



*Powering Connecticut Households Since 1977*

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**News Release**

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## **Operation Fuel Help Continuing During COVID-19, Focusing on Deliverable Fuel Assistance**

*Requests Surge in Two Weeks; Staff Still Working to Support Increased Needs*

HARTFORD, Conn. (March 19, 2020) – As Connecticut grapples with the uncertainty of COVID-19, Operation Fuel is continuing to provide energy and utility assistance to households across the state. Requests for assistance have risen dramatically in the first two weeks of March, and the organization would like the public to know that it will continue to process grant requests for as long as possible, to support households struggling with coronavirus-related economic issues.

In March alone, Operation Fuel has already provided over \$238,000 in energy-related assistance to 514 households. That represents almost a quarter of all assistance provided since its winter program started in October.

Operation Fuel's staff, working remotely or on staggered schedules to best adhere with authorities' guidance on social distancing, is prioritizing requests for assistance helping with the costs of deliverable fuel. While Connecticut's Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) has issued a moratorium on shut-offs for electricity, natural gas, and water, many households heat their homes and hot water heaters using oil, which is provided by individual vendors who are not under PURA's authority.

“As we recognize this to be a public health and energy affordability issue, we are doing our best to respond to the needs of our most vulnerable and will continue processing customer requests for fuel and utility assistance for as long as we possibly can,” said Brenda Watson, executive director for Operation Fuel. “As far as economic recovery goes, low and moderate income households have a greater challenge ahead.”

Watson urged individuals to call 211 or go to [www.operationfuel.org](http://www.operationfuel.org) for more information on how to apply for assistance.

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