

Beginners

How Cold Is It?

Weather May Determine Heating Aid Amounts

CANTON — It's so cold in St. Lawrence County that local residents here and in four other North Country counties may be receiving additional money from the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), county officials said last week.

St. Lawrence County Office for the Aging Director Joseph Sears said the final regulations have not been adopted yet, but he is hopeful that state officials may be changing the payment formula.

That could mean that the maximum grant for HEAP could rise from \$150 last year to as much as \$270 this year.

Sears said the final plan has not been approved yet by state officials administering the program, but he said that last year he and other officials who worked in the program on the local level lobbied Albany to change the guidelines for the program.

Last year, the HEAP program made similar payments to low income residents whether they lived in the North Country's frigid climes, or on Long Island where winters are milder.

Sears said he and other officials concerned with the elderly and the poor lobbied the state Social Services Department and state Energy Department, asking that a new system based on "degree days" be used in the aid formula.

One Of The Coldest That system would have benefited North Country residents who have higher heating bills because of the colder temperatures during the winter.

A system being proposed to answer that criticism divides the state into five regions, with higher payments provided for regions where the average temperature is colder during the winter.

St. Lawrence County would be grouped in region 5, the coldest region in the state.

"The program isn't in place yet," Sears said. "But it looks like we are going to have a good program."

The Office for the Aging will be administering the HEAP program for county residents over the age of 60 who are not on public assistance, but meet income eligibility requirements.

The county Social Services Department will be administering the program for residents who are on public assistance. County residents who are poor, but are under age 60 and are not on public assistance, will be served by either the Social Services Department or the St. Lawrence County Community Development Program.

CDP officials and Social Services officials are currently negotiating over whether CDP will contract to handle the program for residents not on public assistance, and under the age of 60.

Sears said his office will announce when it will begin taking applications for the HEAP program.

The Office for the Aging will again run an outreach program through the mail to alert senior citizens about the program.

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D'Amato Will Seek Milk Tax Repeal

U.S. Senator Alfonse D'Amato (R-C-N.Y.) said recently he will introduce legislation in the current session of Congress to repeal the 50-cent milk assessment scheduled to begin Dec. 1.

D'Amato said the so-called "milk tax" discriminates against New York.

According to D'Amato, the milk tax, which would deduct 50 cents from the proceeds of the sale of every hundredweight of milk, will have a devastating impact on New York's dairy farmers, costing them up to \$92 million in the first year of operation.

The 50-cent assessment passed the Congress earlier this year as part of the 1982 Omnibus Reconciliation Act. Its intent was to defray the cost of the federal dairy price support program.

The proceeds of the tax are to be remitted to the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC).

In New York State, which ranks third in the nation for dairy production, the tax would be particularly burdensome and inequitable, since New York is not an overproducer of milk products, D'Amato charged.

The state's 15,000 dairy farmers who are struggling with difficult economic conditions including, high interest rates and escalating operating costs, will be hard-pressed to meet the payment, claimed the New York lawmaker.

"The 50-cent deduction's fatal flaw is that it fails to address the foremost problem facing this country's dairy industry, a burgeoning surplus production," said D'Amato. "In fact, the milk tax will merely force farmers to increase milk production to meet their rising costs. The solution should be one that directly confronts the surplus problem, not one that compounds it," he said.

"New York," D'Amato continued, "is not responsible for the nation's overwhelming dairy surplus."

D'Amato cited U.S. Department of Agriculture statistics that show New York and other Eastern milk-producing states accountable for only 8 percent of the dairy surplus purchased by the federal government in FY 1982.

The New York State Senate Standing Committee on Agriculture has opposed a Federal proposal to impose a 50-cent per hundredweight assessment on all milk produced after Dec. 1.

The goal of the proposal is to reduce the production of surplus milk, however, the Senate position is that the assessment would increase surplus because farmers would have to produce more milk to continue operations.



NEW CITIZENS — New American citizens who were naturalized on Nov. 4 in Plattsburgh were presented flags by the American Legion in Ogdensburg recently at the legion home. Above, from left seated are Christian Verlaque, Mrs. Patricia Kingsley, Charlotte Cook, Dr. Elizabeth LaRosa, Mrs. Emilliana C. Tanglao, Mrs. Ka Kam Liu, Dr. Fu Son Frank Liu, Mrs. Patricia Milne and James Milne. Legion officials, standing from left, are William Belle, county commander; Albert J. Manville, fourth district vice commander; Hubert Houniel, Americanism chairman; Morris Needle, vice commander of Post 69; Leroy LaDue, commander of Post 69. (Mike LaComb photo)

Hospital Commended For Cost Monitoring System

Canton-Potsdam Hospital has been commended by the American Hospital Association for its ability to control costs through its voluntary participation in a monthly comparative operational monitoring system.

The facility was awarded the 1983 HAS Certificate of Recognition week for participating in the "HASMONTREND" management information program.

Canton-Potsdam Hospital monitors its costs, employee productivity, and utilization both internally over time and in comparison to similar hospitals.

"This allows Canton-Potsdam Hospital to provide higher quality services with greater staff efficiency and help us keep patient charges lower," said hospital President C. Edward Stevens.

Canton-Potsdam Hospital has participated in the comparative management information program since last January and has found it especially helpful in planning its 1983 budgets.

NEWSBRIEF

The North Country Educational Employees Federal Credit Union will be closed on Dec. 24 and Dec. 31 for the Christmas and New Year holidays.

Fundraising Activities Begin

CANTON — Members of the steering committee for the church restoration at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Canton will be directing fundraising in various divisions.

Joan Kepes and Marilyn Ross are responsible for friends in the community, while Peter Van de Water has the area of former members. Ruth Blankman and Marilyn Mintener are in charge of small businesses.

Foundations will get the attention of Rev. Max and Betty Coots and Chris Guick. Clifford Westerling, Bud Sperling and Shirley Boehm will seek the assistance of corporations.

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