

# GOOD NEIGHBOR ENERGY FUND

GIVE THE GIFT OF WARMTH

## 26th Annual Kick-Off Launches 2010-2011 GNEF Campaign

Anticipating another year of helping thousands of families in need of energy assistance across the Commonwealth, the Massachusetts Good Neighbor Energy Fund held its annual breakfast on November 18th, 2010 to kick-off the 2010-11 "Give the Gift of Warmth" campaign.



Jim Sweeney,  
Director of Operations,  
New England Gas  
Company

The Salvation Army's Major William Bode and Jim Sweeney, Director of Operations for New England Gas Company, welcomed the attendees and emphasized the important role the Fund plays each year for

those in need across the state. "Of course, with the struggling economy in mind, the campaign once again faces some major challenges this year," said Sweeney. "But the past success of the Fund gives me every confidence that we'll continue to make a difference in the lives of families in need of energy assistance across the state." He went on to thank all the participating energy companies, The Salvation Army which administers the Fund and, of course, the residents of Massachusetts for their support of the Fund over the years.

The kick-off also featured Frank Gorke, Division Director of Energy Efficiency with the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources, who spoke about the impact the Division's various programs are having throughout the state. Joining Gorke on the speaking program was Mike Wankum, a Meteorologist with WCVB-TV5 in Boston, who gave the attendees his predictions on what kind of weather to expect this winter season and the possible impact that might have on the "urgency of need."



Frank Gorke,  
Division Director of  
Energy Efficiency,  
MA Dept. of Energy  
Resources

Jeanne Cherry, 2010-11 Fund Chairperson and Lead Energy Efficiency Programs Administrator for New England Gas Company, added, "Let's all work together to top this year's fundraising goal of \$650,000 and warm all our neighbors in temporary crisis."

Although many of the Fund's energy sponsors provide a donation or matching contribution at various points throughout the year, seven sponsors presented their contributions towards the end of the kick-off event. "Considering the struggling economy that we're all enduring, these early contributions are extremely important as they help the Fund assist eligible families as soon as possible," said Major Bode.



Major William Bode,  
Divisional Commander,  
The Salvation Army

### List of GNEF Sponsors

Ashburnham Municipal Light  
Atlas Glen-mor  
Belmont Municipal Light  
Berkshire Gas  
Braintree Electric Light Dept.  
Columbia Gas of Massachusetts  
Concord Municipal Light Plant  
Groton Electric Light  
Holyoke Gas & Electric  
Littleton Electric Light  
Mansfield Municipal Electric  
Massachusetts Oilheat Council  
Middleborough Gas & Electric  
NSTAR  
National Grid  
New England Gas Company  
North Attleborough Electric Dept.  
Reading Municipal Light  
Rowley Municipal Lighting Plant  
Unitil/Fitchburg Gas & Electric  
Wakefield Municipal Gas & Light  
Wellesley Municipal Light Plant  
Western Massachusetts Electric  
Westfield Gas & Electric

## Fund Facts

- The MA Good Neighbor Energy Fund is available to any Massachusetts resident who, because of temporary financial difficulty, cannot meet a month's energy expense and is not eligible for state or federal energy assistance.
- Last year, the MA Good Neighbor Energy Fund helped more than 1,475 families pay an electric, gas or oil bill.
- Since 1985, the Fund has raised more than \$16.9 million and assisted over 76,500 needy families.
- To qualify for assistance from the MA Good Neighbor Energy Fund, an applicant's gross household income must fall between 60 and 80 percent of the state's median income levels.
- This year's maximum Fund disbursement is \$300 per eligible household per heating season.
- Sponsoring gas, electric and oil companies support their respective customers' generosity through various giving programs.

## GNEF Sets Goal to Meet Anticipated Need

Massachusetts residents' support of their neighbors in need was evident during last year's campaign as hundreds of thousands of dollars were raised to assist more than 1,475 families.

