

**THANK YOU**

**TO EVERYONE AT**  
*Lyondell Basell*

*Your Generosity Changes Lives*



*From United Way of Coles County*

Board members from left: Jeffery Spracklen, Rhonda Gatons, Al Volk, Dena Epperson, Steve Ferguson, Dr. Stanley Huffman, Briana Whitley, Barbra Wylie

## EBRA assisting with 2021 Illinois Rental Payment Program during COVID-19

The Embarras River Basin Agency Housing Counseling Department is a sponsor of Illinois Rental Payment program. A joint application with landlords and tenants. Applications are not being accepted until Mid-May but IHDA was asking those needing assistance to gather their documents now.

ILRPP is an emergency rental assistance program designed to support households in Illinois that are unable to pay rent due to the COVID-19 pandemic. IDHA will launch the program in May. In the meantime, IDHA has confirmed several program details that can help tenants and housing providers gather the information needed to apply when the program opens. As soon as the launch date is

released, IHDA will update their website: <https://www.ihda.org/about-ihda/illinois-rental-payment-program/> and issue a press release, and post to social media platforms.

### Grant Information

Applicants are eligible for up to 15 months of assistance. The grant can cover the past due rent from the previous 12 months and future rental assistance for the next three months, if deemed necessary. The maximum grant amount is \$25,000. The emergency rental assistance is provided by the Federal government and is free to tenant and housing provider. If approved, the grant will be paid to the housing provider in the form of a check.

### Eligibility Requirements

\* In order to receive financial assistance through ILRPP, tenants must meet all of the following:

- \* Household is behind on their rent for at least 30 days
- \* Household lives in Illinois and rents their home as their primary residence
- \* Household's total gross income cannot exceed 80% Area Median Income for location
- \* Household must have experienced a financial hardship directly — or indirectly — due to the pandemic, for example:
  - \* Being laid off
  - \* Place of employment has closed
  - \* Reduction in hours of work
  - \* Loss of spousal/child

support

- \* Inability to find work due to COVID-19
  - \* Having to stay home with children due to closure of day care/school
  - \* Unable to participate in previous employment due to the workplace's high risk of severe illness from COVID-19
  - \* At risk of homelessness or housing instability
- Time frame to submit an application will be short. Please gather the below documents prior to application opening date!
- Documentation Requirements:**
- |                                       |                         |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Housing Providers (landlords):</i> | <i>Providers</i>        |
| * Evidence of past-due rent           | * Copy of 2019 Property |

- Tax Bill or 2021 monthly mortgage statement
- \* Grant payment information for check distribution
- \* Current signed lease (if available)
- \* SSN or ITIN
- \* Employer Identification Number (if payment is made to a business entity)
- \* Rental unit information (unit type, address, rent amount)
- \* Fully executed and current property management agreement (if payment is made to a property manager)
- \* Valid email address - all communication from IHDA will be done through email.
- Tenants:**
  - \* Government-issued photo ID
  - \* A utility bill or proof

of address (if the address on your ID is not your current address) Monthly rent and amount past-due

- \* Proof of household income in 2020
- \* Proof of public assistance (if applicable)
- \* Valid email address - all communication from IHDA will be done through email.
- \* Proof of immigration status (or social security number) is not required

The application will be a joint application from the housing provider and the tenant. We strongly encourage you to communicate with each other and begin preparing your materials. We look forward to launching the program in the near future.

## ICC initiates notice of inquiry into extreme weather preparedness

Extreme winter weather in February in the U.S. South Central Region that left millions without electricity or heat, and sent natural gas prices skyrocketing to record levels, has prompted the Illinois Commerce Commission to open a Notice of Inquiry into Extreme Weather Preparedness to ensure Illinois consumers are protected.

"What happened in Texas, Louisiana and Oklahoma this past winter is extremely concerning to the Commission. While we regularly hear from the utilities and regional transmission organizations about their winter and summer preparedness efforts, we are digging deeper so that we are absolutely certain that every reasonable step possible is being taken to protect Illinois consumers from widespread outages and extreme energy prices," said ICC Chairman Carrie Zaleski.

In mid-February of this year, a severe winter storm that blanketed the south-central region of the United States forced natural gas processing plants and com-



pressor stations to shut down or perform maintenance as liquid froze inside pipes and compressors, dramatically reducing output in the region. The reduction in supply coupled with an increase demand for home heating by gas-fired electric generators sent natural gas prices soaring from approximately \$3.50 per MMBtu on February 10, 2021 to nearly \$24 per MMBtu on February 17,

2021. Price increases for natural gas delivered to Illinois by pipelines from the south-central region were even more dramatic hitting as high as \$255 per MMBtu during this period.

The electric sector in the south-central region was also impacted by the winter storms. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, on the morning of February 16, 2021 there were ap-

proximately 4.89 million power outages across Texas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma. Real-time wholesale electric market prices at ERCOT were reportedly more than \$9,000 per megawatt hour on the morning of February 15, 2021 compared with less than \$50 per megawatt hour prior to the winter storm.

"We know from past experience that extreme weather events are going to hap-

pen here in Illinois, and they can be devastating. Through the NOI, we are seeking highly detailed information from utility service providers and operators about their response efforts and communication plans to ensure that they are adequately prepared and equipped to handle a weather related crisis with minimal impact on consumers," said ICC Commissioner Michael T. Carrigan.

21-NOI-01 directs questions to natural gas, electric, water and sewer utilities in Illinois, independent system operators (ISOs) or regional transmission operators (RTOs), owners or operators of electric generation and natural gas pipelines located in Illinois, and to all interested parties.

The NOI schedule requires the submission of initial comments by June 14, 2021 and submission of reply comments by July 30, 2021. However, the NOI Manager is authorized to schedule further rounds of comments if she believes that additional comments will be helpful

and may alter the schedule if necessary. The NOI Manager is Joy Nicdao-Cuyugan.

Respondents must submit an original and three copies of all comments, reply comments, and other documents to the Office of the Chief Clerk of the Commission. Interested persons and entities are also requested to email the same in electronic form (preferably Adobe pdf) to Joy.Nicdao-Cuyugan2@Illinois.gov. The NOI Manager will take steps to ensure that copies of all documents filed in the proceeding are posted to the Commission's website [www.illinois.gov](http://www.illinois.gov). Copies of all documents filed in the proceeding will be available for public inspection at the Office of the Chief Clerk of the Commission in Springfield and the Commission's Chicago office.

A Notice of Inquiry proceeding is not a rulemaking, and the information gathered may or may not form the basis for the initiation of rule-making or other purposes.

## IFB

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the government reports had been so inaccurate. To their credit, NASS was receptive to the discussion and the

recommendations Farm Bureau made.

Guessing crop size is an inexact science and growers are aware of that. I think the statisticians do not give enough credit to weather problems. The corn hybrids

we use and the soybean varieties we plant are light years ahead of what we planted when I started farming. They are not bulletproof. A month delay in planting or three weeks without rain can make a big difference in

yields. The numbers people tend to make broad assumptions that do not take that into account.

Actual acres planted to each crop seem to be an elusive number every year, but we report planted acres

to the local Farm Service Agency by mid-June each year. It should be simple to find out those numbers. In 2019 it was harvest time before the government figured out the upper Midwest had huge prevent plant numbers.

So, after a deep dive into crop reports, thank you for reading about agriculture this month. Remember we will still be on the roads to finish putting this crop in and watch out for us.