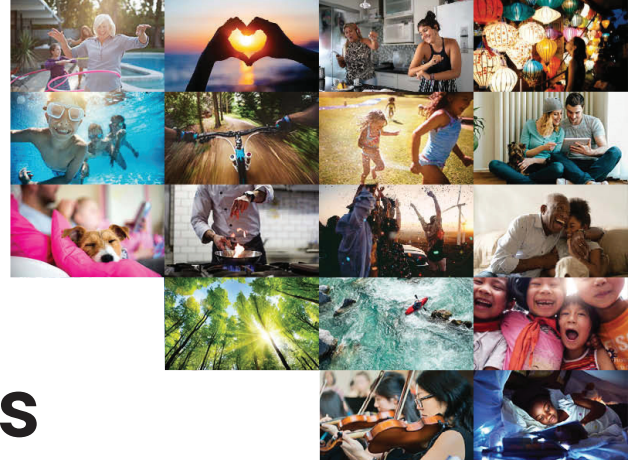




Liberty™

# News for our Natural Gas Customers

## Special Protections Edition



MA

November/December 2021



## How to Reach Us

### Emergencies

1-800-936-7000

### Customer Service/Billing/ Payments

1-800-544-4944 or

[www.libertyenergyandwater.com](http://www.libertyenergyandwater.com)

### Safety and Savings Information

[www.twitter.com/LibertyUtil\\_MA](https://www.twitter.com/LibertyUtil_MA)

[www.facebook.com/LibertyUtilitiesMA](https://www.facebook.com/LibertyUtilitiesMA)

### Customer Walk-In Centers

Currently closed due to COVID-19 restrictions

36 Fifth Street (Hartwell Street entrance)  
Fall River, MA 02720

### Bill Payment Locations

Payments can be made at our walk-in center once it reopens, most Walmart locations and other authorized CheckFreePay® locations. To find one near you, visit [www.libertyenergyandwater.com](http://www.libertyenergyandwater.com).

### Income Eligible Assistance

For Fall River, Westport, Somerset, and Swansea: Citizens for Citizens  
1-508-679-0041

For North Attleboro and Plainville:  
Self Help, Inc. 1-508-226-4192

## Budget Billing Plans

Monthly payment plans are available to spread the cost of your natural gas more evenly throughout the year. This free service is available to all of our residential customers. Knowing your monthly payment in advance can make it easier to manage your household energy payments from season to season. Here is how the plan works:

- Your initial budget amount is based on your average monthly bill from the previous twelve (12) months. If your account has been open for less than twelve months, the budget amount will be estimated.
- After six (6) months, your budget billing plan will be reviewed and may be adjusted to reflect changes in gas costs or your actual usage for this six-month period.
- Your twelfth monthly bill will reflect the difference between your actual usage and your budget billing plan payments for the year. This difference could be a credit or an outstanding balance.

For more information, contact Customer Care at (800) 544-4944.

## Payment Arrangements

Liberty offers convenient payment arrangements for managing past due balances. Once a good faith payment is made to the account, the remaining balance can be spread out over a period of two to six months. The monthly payment will be calculated based on the past due amount plus any charges accrued during the current billing cycle. To establish a payment arrangement on your account, please contact Customer Care at (800) 544-4944.

## Payments at Payment Stations

To protect yourself and your natural gas service, please use caution when paying your bill in person at a third-party payment center. Some local stores may accept utility payments as a courtesy to their customers, but we cannot guarantee that payments made at unauthorized locations will be posted to your account on time or even received by Liberty.

Authorized pay stations can be found on our website at [www.libertyenergyandwater.com](http://www.libertyenergyandwater.com). Also, it is a good idea to always keep your receipt in case you must verify a payment.

## Have You Been Affected?

The pandemic has caused financial hardship for many people. We want to make sure customers take advantage of programs available to them. From calling us for a payment arrangement, to contacting Mass Save® and getting a no-cost Home Energy Assessment, reducing costs and setting a budget will help ease some financial stress. With increased income guidelines, people who didn't qualify for fuel assistance in the past may now be eligible. Other programs, such as the Good Neighbor Energy Fund, offer assistance for people in temporary financial crisis who do not qualify for state or federal aid. Call 2-1-1 for a list of statewide programs, your local CAP agency (listed on the front) for fuel assistance programs, or call us for a payment arrangement.

## Third Party Notification Service

Liberty offers customers a service known as "Third Party Notification." This service allows Liberty, with your permission, to notify a friend, relative or neighbor if your gas bill is overdue. This is particularly helpful for those who would like a reminder to pay their bill or who may need help managing their bills. The person you select as your "third party" is not responsible for paying your bill, only for reminding you to pay it if it becomes overdue. If you are interested in this service, please call Customer Care at (800) 544-4944 to request a Third Party Notification Service form.

## For Customers Requesting Protected Status

In Massachusetts, if everyone living in your home is 65 years old or older OR if the only other resident of your home under the age of 65 is a minor, you are eligible for special protection from the termination of your natural gas service as a result of an arrears on your account.

There are other protections as well. Your natural gas service cannot be shut off, or will be restored, if you provide certification to Liberty that you are unable to pay any overdue bill because of financial hardship, and:

- Someone living in your home is seriously ill; or
- A child under 12 months old lives in your home; or
- Between November 15th and March 15th natural gas is used as your primary heating fuel and your service was not shut off for non-payment before November 15th.

It is the customer's responsibility to contact Liberty to apply for protected status. Contact Customer Care at (800) 544-4944 for more information on how to apply.

## Arrearage Management Program (AMP)

Liberty's Arrearage Management Program (AMP) provides financial assistance to eligible low-income customers with active accounts that have outstanding bills in arrears. Under the AMP program, eligible low-income customers may qualify for forgiveness of past due utility bills and program participants receive monthly credits to their past due account once all the program requirements have been met (some restrictions may apply). Participation in the Arrearage Management Program and forgiveness of the past due balance is extended only once, unless extenuating circumstances have occurred.

**Eligibility** - The following eligibility guidelines must be met to qualify for the Arrearage Management Program (AMP):

- Must be the customer of record at the premise (not a landlord account);
- The customer of record must reside at the location where the utility service is provided;
- Must have outstanding bills with a minimum of \$300.00 in arrears and sixty (60) days past due;
- Must be eligible for the company's low-income discount rate; and
- Must not be shutoff for non-payment.

**Program Requirements** - Customers approved for the AMP program must:

1. Enter into a monthly budget that includes current bill amount and future projected bills for the term of the budget less any projected fuel assistance payments.
2. Pay the monthly amount agreed to in order to receive the monthly AMP credit. After six (6) months, your budget will be reviewed and may be adjusted to reflect changes in gas costs or your actual usage for this six-month period. You will be notified if the budget amount will be changed.
3. Apply for, and agree to participate in, all other financial assistance programs available (e.g. fuel assistance, weatherization/conservation, etc.).

Failure to pay the monthly amount agreed to will result in termination of the budget agreement, and any remaining AMP benefit will be forfeited. The AMP budget may be reinstated if all missed payments along with the current payments are made. **You may apply for this program by calling Customer Care at (800) 544-4944.**