 5 years. That's why I personally register each and every system we install. A warranty covers manufacturer defects and normal wear. We do see some parts fail inside of that warranty but many times problems are caused by improper installation or external conditions. When a basement is flooded and parts are ruined, that is not a warranty claim. It may be covered under some homeowner's insurance policies but not a manufacturer's warranty. Some manufacturers even want verification that regular maintenance was performed before authorizing expensive claims.

In an effort to cut out the middleman many people are shopping for heating and air conditioning systems on the internet. On the surface it seems like a good way to save some money but there are many more pitfalls than one can imagine. One is that equipment registration may be impossible without the credentials of a certified dealer. Certifying contractors eliminates a lot of warranty claims for issues created by an improper installation and manufacturers require training to get certified. If the equipment arrives at your home and is damaged, the process for replacement is long and difficult. Surprisingly, air conditioning equipment is very easy to damage when it's handled roughly. Once it gets to your home, if you don't unbox it and check for cracked plastic or dented fins, it's on you, not the carrier.

Most contractors don't want to get involved in partial DIY jobs either. I did get involved last year in one for a friend and half of the parts they had there for installation were wrong. It took more than a week for them to return the wrong stuff and get the correct parts.

Warranties are a valuable part of any purchase but just like health insurance, there can be a lot of paperwork and it must be submitted correctly or there will be no payment. A contractor may not foot the cost of your parts until they get credit from a distributor so don't be surprised if you have to pay up front and get the cost of the parts back when the claim is approved. Deal with people you trust for best results.

Ken Field is the owner of Slate Belt Energy and Field's Service, Inc. As a certified energy rater and contractor, he is qualified to assess every aspect of energy usage and prescribe solutions to save energy. He can be reached at 610-759-6306 or email Ken@FieldsService.com

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Your Resources for Voting Information

By Rep. Joe Emrick

My office is receiving many calls about new procedures and options with voting in Pennsylvania this year.

VotesPA.com (<http://www.votespa.com/>) is the state resource with all information regarding voting in Pennsylvania. It's a great starting point for your questions. Links are available to:

- Check your registration status.

<https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/pages/voterregistration-status.aspx>

- Apply to register to vote or update your registration online.

<https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/VoterRegistrationApplication.aspx>

- Request a mail-in ballot.

<https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Mail-and-Absentee-Ballot.aspx>

- Check your mail-in ballot status.

<https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/BallotTracking.aspx>

- Learn about voting in person at a polling place.

<https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Voting-at-a-Polling-Place.aspx>

You're also welcome to call the Northampton County Board of Elections at 610-829-6500.

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