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Seniors aided to heat homes

A federally-funded program to help senior citizens pay home heating bills is now being implemented in Michigan.

The program will provide a one-time payment directly to fuel suppliers of up to \$250, on behalf of people at least 65 years old who have large, unpaid heating bills and face having heating service discontinued.

It will also provide direct payments of \$50 to those who have paid high heating bills and suffer financial hardship as a result.

Called the Special Energy Crisis Intervention Program, it was

authorized by the United States Congress for states that wished to participate, and applications are already available through Offices on Aging.

Applications must be returned by Aug. 15, and payments will be mailed by Sept. 30. Fuel suppliers have been notified of the program and requested to participate. They have also been asked to help identify those seniors who have outstanding heating bills and may need assistance.

Senior citizens can contact their county Department of Social Services or the area Office on Aging for an application.

OCC Channel 56 feature

Oakland Community College, its programs and staff were featured on a recent "It's Your Turn" program on Channel 56.

Aired at 11 p.m. on July 19, the program was developed and directed by OCC faculty member Ted Rancont, and featured 25 OCC staff members.

The college's personal-

ized approach to education was discussed, as were such classes as life drawing, auto mechanics, biology and allied health.

Designed to be entertaining as well as informative, the show featured a live boia constrictor, a classical guitar artist, and a presentation by the Children's Theater group.

Hills has new LPN

Rebecca Oliver, Farmington Hills, is among 39 who will graduate from Oakland Community College's Practical Nurse

program on July 29. The program is funded under the Comprehensive Employment Training Act.

Seniors housing

(Continued from page 1A)

pride." Commissioner Ben Marks said. Some of the elderly see welfare or other types of government aid as shameful, Dornan explained.

About 81.7 of the seniors who answered the survey indicated they weren't subject to financial need. Medical need was also denied by 79 per cent of the answering seniors. Nursing needs were denied by 97.5 per cent of the elderly who returned the survey.

About 87.8 per cent indicated they didn't need help with housing. Transportation wasn't a problem for 80 per cent of the respondents.

Again, the commission was sceptical.

"Medical and transportation needs by the elderly and sources for this area are being investigated by the city," Dornan said. ALTHOUGH MOST owned their own homes in the city for more than 10 years, elderly respondents also said their chief source of income was from Social Security. If the seniors do receive Social Security, the average check is in the \$440-a-month range, according to Marks.

While 23.5 per cent of the seniors rely solely on the social security payments, about 71.4 supplement those checks with other sources of income, according to the survey. About 1.8 per cent indicated that their income came from a job.

Working with government figures, the commissioners set aside 20 per cent of a senior's monthly income for housing costs. With this figure, they suggest that any housing priced at more than \$150 a month would require more than the allotted 20 per cent of the seniors' incomes.

About 50 per cent of the seniors said their income range was more \$1,000 a month. In the \$751-\$1,000-a-month bracket, the survey showed a membership of 24.6 per cent of the answering seniors.

On the other end of the spectrum, 20.9 per cent of the seniors said they had between \$251-\$500 a month. Another 5.9 per cent indicated they received less than \$250 a month.

"Those who have over \$751 a month, we shouldn't worry about," said Czubiak. "It's those who have less than \$300 we should worry about. That's about 20 per cent of the seniors."

COMMISSIONER WILLIAM Flattery was cautious about the income figures.

"There are seniors who don't consider their savings as income. Many are receiving help from their children or have savings accounts in their children's names. When they get to be about 70 they get senile and forgetful and forget about their savings accounts," he said.

"And some don't take their medicine and don't have food because they have to have housing first," added Councilmember Jeanne Smith, who was observing the session.

Seniors indicated that 61 per cent of their numbers paid more than \$250 a month for housing. About 15 per cent paid between \$201-\$250 a month and another 15 per cent had a monthly housing bill of \$151-\$200. Another 1.5 per cent said they paid between \$51-\$100 a month for housing.

About 8.7 per cent of the answering seniors indicated they live in senior housing. Because there are about 322 senior units in the city, the commission took into account that some seniors are classifying their apartments as elderly housing.

About 48.9 per cent of the seniors own their homes. Another two per cent rent a house and 25.7 per cent rent an apartment.

Condominiums are rented by 7.3 per cent of the respondents and mobile homes are occupied by another two per cent.

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