

RULES AND REGULATIONS
GENERAL RULES (GR)
RULE GR-18
UTILITIES ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (UAP)

GR-18.01 GENERAL

The purpose of the UAP is to provide assistance to low income residential customers of the Utility during the months of October through March, or year-round for ~~Senior-C~~ citizens over age 65 or account holders qualified through the Social Security Administration for Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or one-time assistance to account holders who demonstrate need due to unforeseen and unusual circumstances. Funding is provided voluntarily from customers.

To qualify for monthly assistance, the household income of the applicant must be below 50% of the median household income for the ~~Santa Fe Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)~~ Los Alamos Census Designated Place (CDP), which includes ~~both Santa Fe and all of~~ Los Alamos ~~County~~ counties. The Department will verify income levels by requesting ~~either~~ either copies of tax returns, ~~or~~ pay stubs, or other suitable documentation.

GR-18.02 AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE PROVIDED

Assistance is always limited by the amount of contributions. The Utility shall attempt to distribute assistance based on need. Assistance provided will be up to 30% of the customer's average bill for consumption of water, gas, ~~and~~ electric and sewer during the previous winter months of October through March, with a maximum of \$125.00 assistance per month and a minimum of \$15.00 assistance per month for those who qualify. The monthly credit will be limited by the customers total bill for utilities services for each individual month. If the customer does not have previous winter use history at the subject residence staff will estimate appropriate assistance based on relevant comparative information.

GR-18.03 ONE-TIME PAYMENTS FOR IMMEDIATE FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

A single lump sum assistance credit may be applied to a customer's bill if they have a demonstrated need due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g., layoff, illness, major household repairs, etc.) and are in danger of their utility services being turned off for non-payment. A brief statement of income and anticipated expenses, a statement of need or hardship and details of other assistance resources sought or expended will be required. Lump sum payments will generally only be granted once per incident and only after all other assistance programs have been ~~exhausted~~ pursued. The maximum amount will be \$350.00. Each individual case will be judged on its own merit. Staff will make a recommendation for final approval by the Deputy Utilities Manager for Finance and Administration.

GR-18.04 PROCEDURE FOR ALLOCATING ASSISTANCE

The annual assistance period will be October through the following March of each year, or October through the following September for year-round assistance. A new application will be required each year. In September the Utility will determine eligibility for winter or year-round assistance and calculate the maximum allocation for each applicant. One-time assistance payments will be considered as applications are received, if funds are available. Applications received during an annual assistance period will be considered for the remainder of the current assistance period if funds are available. Each month the Utility will compute the maximum allocation for each applicant. If the total allocation thus calculated exceeds projected funds available, the allocations will be reduced on a pro-rata basis. In no case will assistance payments exceed contributed funds available at the time the assistance payment is credited to the customer's account.