



News Release

Lifeline, Inc.

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Home Energy Assistance Program Summer Crisis Program Helping Lake Co. Residents Beat the Heat July 19, 2018

PAINESVILLE, Ohio— The HEAP Summer Crisis Program (SCP), which began on July 2 and concluded on August 31, served a high number of low-income households with emergency utility assistance and cooling.

Throughout the two months of the Summer Crisis Season, Lifeline's staff completed applications for over 320 households from nearly every community in Lake County for emergency assistance. Of those applications, over 310 of them were either approved for assistance with their electric bill or received an air conditioner. Over \$52,000 in federal dollars were expended over the course of the season, in addition to the 30 window air conditioners distributed.

"July and August can be two extremely hot months in Ohio, and that can take a toll on older Ohioans and Ohioans with breathing conditions," said David Goodman, director of the Ohio Development Services Agency.

"It was a very steady summer season with a lot of days in the 90s," said Carrie Dotson, Executive Director at Lifeline. "Our lobby was often very full and we were also able to get out into the community more, too."

Through a partnership with the Lake County Council on Aging and many of Lake County Senior Citizens Centers, Lifeline was able to take applications on-site at many of the centers, which increased access for senior citizens across the county.

"This program really isn't just about providing comfort—it's about keeping our most vulnerable residents, senior citizens and those with health conditions, safe and healthy. With the guidelines to qualify for the SCP requiring that applicants must either have a senior citizen in the home or have a physician documented health condition, we know we're helping folks who really need assistance. These are people who clearly need their utilities on and to keep cool during the hottest months of the year," said Dotson. "We're grateful to the Council on Aging and the local senior centers for helping us increase access for some of our county's more vulnerable populations."

The HEAP Summer Crisis Program provides assistance to low-income households with an elderly member (60 years or older), or households that can provide physician documentation that cooling assistance is needed for a household member's health. Applicants must be Lake County residents and must have a gross income at or below 175 percent of the federal poverty guidelines to qualify for assistance.

For more information on the HEAP Programs, please contact Lifeline, Inc.'s Energy Assistance Office at (440) 350-9160. Lifeline's Energy Assistance Office is located at 54 S. State Street, Suite 303 in Painesville and opens daily at 8:30 a.m.

Lifeline for the Empowerment and Development of Consumers was founded in 1973 with the mission of helping Lake County residents by providing them assistance and life skills programming that is designed to increase self-sufficiency. In 1980 Lifeline became a participating agency of the United Way of Lake County, UWLC, and in 1987 was designated a community action agency by the Ohio Development Services Agency, ODSA. In 2008, Lifeline was designated as a mental health agency by the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services.

Today Lifeline continues with the same mission of helping Lake County's low-income residents break the cycle of poverty and make the transition from agency-dependency to self-sufficiency. Lifeline's current programming includes services in the healthcare, housing & energy assistance, information & referral services and consumer education & job training areas. Our motto is 'helping people, changing lives.' Lifeline is currently funded by the UWLC and by grants through the ODSA, the Lake County Board of Commissioners, the Lake County ADAMHS Board, Lake County Department of Job & Family Services, the City of Mentor, the Western Reserve Junior Service League and through private donors.