

# Missouri Public Service Commission

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Community Services Department

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# Agenda

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  - What We Do
  - Why We Do What We Do
- LIHEAP Overview
- LIHEAP Data
- Spire Outreach
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  - Distribution Only Partnerships
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  - Spire on the Move
- Outreach Feedback
- Spire Outreach FY19



# Introduction – CSD Team

Julie Trachsel, CSD Manager, MBA

- Worked for Spire for 18 years

Tammy Evans, Community Services Partner

- Worked for Spire 16 years

Danielle Holland, Community Services Partner

- Worked for Spire for 12 years

Royce Love, Heating Assistance Coordinator

- Worked for Spire for 10 years

Alicia Johnson, Community Services Partner

- Worked for Spire for 7 years

Liz Schurk, Community Services Partner, BA International Human Rights

- Began with Spire in March 2017

Connie Sanchez, Community Services Partner, MSW (Master of Social Work)

- Worked 15 Years in Non-Profit Sector
  - Urban League LIHEAP Director (6 years)
- Learning Spanish



# Introduction – What We Do

- Process Customer Complaints (MPSC, BBB, AG)
- Community Outreach/Education
- Point-of-Contact for Agency Partners
  - Provide Account Information
  - Enter Pledges
  - Process Pledge Payments
- Coordinate Red Tag Equipment Repair Program Requests
- Provide Program Oversight to Agencies for Spire Low-Income Program
- Provide Program Oversight to Agencies for Dollar Help
- Provide Agency Training
  - Pledge Portal
  - Spire Programs
  - LIHEAP



# Introduction – Why We Do What We Do

- Increase Awareness of LIHEAP
  - Applications Declining; Need is Not
  - Reduce CAA Burden
- Debunk Public Misconceptions
- Make LIHEAP Accessible
  - Rural Access to CAA
  - Access to Transportation
  - Senior Pride
- Provide Immediate Crisis Intervention
- Liaison Between CAA and Partnering Agencies
  - Status Updates
  - Pledge Updates
- Increase Awareness of Spire Programs



# LIHEAP Overview

LIHEAP helps low income households meet their immediate energy needs; targeting the elderly, disabled and households with young children as insufficient heating and cooling can cause health and safety issues for these households.

LIHEAP can help with energy assistance in two ways: Energy Assistance (EA) and Energy Crisis Intervention Program (ECIP).

EA helps with a one-time payment on the primary heating bill (November – March)

ECIP helps pay when your energy is shut off or is threatened to be shut off.

- Winter ECIP up to \$800 (November – May)
- Summer ECIP up to \$300 (June – September)



# LIHEAP Data

- LIHEAP applications down a little over 3,000 from the previous year.
  - Between FY16 to FY17, LIHEAP applications were down by over 11,000.
- CAASTLC saw an increase in applications from the previous year.
  - CAASTLC attributes the increase to their partnership with Spire and our outreach efforts.
  - First increase in applications for CAASTLC, since 2014. They participated in all pilot outreach efforts and want to expand upon efforts with us this winter.



# Spire Outreach

- Spire Developed 125+ Community Partnerships
  - 20 Staff Presentations
    - 350 staff members
  - 50 Intake Events
    - 2,145 applications distributed
  - 52 Distribution Only Partnerships
    - 10,600 applications distributed
  - 12 Resource Fairs
    - 460 applications distributed
  - Community Action Agency Meetings
    - Spire Programs
      - Red Tag Equipment Repair Program (New Improvements!)
      - FCAP (New)
      - Extended Due Date Plan
      - Extra Notification Program
      - Medical Emergency Certification
      - Dollar Help
    - Outreach Efforts