Considering the struggling economy and high unemployment rate, the Fund's goal for 2010-11 is \$650,000. It is anticipated that the money raised will help more than 2,000 Massachusetts families this winter season. The Salvation Army, which administers the Fund, is already beginning to see a rise in the number of phone calls from families in need. In fact, the Fund expects to receive approximately 5,000 requests for aid this winter alone.

Please look for your green Good Neighbor donation envelope provided with your utility bill or take advantage of some companies' "add a dollar" program whereby customers are asked to overpay their utility bills by one dollar or more.

And the need doesn't end with the cold weather. Families in temporary

crisis also request assistance with their energy bills even when the weather warms up. The need is year-round, as is the Massachusetts Good Neighbor Energy Fund.

If you know of someone who is in need, please have them visit one of the 36 local Salvation Army offices throughout the state. For more information, call:

**Western Massachusetts**  
1-800-262-1320  
(Serving Area Code 413)

**Eastern Massachusetts**  
1-800-334-3047  
(Serving Area Codes 508, 617, 781 & 978)

**You may also visit**  
[www.magoodneighbor.org](http://www.magoodneighbor.org)



## Totaling Up Those Envelope Donations!



The Good Neighbor Energy Fund Committee members gathered three times last February and March to help The Salvation Army count and process energy customer donations received via the Fund's green-colored donation envelopes. After burning up several calculators, representatives from a dozen energy sponsors and The Salvation Army processed more than \$147,000 from 4,562 donors. Thank you volunteers!

## GNEF Announces 2010 Awards

The Massachusetts Good Neighbor Energy Fund is proud to announce that the fourth annual recipient of the Lt. Colonel Fred Van Brunt Good Neighbor Award is Rockland Trust.

Named in honor of the retired Divisional Commander of The Salvation Army who was a strong advocate for the Fund, Rockland Trust is recognized for its community leadership and giving spirit. The bank organized a "Warm for the Winter" drive held in its 71 branches during the month of December 2009. Rockland Trust sold paper mittens for \$1, \$3 and \$5 with all proceeds benefiting the Fund.



Above (left to right:) Wil Leslie, Service Extension Director at The Salvation Army, and Melissa Brastow, GNEF Committee Member and Customer Service Representative at North Attleborough Electric Department, accept a check for \$7,000 from Bill Matteson, Senior Vice President at Rockland Trust.

The third annual GNEF Chairman's Award recipient is Kate Agin, Community Outreach Representative with Western Massachusetts Electric. For more than a decade, Agin has consistently showed her dedication and support of the Fund as GNEF Committee Chairperson and as an active committee member.

## Give The Gift of Warmth

A letter received by The Salvation Army

Dear Sir,

I am a single mother who receives no state assistance – no welfare, no food stamps, and no public housing. I'm always very busy as I work at a full-time job as a receptionist and have four children to take care of – especially my son who has chronic health problems requiring expensive medication.

Recently, my apartment became even more crowded as I had to take in my sister and her children as well as several teenagers who had no other place to go. Not surprisingly, it put a real strain on my budget and I was constantly facing the question of, "heat or eat."

I was very desperate and asked a friend if they knew where I could get some financial counseling. It was at that point that I was introduced to the social workers at The Army and they helped me apply for and receive assistance through the Good Neighbor Energy Fund.

To everyone associated with the Fund, my heart overflows with thanks. There are no words to explain how I feel. My family will be forever grateful.

## Don't Qualify for GNEF Assistance?

For those who are not eligible for assistance through the Good Neighbor Energy Fund, Energy Bucks might be a place to turn. Energy Bucks is an initiative sponsored by the non-profit organization LEAN (Low-Income Energy Affordability Network) to help low and moderate-income families in Massachusetts save up to 30 percent on their energy bills by participating in fuel assistance, discount rates and energy efficiency programs.



For more information on the program or how to apply, visit [www.energybucks.com](http://www.energybucks.com) or call 866-537-7267 today.