

# Dialogue with Federal Officials

2016 National Energy Utility Affordability  
Conference

June 6, 2016

Denver, Colorado



ADMINISTRATION FOR  
**CHILDREN & FAMILIES**



# AGENDA

1. Introduction of Federal Staff
2. Federal Budget Overview
3. Extreme Heat Preparations
4. Recent Monitoring Trends
5. Risk Management at the Local Level
6. Performance Management
7. FY 2016 Weatherization Waivers
8. FY 2017 LIHEAP Plans
9. ACA-LIHEAP Partnerships
10. Q & A

# Federal ACF Staff

## Today's Presenters

- Marianne McMullen, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Strategic Initiatives, ACF
- Lauren Christopher, Director, Division of Energy Assistance (DEA)
- Akm Rahman, Energy Program Operations Branch Chief, DEA
- Peter Edelman, Program Analyst, Policy and Evaluation Branch, DEA
- Jamia Furbush, Program Specialist, Operations Branch, DEA
  - Liaison to Regions I & IV
- Kate Thomas, Program Specialist, Operations Branch, DEA
  - Liaison to Regions III & V

All Federal LIHEAP staff are based in D.C. Full contact list available at:  
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/resource/division-of-energy-assistance-federal-staff>

# Federal Budget Overview

Lauren Christopher

## FY 2017 Proposal

- \$3 billion discretionary funding
- \$390 million below FY16

## Mandatory Contingency Fund to address increases in

- Energy prices (electricity, oil, natural gas)
- Extreme weather
- Households in poverty
- Flexibility allowing states to spend up to 40 percent of LIHEAP funds for weatherization without needing federal approval

# Extreme Heat Preparations

Lauren Christopher

- America's PrepareAthon! – [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)
  - White House seasonal campaign to build community-level preparedness action
  - May 23–27 Extreme Heat Week
  - Webinar and other resources available
  - [www.cdc.gov/extremeheat](http://www.cdc.gov/extremeheat)
- People at greater risk are often also LIHEAP applicants
  - Consider intake home visits as opportunity to check on vulnerable members of the community
- NEVER leave anyone in a closed, parked vehicle



# How Does Home Energy Affect Health?

## Key Mechanisms

- Indoor temperature
  - Heating
  - Cooling
- Indoor air quality
- Weatherization
- Vectors
- Food safety
- Less safe heating alternatives

## Specific Health Threats

- Ischemic heart disease
- Cardiovascular disease
- Asthma
- Allergies
- Respiratory disease
- Heat injury
- Hypothermic injury
- Mosquito-borne illness
- Environmental pollutant exposures
- Accidents and burns
- Behavioral health/stress

# LIHEAP Resource Guide on Indoor Health and Safety

- Electric fans may provide comfort, but **will not** prevent heat-related illness for temperatures in 90s or above
- Keep windows and doors shut and use air conditioning to also control mosquitos
- Better ways to cool off
  - Taking a cool shower or bath
  - Moving to an air-conditioned place or visiting shopping mall or public library



# Monitoring Trends – Akm Rahman

## Importance of Monitoring

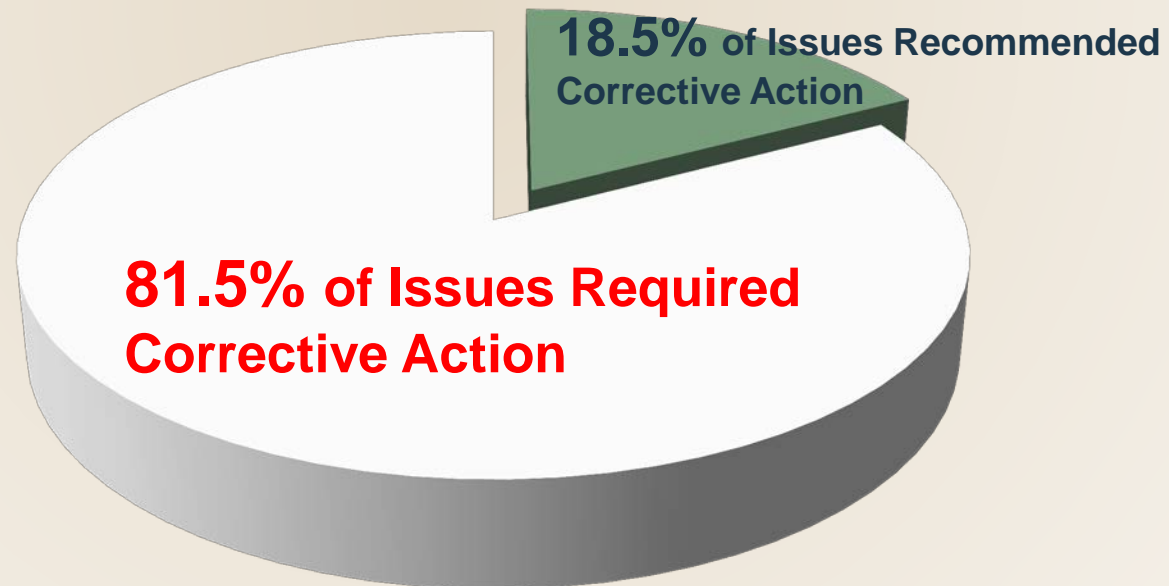
- Monitoring helps to prevent improper payments, fraud, waste, and abuse of LIHEAP funds.
- Monitoring Goals
  - Maintain Compliance
  - Identify Note-worthy Practices
  - Offer Training and Technical Assistance (where applicable)



