

**OFFICE OF PEOPLE'S COUNSEL  
CONSUMER ALERT  
BGE NEW BUDGET BILLING PLAN OPTION**

The winter weather has been unusually cold – frigid is the word, and households have been using more electricity or fuel to heat your homes. With another storm coming, we are expecting high electricity and gas bills for the 2014 winter months. If you are having difficulty paying the monthly bill in full, you should contact BGE and request one of the following:

- Extension of the payment due date
- Installment payment plan
- Budget Plan to spread the cost of winter heating over the entire year

If you are a budget billing customer already, your bills will remain lower than the actual gas or electric costs for a few months, as you pay the fixed budget bill amount. This budget bill amount will be adjusted up eventually to cover the part of your winter bills that was not covered by your budget bill payment.

To address the high bills due to this winter's cold weather, BGE has announced a **new budget billing option**. If your BGE bill is no more than \$500 past due and you are not on budget billing now, you can ask to be enrolled in this plan.

**This is how it works.**

Ms. Jones has a \$500.00 BGE bill due on February 20. She calls BGE at 800-685-0123 and asks to be enrolled in the new budget bill option. BGE will average her 12 most recent gas and electric bills and combine the average with the \$500.00 (e.g.  $\$1900 + \$500 = \$2400$ ), divide the amount by 12 (months) ( $\$2400 \div 12 = \$200$ ) and set the budget bill amount at \$200. The \$200 will be due by the next due date. BGE will review the monthly budget bill amount every 3 months, and can adjust the budget bill amount up or down based on your bills. Even if the monthly amount goes up, it still will allow her to pay the higher bills over time.

- **TIP:** Your budget bill payment will be applied to your entire bill if you buy your electric or gas supply from BGE. **However, if you buy your gas or electricity from an alternative energy supplier, the gas and electric supply cost will not be included in your BGE budget bill amount.** You will need to pay that amount in full, or contact your supplier directly to find out if they offer any special plan for the supplier costs on your bill.

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*February 12, 2014*

- For more information, see <http://www.bge.com/Article%20Documents/BGEOffersNewBillingOptionsToHelpCustomers1.28.14.pdf> or call BGE at 1-800-685-0123 to enroll.

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