# Staff Presentations/Intake

## Feedback

- The executive director from BJC Behavioral Health came to personally thank us for coming to help their clients. She indicated that they have difficulty getting outside agencies to come in to help their clients because there is such a stigma with helping those suffering from a mental illness or disability. She later sent a letter to my supervisor thanking us for being their and the care and attention we took with their clients.
- We visited the Barton County Senior Center in Lamar, MO. They were extremely grateful because they had never been visited by a utility company before and didn't know they had programs to assist their customers. They also didn't realize that LIHEAP assistance could be used for propane customers.
- When we visited Tri-County Mental Health they stated they would start assisting everyone of their clients with completing an application and will be having us out in October to help with a LIHEAP Intake Lobby Day.
- Cardinal Ritter Children's Hospital was appreciate of the information and also that we don't just "work" the Medical Emergency Applications by cancelling the disconnection, but also try to assist their clients with finding energy funds.



# Intake Events

- Create Event Flier & Make Copies
- Distribute Event Flier (if applicable)
- Provide Spire Goodie Bags
- Provide LIHEAP Energy Assistance Applications
- Provide Energy Saving Tips
- Provide Spire Programs Information, Flier and Applications
- Provide Spire CWR Flier



# Intake Events – Purpose & Outcomes

- Increase LIHEAP Awareness
  - build partnerships
  - able to educate agencies about utilizing LIHEAP and how to assist their clients with completing applications
  - educate potential LIHEAP recipients
    - eligibility process
    - timeframes
    - assisting with completing the application
- Increase Spire Programs Awareness Among Multiple Groups
  - able to assist customers with completing applications and understand Spire programs
  - able to educate agencies about Spire programs and how to assist their clients with completing applications
- Increase Accessibility
- Decrease Stigma



# Intake Events

## Feedback

- *I didn't know this program existed.*
- *Don't forget to come back and see us again next winter!*
- *My house was destroyed in a fire and now I'll be able to get my gas and electric turned on at my new address.*
- *Thank you coming out to help us.*
- *My kids and I were homeless and we're starting over. I am so happy that now we can get our utilities turned on.*
- *I didn't think I qualified for a program like this. Thanks for coming out to talk to us about it.*
- *I can't read, thank you for helping me fill out my application.*
- *I didn't know I could apply for LIHEAP when I didn't have a disconnection notice. This will be such a help to me.*
- *I thought I made too much money for LIHEAP. It's a blessing to know I can get help too.*



# Distribution Only Partnerships

**8,500 LIHEAP applications and Spire fliers distributed through AAA partners.**

- Area Agency on Aging Region X (Joplin)
  - Mid-East Area Agency on Aging (STL County, Jefferson County, St. Charles County)
  - Mid-America Regional Council (Kansas City)
  - St. Louis Area Agency on Aging (STL City)
- Senior Centers
  - Home Delivered Meals
- Modifying Approach for LIHEAP FY19



# Community Action Agencies

**Spire met with the Community Action Agencies in our service area to discuss LIHEAP outreach, garner support and get feedback and recommendations. Support was unanimous! All agencies welcomed the help and stated that they didn't have the staff or time for outreach, but wanted to stay informed regarding the outreach efforts and scheduled events. A few suggestions that came out of the discussion...**