# LIHEAP Site Visit Findings

Of the 200 site visit findings\* identified between 2012-2015:

- 163 visit findings required corrective action.
- 34 visit findings recommended corrective action.



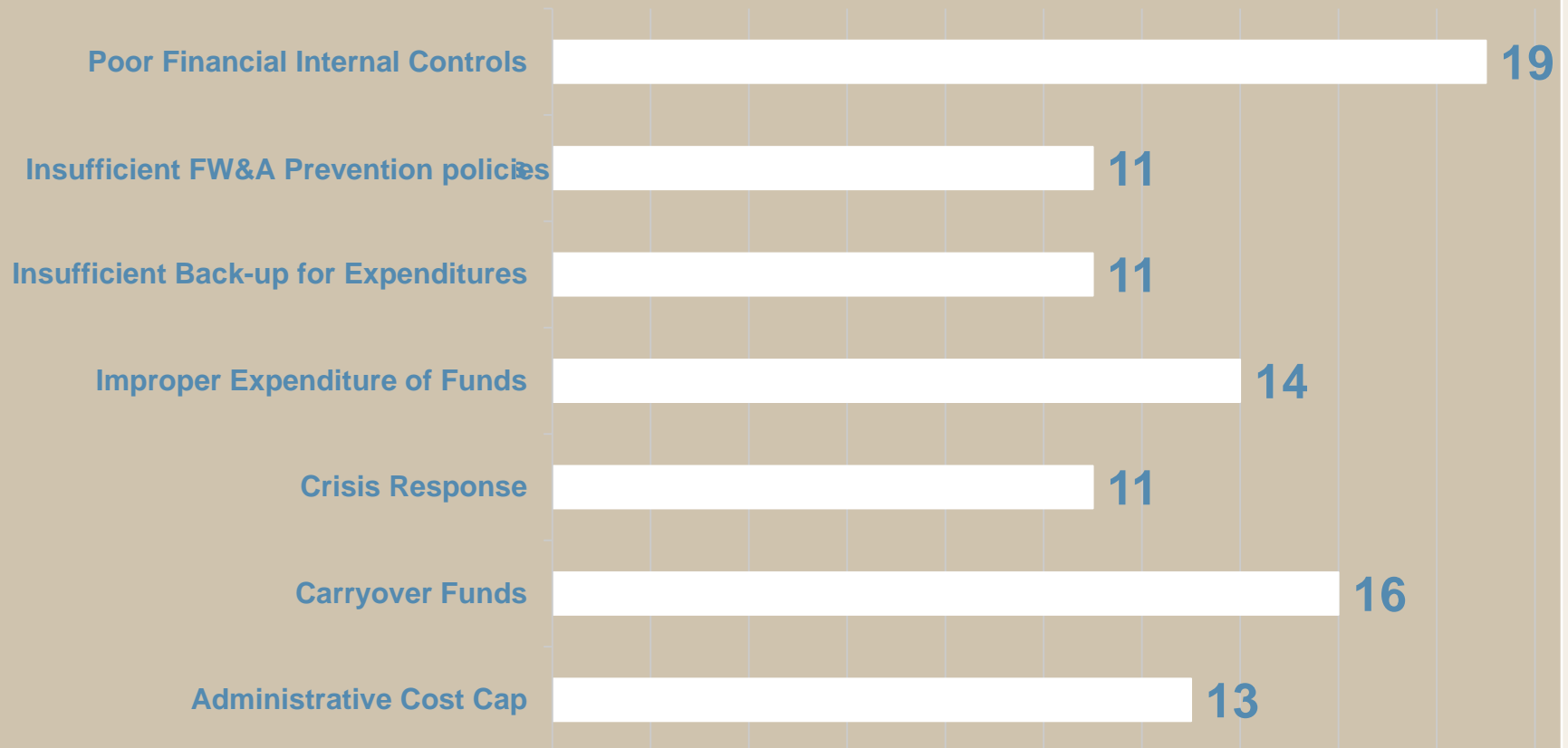
# LIHEAP Regional Trends

Consistent findings across all regions include:

- Administrative Cost Cap
- Carryover Funds
- Crisis Responses
- Improper Expenditure of Funds
- Insufficient Back-up for Expenditures
- Insufficient Fraud, Waste, & Abuse Prevention Policies
- Poor Financial Internal Controls

# LIHEAP Site Visit Findings by Category

## Categories of Issues Most Often Found



# Noteworthy Practices

- Local Service Delivery Plans (mini model plans for subgrantees).
- Partnership with 24-hour Hotline for after-hours crises.
- Interface between Utility vendor system and grantee payer system (performance measures and vendor refunds).
- FAQ Section on grantee websites for Subgrantees.

# Noteworthy Practices

- Branding of LIHEAP to reach new applicants (“LIHEAP Super Sunday,” and “Early Bird Special” events).
- LIHEAP collaboration with health and safety programs (Indoor air quality issues and ACA health insurance enrollment).
- New technology to administer LIHEAP.
- Strong Leveraging partnerships with the private sector.

# Noteworthy Practices

- Frequent and Organized Training for the Local Agencies.
- Moratorium not to disconnect energy services between November and March.
- Local agencies made Fridays available for applicants on crisis to avert any issues on weekends and holidays.

# Lessons Learned

## Points to Remember

- Have a clearly thought out and defined plan.
- Always consider energy costs and need in your Benefit Matrix.
- Document everything in an organized fashion.
- Supporting documentation is a necessity.
- Pay special attention to the rules for carryover.
- Take vendor refunds and other de-obligated funds into consideration.
- Subgrantee monitoring is essential for quality control.
- LIHEAP is successful when people know it is available, have access to it, and can weigh in on how the program can work for them.

