



## Media Release:

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### **Juneau Unplugged Household Electric Bill Relief Says, “Please Wait for Your Next Electric Bill before Applying”**

According to Kevin Ritchie, Program Manager, when eligible households submit applications they must include a copy of their AEL&P bill received after May 16<sup>th</sup>. May 16<sup>th</sup> is the date that AEL&P will send out the first bills with the higher rates. **No one should worry. Every eligible person will be served, even if their bill with the first avalanche-related increase comes out in June.** The program cannot process the application without a copy of the higher AEL&P bill because the assistance amount cannot be calculated. AEL&P will send out bills with the higher rates throughout the next 30 days.

The Juneau Unplugged Household Electric Bill Relief Program is now organized to deal with an expected 3,000 to 3,500 applications in the first 30 days. “Creating and staffing a program to serve a large number of people in less than two weeks has taken an amazing amount of “above and beyond” help by a great many people, especially the staff of Catholic Community Service and the United Way,” Ritchie said.

- Applicants are encouraged to send in applications by mail. They can now also pick up applications and drop them off at **any of Juneau’s Libraries, AEL&P, the Valley Job Service Center, or the program office at Catholic Community Service.** Applicants may also make copies of AEL&P bills and income verification documents to submit with their applications at each of the locations. (Note: \$0.15 per page at libraries – free copies at other locations).
- Many agencies that work with low-income households have volunteered to help streamline the process by sending prequalifying letters to each of their eligible clients. According to Ritchie, “The positive response and immediate action by Juneau’s human service agencies has been wonderful.” The clients may submit their electric bill relief application with the agency letter attached to verify household income. The agencies include the State Department of Health and Social Services, Tlingit and Haida Housing Authority, Tlingit and Haida Central Council, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, the Juneau School Lunch Program, and several other agencies.
- It is estimated that 3,000 to 3,500 Juneau households qualify for assistance with gross income under 200% of the federal poverty guidelines adjusted for Alaska. It is anticipated that the first month each qualified household will receive a credit of 30 cents per Kilowatt Hour reducing their potential increase from about 500% with no assistance to about 100%. According to Ritchie, “For low-income households on a fixed income, even with this assistance it will still be a challenge to make ends meet. There will definitely be a strong structural incentive to conserve.”
- During the first month each applicant will receive a letter stating that they are approved or not approved based on the income verification to establish eligibility. Approved applicants will also receive notice of the amount of their first month’s assistance payment to their AEL&P account. Each applicant is still responsible for paying their AEL&P bill timely.
- The Juneau Unplugged Household Electric Bill Relief Program is located in a former day care room at the corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and Gold in the Catholic Community Service Building. The opportunity to help people in need has attracted a highly skilled group of temporary part-time staff and volunteers including former Juneau City and Borough Manager Kevin Ritchie; former Director of the Permanent Fund Dividend Division Sharon Barton; Jean McBrien, former Director of Convention Sales for JCVB; Laurie Berg, long-time Juneau business person; Crystal Merritt, intake and data base specialist.



## ANNOUNCEMENT

### **There Are Six Pick Up/Drop Off/Copying Locations For Emergency Electric Bill Relief Applications**

MAILING APPLICATIONS BACK IS PREFERRED

#### **Locations:**

Applications may be picked up or dropped off during regular business hours.

Applicants may make copies of the first page of their IRS 1040 or 1040A and AEL&P Bill (Note: \$0.15 per page at libraries – free copies at other locations).

Applications can be deposited in a secure drop box that is retrieved at least every three days at:

- All Juneau Libraries:
  - Mendenhall Valley in the Mendenhall Mall
  - Downtown
  - Douglas
- Valley Job Service Center (10002 Glacier Highway)
- AEL&P Office – 5601 Tonsgard Court (Lemon Creek)
- Catholic Community Service - 419 6<sup>th</sup> Street (Downtown)

#### **To get an application online:**

- [www.ccsjuneau.org](http://www.ccsjuneau.org)
- [www.aelp.com](http://www.aelp.com)
- [www.juneau.org](http://www.juneau.org)

**To have an application mailed to you:** Call 463-6130 to have an application mailed.

#### **To return applications:**

- **Fax to:** Attn: Juneau Unplugged, 523-6208
- **Mail to:** Juneau Unplugged, Catholic Community Service, 419 Sixth St, Juneau, AK 99801

**For questions or help in applying,** call 463-6130, or email: [unplugged@ccsjuneau.org](mailto:unplugged@ccsjuneau.org)

Remember to include your AEL&P bill with your application.