

# Utility Discount Programs for Low-Income Households

The Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia (PSC) requires Verizon Washington DC, Inc., Pepco, and Washington Gas to offer discounted rates to low income residential customers. Below is a brief description of each program.



## TELECOMMUNICATIONS

**ECONOMY II**, also known as Lifeline, is the government discount program offered by Verizon in the District. This program offers discounted wire line local telephone service to qualified D.C. customers under 65 years of age for \$3.00 a month. Seniors 65 years of age or older pay \$1.00 per month. D.C. residents participating in Lifeline have unlimited calling in the Washington metropolitan area. Lifeline service is a non-transferable benefit and only one Lifeline service discount is available per household. Only eligible consumers may enroll in the Lifeline program and consumers who willfully make false statements in order to obtain the benefit can be punished by fine or imprisonment or can be barred from the program.

## HOW TO APPLY

**ECONOMY II:** To apply for Economy II, call **1-800-253-0846** for eligibility requirements and an application. To qualify for Economy II, applicants must participate in certain federal programs or meet certain income guidelines. Economy II customers must recertify every year.

**RES and RAD:** To apply for RES and RAD, residents must contact the District Department of Energy and the Environment (DOEE) by calling 311. In order to qualify for RES or RAD, the applicant must be a District resident and the utility bill must be in the applicant's name. The applicant must also meet the following established income guidelines:



## ELECTRIC

**RESIDENTIAL AID DISCOUNT (RAD)** is the discount program offered by Pepco and competitive electricity suppliers. The program offers eligible residential customers a monthly credit, the Residential Aid Credit (RAC). The RAC replaces the previous discount that was applied to RAD customers' generation and transmission charges on their account. The RAC covers the following charges: the full customer charge and energy charge for distribution; and exemption from the following surcharges: the Residential Aid Discount Surcharge, the Sustainable Energy Trust Fund, and the Energy Assistance Trust Fund. Credits for these charges are individually listed on the customers' bills as "RAC Distribution" and "RAC Surcharges." Customers will receive the RAC whether or not they have a retail supplier. The full RAC is equal to approximately 30% of a typical RAD customer's bill.

### **RES & RAD Current Income Guidelines**

Household Size	Maximum Annual Income
1	\$30,918
2	\$40,431
3	\$49,944
4	\$59,457
5	\$68,970
6	\$78,483
7	\$80,267
8	\$82,051



## NATURAL GAS

**RESIDENTIAL ESSENTIAL SERVICE (RES)** is the discount program offered by Washington Gas. This program offers a discount on the distribution portion of the customers bill through the winter months from November through April. The recently simplified RES eliminates the previous three different income tiers whereby RES customers were classified, and eliminates the cap on the discount. The new discount is achieved through a percentage reduction of the distribution portion of a customers bill, resulting in an approximately 25% reduction in the total bill. The RES additionally provides for an automatic short-term increase in the reduction to the distribution portion of the bill when purchased gas prices rise above a specified historic percentage. RES customers bills will also indicate the costs of surcharges that RES customers' are exempt from paying, specifically the RES surcharge; The Sustainable Energy Trust Fund surcharge, and The Energy Assistance Trust Fund surcharge. Customers can enroll in the RES program year-round; the enrollment year begins on October 1.

Proof of income must be provided with the application. To show proof of income, a copy of one of the documents listed below must be provided with the application: W-2 form, paycheck stub, award letter, unemployment compensation letter, or other formal verification. Participants must reapply for certification each year.

For more information, call the PSC's Office of Consumer Services on 202-626-5120 or the DOEE Office at 311.