# Risk Management at the Local Level

Kate Thomas

OMB Uniform Administrative  
Guidance (UAG)

## Federal Register

**Title 45**      Public Welfare  
**Subtitle A**    Department of  
                    Health and Human  
                    Services (HHS)  
**Chapter III**    Department of HHS  
**Part 75**        Uniform  
                    Administrative  
                    Requirements, Cost  
                    Principles, and  
                    Audit Requirements  
                    for HHS Awards

## Goals of reform

- 1) streamline OMB guidance for Federal awards to ease administrative burden
- 2) strengthen oversight over Federal funds to reduce risks of waste, fraud, and abuse



# Applicability of the OMB UAG to LIHEAP Awards

## What impact does this have for grantees?

- As of FY2016: LIHEAP awards must be in compliance with all relevant provisions of OMB UAG
  - Section 75.202 of Subpart C, addressing pre-Federal award requirements;
  - Sections 75.351-353 of Subpart D, addressing post-Federal award requirements; and
  - Subpart F, addressing audit requirements.
- More information available in LIHEAP-IM-2015-04

# Performance Management

Peter Edelman

*States collect and report data on the following performance measures:*

1. Benefit Targeting Index
2. Energy Burden Reduction Index
3. Preventing Loss of Home Energy Service
4. Restoring Home Energy Service

*The last two measures were optional for FY15 but are **mandatory** for FY16 (starting January 2017).*

# Performance Management

Peter Edelman

*The use of Performance Measurement data to administer the program constitutes Performance Management.*

(Performance Management isn't an effort to find out what states are doing wrong.)

# Performance Management

Peter Edelman

*Performance Management entails the following three steps:*

1. **PLANNING** what you want to happen (and adjusting such plan based on experience);
2. **MONITORING** what's actually happening (and using the results to adjust your plan); and
3. **EVALUATING** the reasons why you are or aren't track to meet our expected outcomes.