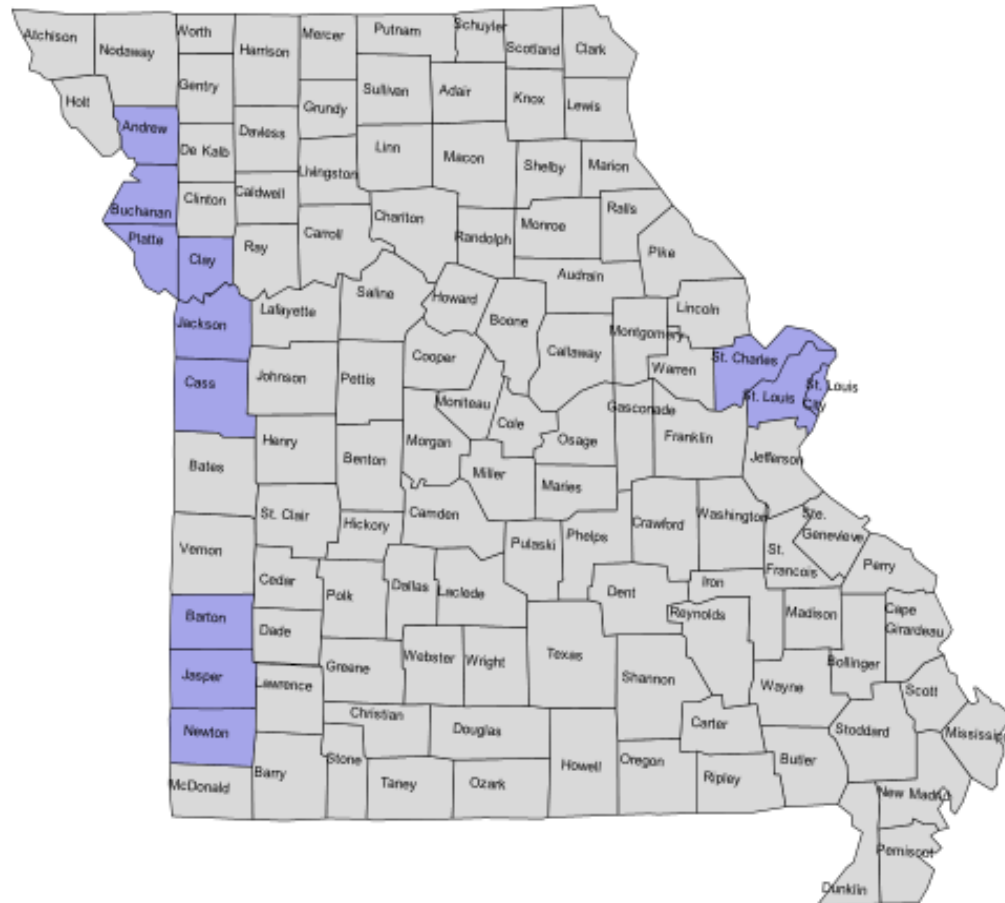
- Churches
- Schools
- Senior Centers
- Head Start
- Senior Apartment Buildings
- Libraries
- Low-Income Apartment Buildings



# Spire on the Move

**Spire worked with partners throughout Missouri!**

- St. Louis City
- St. Louis County
- St. Charles
- St. Peters
- Kansas City
- Joplin
- Lamar
- St. Joseph
- Savannah
- Independence
- Belton
- Blue Springs
- Andrew County
- Clay County
- Platte County



# Outreach Feedback - Overview

## AWARNESS – EDUCATION – CARE

- Applicants
  - fixed-income (social security/SSI)
  - health issues (reduced wages/unable to work; medical bills)
  - unforeseen tragedy (house fire, death)
  - change in income status (loss of employment, divorce, child support)
- Breaking Through Obstacles
  - acquaint communities to LIHEAP
  - transportation to CAA
  - unable to read/write
  - access to an application
  - stress
- Debunking Misconceptions About LIHEAP
  - only helps if you're in threat of disconnection
  - only helps with electric bills
  - I make too much money





# Spire Outreach FY19

- ***Take what we learned and multiply the benefits by adding new partners and to assist new areas and pockets of customers.***
- Using Spire's Outreach Experiences
  - Partnerships that Target the Community Work Best
  - Establishing Strong Relationships with Social Workers and Case Managers Increases Turn Out
  - Keep the Lines of Communication Open with Partners
  - Every Event is an Opportunity to Network/Build Relationships
  - Establish Clear Program Expectations with Applicants
- LIHEAP Zip Code Data to Identify Areas of Need
- Use Niche to Identify School Districts with a High Percentage of Recipients of Free or Reduced Lunch
- Provide Application Assistance to Home Delivered Meals Recipients
- Application Folder
  - LIHEAP Application Eligibility & Documents
  - Energy Saving Tips
  - My Account



# Questions & Feedback