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## Message from the CEO:

### **OLHSA goes solar! Department of Energy grant brings renewable resources to low-income families**



For over 35 years OLHSA has been providing Weatherization services to families who qualify - making home improvements to reduce energy consumption and lower utility bills. This year OLHSA is taking energy efficiency one step further, launching into the field of renewable resources.

With over \$3.7 million dollars awarded to OLHSA through the Sustainable Energy Resources for Consumers Grant, low-income families in Oakland and Livingston Counties now have access to cutting-edge energy technology. Solar shingles, solar photovoltaics, solar thermal systems, hybrid electric hot water heaters and injection foam are examples of the technology being provided through this grant. These innovative improvements allow clients to enjoy lower utility bills and more comfortable homes. Eligible families have already been through the Weatherization Assistance Program, which provides more traditional energy-efficiency improvements like insulation, furnace repair and caulking.

Perhaps the most thrilling benefit to this grant is the unique experience of living nearly off-the-grid, something many of us only dream about. Solar and photovoltaic technology are renewable energy resources that allow the homeowner to reduce dependency on the main power supply. Thermal systems will reduce hot water and heating expenses, and the hybrid water heaters are a staggering 235 percent more efficient than traditional water heaters.

**We are excited to embark on a new path of renewable energy through this significant grant. We hope that this is just the first of many opportunities OLHSA has to help our clients while improving environmental responsibility.**

## Weatherization worked for Dorothy in Pontiac

The following opinion piece was submitted to the Oakland Press by a client of the Weatherization Assistance Program. Love what she has to say? Find out if you qualify for the program. Call 248.209.2760 or 517.546.8500.

To Whom It May Concern:

On a fixed income, you need everything you can get. The income is fixed but the other stuff keeps going up. I know that first hand, and that's why I paid attention when I heard about the Weatherization Assistance Program. Through the program at OLHSA, A Community Action Agency, I received two custom home energy inspections – one before free energy measures were installed, and one after. I didn't pay for measures that changed my life, or the inspections that proved the measures worked.

I never knew floors in my home could be warm year-round. After Weatherization, I found out and was so pleased. No longer do I have to layer socks or run from carpet to carpet during the winter to avoid a major chill.

My case included a thoroughly cleaned furnace, an Energy Star refrigerator, an attic fan, and blown insulation into the attic. It felt like Christmas to receive these gifts, which made my home warmer, safer, and more comfortable. That is before even mentioning the savings. I used to pay over \$200 monthly for energy costs, and just last month my energy bill was \$73. That is a real and valuable gift indeed!

Part of Weatherization includes energy education classes. I enjoyed the classes and learned even more measures I could take that were low or no cost. I have buckets outside to catch rainwater that I use in my flower garden. Another tip I learned, one of my favorites, is keeping lots of ice in the freezer, which runs the freezer less and keeps my bill way down.

The result of Weatherization for me means my water and energy bills are lower. My home is more comfortable and safer. I am healthier and feel good about conserving energy and helping to keep our world more beautiful for further generations. I feel proud knowing I can live off of less energy and I believe each of us should be part of Weatherization if we can be. It is what we should do as people of the world.

Being part of this program helped grow my pride as a homeowner, but renters can feel the savings, too. I urge you to see if you qualify for Weatherization Assistance. What do you have to lose besides high bills, chilly floors, and running noses? It just could turn your life around.

Dorothy Monahan  
Pontiac, Mich.



## Coalition to Keep Michigan Warm

With a brand new website and refreshed energy, the Coalition to Keep Michigan Warm is more dedicated than ever to retaining funding for programs that help low-income families stay warm. Unemployment continues to plague our state and energy prices continue to rise. Will you help advocate for those in need?

Visit [www.CoalitionToKeepMichiganWarm.com](http://www.CoalitionToKeepMichiganWarm.com)

## Gleaners donates food to OLHSA's Summer Lunch Program

Gleaners Community Food Bank, a longtime partner of OLHSA, donated 1,000 bags of food to OLHSA's Summer Lunch Program on Thursday, August 18.

The food was distributed to children in the program who are eligible for free and reduced lunches during the school year. During the summer months OLHSA partners with Gleaners at over 50 sites in Pontiac to serve tens of thousands of lunches, Monday through Friday while school is out for summer recess. The bags of food helped the children-in-need stay nourished throughout the weekend.

With school starting just a couple weeks after the donation, many kids were able to kick off the new year more focused and prepared, without the pain and distraction of hunger.



Volunteers from one of OLHSA's Summer Lunch sites, along with OLHSA staff, distribute donated food.

## HIV testing hours extended at OLHSA in Pontiac

Learning your HIV status just got easier. In order to encourage more local residents to know their status, OLHSA and AIDS Partnership Michigan (APM) announce extended hours for free HIV testing at OLHSA: 196 Cesar E. Chavez Ave., Pontiac, Mich.

Current testing hours are Monday through Friday 11am to 4pm walk-in, or 9am – 5pm for appointments. Starting the second week in August and lasting indefinitely extended evening hours will be offered on Wednesdays from 5 to 7pm. This aligns with OLHSA's Pontiac Welcome Center, which is open for all OLHSA services until 7pm on Wednesdays.

Appointments for HIV testing are preferred but walk-ins are welcome. Testing can either be done anonymously without identification, or confidentially with identification to receive formal, written results. Results are given rapidly, on-site. Testing is free and open to all persons regardless of income or residency.

Knowing your status is the first step to living a long, healthy, and happy life. If positive results are obtained and confirmed, clients have access to all HIV wrap-around support services provided by OLHSA and APM, including financial assistance, food vouchers, medical nutrition therapy, mental health services, and transportation to medical appointments.

This collaborative effort comes as the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States AIDS epidemic is recognized this year.

To make an appointment for testing, or for more information please call 248.209.2661.





**Oakland Livingston Human Service Agency**  
*A Community Action Agency Since 1964*

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 For more information, contact Lindsey Walenga, editor 248.209.2623 or [lindseyw@olhsa.org](mailto:lindseyw@olhsa.org).

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