# Performance Management

Peter Edelman

*Use performance data to manage your programs*

Examples:

1. Using variations in burden reduction across heating fuel types to adjust your benefit matrix.
2. Using rates of service restoration to adjust your plan's component funding distribution.

# Performance Management

Peter Edelman

*More information is available at the following locations.*

- The LIHEAP Data Warehouse (for grantees and federal managers only)  
<https://liheappmdev.ncat.org/>
- The LIHEAP Clearinghouse  
<https://liheapch.acf.hhs.gov/pm/needtoknow.htm>
- ACF's LIHEAP Website (for filling out the performance data reporting form)  
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/resource/liheap-at-2016-03-performance-data-form-for-fy-2015>

# FY 2016 Weatherization Waivers

Jamia Furbush

- April 1: **Option** to request increased LIHEAP fund use from 15% to up to 25% for weatherization
- Chief executive officer (or designee) may request weatherization obligation limit waiver for fiscal year
- Grantees must make proposed waiver requests available for public review and comment
- Waivers are effective from date of OCS written approval until funds are obligated

# Two Kinds of Waivers

- Standard Waiver demonstrates
  - Will not spend less than previous fiscal year on heating/cooling/crisis benefits;
  - Will not serve fewer households; and
  - All weatherization measures are shown to provide energy savings
- Good Cause Waiver
  - If not entitled to "standard waiver"
  - Demonstrates good cause why waiver should be granted despite not meeting standard waiver criteria



# How to Request Weatherization Waiver?

- Detailed requirements are provided in section 96.83 of regulation
  - Grantee must submit a letter which includes the justification for the waiver being requested

[www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2013-title45-vol1/xml/CFR-2013-title45-vol1-part96.xml#seqnum96.80](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2013-title45-vol1/xml/CFR-2013-title45-vol1-part96.xml#seqnum96.80)

# FY 2017 LIHEAP Plans

Jamia Furbush

**Due September 1, 2016**

- LIHEAP grantees **must** submit plan for funds each year
- Entire plan is completed in On-Line Data Collection System (OLDC)
  - Transfer information from prior year to current year plan
  - Update responses to questions and any other aspects

<https://extranet.acf.hhs.gov/ssi/>

# Model Plan

Includes grant application details

- Program components
- Heating assistance criteria
- Cooling assistance criteria
- Crisis Assistance
- Weatherization criteria
- Activities to address 16 Assurances
- Funds monitoring

# Suggested Activities to Complete 2017 Plan by September 1

Letter of Designation for Authorized Official to Sign the Plan	June – August
Public Hearing/Participation	Early July: at least 30 days before plan submission
Access to OLDC for Authorized Signatory, Grant Administrator, Fiscal Staff, Data Entry Persons, etc.	June – August ( <b>do not wait</b> ) check OLDC every 60 days to ensure access does not expire
Approval/signature process for Plan	June – July
Cloning of previous report in OLDC	June – July

# ACA-Utility Partnerships

Marriane McMullen

The screenshot shows the Rocky Mountain PBS News website. The main article is titled "Energy Bills Take Big Chunk of Family Income for Those Living in Poverty" by Dan Boyce, published 15 hours ago. The article features a photo of Lea Anne Shellberg sitting in a chair talking on a phone, with a dog nearby. The sidebar includes a "6 YEARS ROCKY MOUNTAIN PBS" anniversary graphic, a "BLACKOUT: REINVENTING THE GRID" investigation promotion, and a "SUPPORT ROCKY MOUNTAIN PBS NEWS" section.

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN PBS NEWS**

INVESTIGATIONS TOPICS TV SCHEDULE EVENTS EDUCATION VIDEO ABOUT US KIDS SUPPORT US SHOP

## Energy Bills Take Big Chunk of Family Income for Those Living in Poverty

By DAN BOYCE | 15 HOURS AGO

Tweet Recommend 1 Share Email Print

Andrew Cullen/Ferriatik

Lea Anne Shellberg talks on the phone in her home in Fort Collins. A single mother who is disabled because of a work injury, Shellberg often struggles to pay her utilities on her fixed income.

**6 YEARS ROCKY MOUNTAIN PBS**

Rocky Mountain PBS News produces public-service journalism and shares it with news organizations throughout the region. News that makes a difference.

**BLACKOUT: REINVENTING THE GRID**

**BLACKOUT: Reinventing The Grid**

A new investigation from Inside Energy  
[insideenergy.org/grid](http://insideenergy.org/grid)

**SUPPORT ROCKY MOUNTAIN PBS NEWS**

All Coloradans deserve quality journalism that inspires people to make a difference – because you can only fix what's wrong if you know about the problem. Millions more Coloradans deserve more news.

