

# Higher gas prices likely to increase utility bills

Natural gas prices have spiked in recent days, due to several weeks of record low temperatures and "polar vortexes" hitting large parts of the country. Combined with depleted natural gas storage supplies nationwide, the likely result will be higher gas bills for February and March.

"With all the cold weather last month in the Midwest and Northeast, gas storage supplies are at a five-year low and forecasts for most of the country are calling for below normal temperatures," said Dixie Riedel, Senior Gas Scheduler for Midwest Energy. "Our two main pipeline suppliers have put out critical notices indicating tighter supplies, and usage remains

very high, so we're having to buy more expensive gas than last month."

Midwest Energy's January gas price averaged \$4.73 for January, so a home using 140 therms (about 14 million BTUs) used \$66.22 in gas. Early February daily prices for gas so far are about 90 cents higher than January; if those prices stay consistent through February, the cost of gas for that same home would climb to \$78.82.

"We're seeing a lot of volatility in daily prices right now; we've seen prices on some pipelines above \$30 per million BTU," said Pat Parke, Midwest Energy's Vice President of Customer Service. "Hopefully, daily prices will moderate later

this month and we can offset these higher costs, but we wanted customers to be informed so they're not surprised when they open their February and March bills."

Bills vary by customer depending on the size and age of the home, number of gas appliances, number in the household, thermostat settings and levels of insulation.

Midwest Energy has in place a number of tools to help customers manage their energy bills, including energy assistance and efficiency tips, and several payment options. Details for these programs can be found at [www.mwenergy.com](http://www.mwenergy.com) or by calling 1-800-222-3121.

## Cleaning up...



Tuesday brought the area a winter blast with approximately five inches of snow being dumped on Norton County. Crews were running 24/7 in hopes of keeping the roads safe for travelers. On Wednesday Norton City crews were hard at work trying to clean up what Mother Nature left behind. A bit of bad with the good, we need the moisture but not the mess.

- Telegram photo by Dana Paxton

# Low-income Kansas families to receive rapid assistance

Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) Secretary Phyllis Gilmore announced today, a new Emergency Propane Relief Program. This temporary program is designed to help individuals who rely on propane as their primary heating source and whose income falls between 130 and 185 percent of the federal poverty level.

"We know that as propane costs have dramatically increased, working poor families are unable to afford the expense

of keeping their homes warm," Governor Sam Brownback said. "I am excited to see DCF working quickly to help those in need in this emergency situation."

The Emergency Propane Relief Program will provide a one-time \$511 benefit to eligible households. The payment will be issued as a two-party check, so that only the propane vendor can deposit it.

The application period is from Tuesday, Feb. 4 through Tuesday, March 4. Applications

must be received prior to 5 p.m. on March 4. The continued need for this temporary program will be monitored closely.

Applications are available at all DCF service centers. The applications can also be downloaded from [www.dcf.ks.gov](http://www.dcf.ks.gov) and faxed, emailed to [propane@dcf.ks.gov](mailto:propane@dcf.ks.gov) or delivered directly to the nearest DCF service center. All supporting documentation must be provided before the application can be processed. Necessary docu-

ments include income verification and verification of propane usage and vendor.

"This temporary program is designed to help low-income adults with children and older adults living on fixed incomes," DCF Secretary Phyllis Gilmore said. "We look forward to helping Kansas families receive the help they need during this unexpected propane price hike."

Families that qualify for the Emergency Propane Relief Program must meet the following

criteria:

Households must use propane as their primary heating source and provide verification of their current propane vendor and bill. Applicants must provide verification of their household's income for the past 30 days.

The combined monthly gross income of household members must be between 130 and 185 percent of the federal poverty level according to the chart below:

Household Size and Monthly

Income

1 above \$1,211; below \$1,771  
 2 above \$1,640; below \$2,391  
 3 above \$2,069; below \$3,011  
 4 above \$2,498; below \$3,631

Households below 130 percent of the federal poverty level may apply for the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP). Those who list propane as their primary heating source will receive priority status for processing.

## LYLE NEWS

**By Veda Wood**

Joyce Sumner visited Ron Temple and Joyce Price at the Norton County Hospital on Friday, and Joyce says she is doing so well that she should be out of the hospital sooner than formerly thought, possibly two weeks.

On Sunday Toots Magers, Judy Easton, Jane Engelhardt and Joyce Sumner attended Helen Helm's birthday party in Oberlin. They were all Lyle neighbors for many years. When Toots arrived back home,

she found that Shanna and Don Nitzel had been there. Charlie Easton had oral surgery in Wichita last week. Thursday was pinocle day for Toots on Thursday.

Dwight Wood had another fainting spell brought on by internal bleeding. He is still in the North Platte, Neb. hospital where they have given him more blood, and as soon as they can get the proper instrument, he will have surgery. He is resting, getting dialysis, and only in

pain when he has to be moved.

June Jolly is keeping busy; playing cards, playing bingo and helping with bingo. She is still swimming, going for routine checkups and driving other people for their checkups.

Cathy Anthony is enjoying her retirement. One priority at this time is going to watch her grandsons wrestle.

Kathy Van Meter and Lloyd Frandsen saw Canada's Cowgirl Sweetheart. Eli Barsi, who played, sang and yodeled at

the Dinner Theater in Oberlin on Saturday evening. They had steel guitar, mandolin, and her husband played the bass viol.

Beth Johnson was taken to the Decatur County Hospital this week, and the diagnosis was that she has suffered a stroke. The community is hoping and praying for a fast recovery.

The Superbowl game was a real disaster for Denver fans. I usually tell folks that I am neutral, as we are sure to have fans of both sides in the family,

and if I have a favorite, they usually lose. It was sad to see it so one-sided.

I seem to be having phone trouble today. We'll see if a new battery will help.

Thirteen people ate at the Lyle dinner on Sunday, including Jane Engelhardt, Ward Sumner and grandson, Chandler Sumner and friend, and Dewayne and Aurelia Jackson.

Kathy Van Meter and Lloyd Frandsen were at Lyle and Lloyd scooped snow for Toots Magers.

Lloyd and Kathy attended the Cattle Seminar on Thursday at the Oxford Mulligan Restaurant.

June Jolly has a new quilt in the frames, so outside of her usual card games, etc., we know what she is doing. She was shocked to hear of the death of Bill Ellis, of local Lebanon, Neb.

Dwight Wood is resting, doing physical therapy and trying to gain strength. He still has a lot of pain and soreness, but is working at getting better.

## Tractor

(Continued From Page 1)

weed report from Reggie Beckman. The commissioners reviewed the acres treated as well as the estimated infested acres in the county.

- Provided tax abatements of \$5,459. Of that one was an oil well, that had declined in production and received a \$5,331 abatement.
- Heard from Dean and Dwight Sprigg, Robbie Mapes and Mark and Lucille Retke on a concern about a road in Rock

Branch Township, which has had no maintenance. County Attorney Doug Sebelius told the group that since the road has been vacated for several years the only way for them to proceed would be for the Spriggs to file a legal petition since the commissioners have no authority over a vacated road.

- Received County Treasurer Cynthia Linner's monthly report on sales tax collection sent to the state and what the state sends back to the county

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### PURSUANT TO 1.101, CH. 279,2

Published in The Norton Telegram on Friday, February 7, 2014

Pursuant to 1.101, ch. 279,2

Results of the market study analysis for Norton County for assessment year 2014.

A study of the residential real estate market indicated that there is an overall inflationary trend of approximately 0% to 4% per year depending on age of residence and location.

A study of the commercial and vacant lot real estate market indicated that the market is stable with no definitive trend.

Values on specific properties may not follow the general trend because of changes in the property, correction of descriptive information or adjustment of values based on sales of similar properties. In accordance with the provisions in K.S.A. 79-1476, the Division of Property Valuation is required to annually furnish each county the results of its study relating to changes, if any, of the use value of agricultural land. Changes can and do occur as a result of several factors including cropping practices, commodity prices and production costs.

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