**INSIDE ENERGY**

High Utility Costs Force Hard Decisions For The P...

- ...a broken back and a recurring battle with skin cancer ended her career...
- ...she chose to pay a medical bill for her cancer treatment ahead of the \$470 she owed her utility...

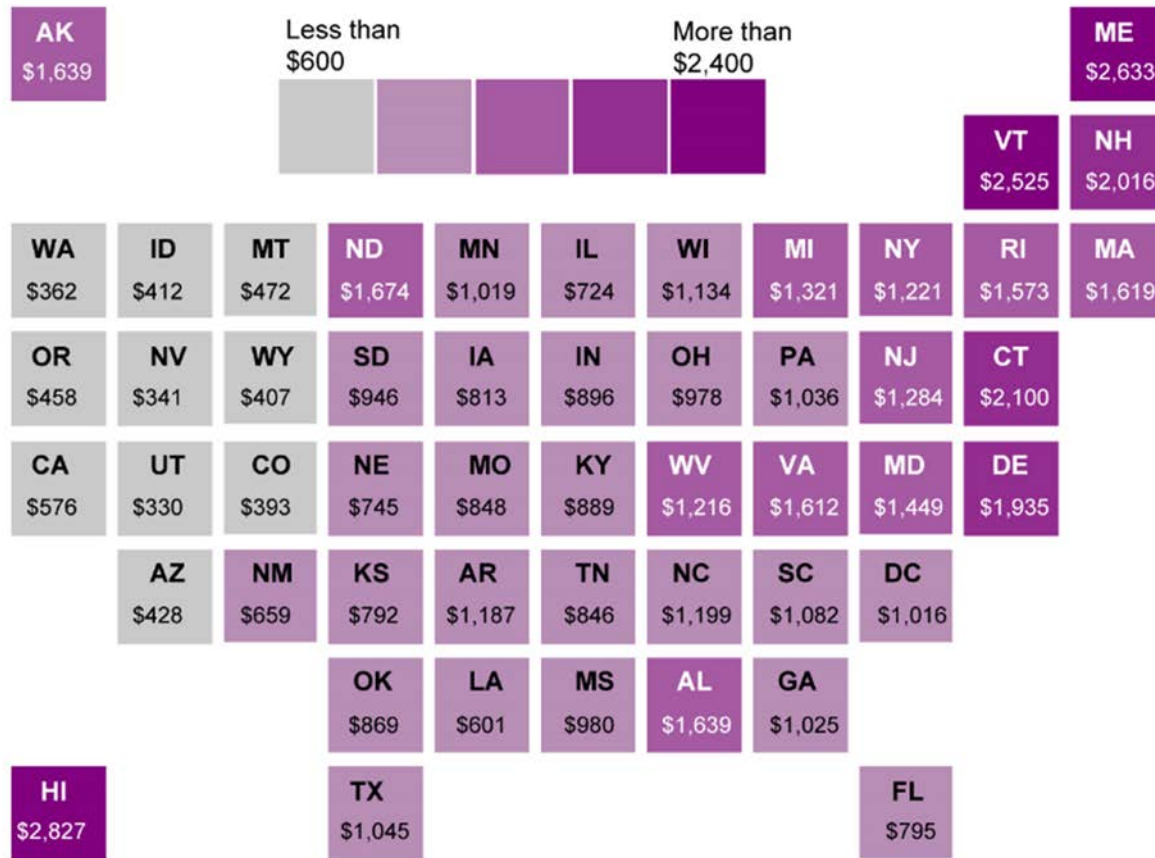
# ACA-Utility Partnerships

**Why would utilities want to partner with health advocates?**

- Large low-income customer base
- Medical costs #1 cause of personal bankruptcy
- All assistance matters
- Potential to decrease costly service terminations
- Positive community relations

# ACA-Utility Partnerships

Gap between how much assistance low-income households need and how much is available



# ACA-Utility Partnerships

## Why would health advocates want to partner with utilities?

- Deep reach into low-income areas with low insurance levels
- Most utilities have established outreach to low-income customers
- Valuable long-term community partner



# ACA-Utility Partnerships



During Open Enrollment 2015- 2016:

- Philadelphia Gas Works included health insurance information in bill inserts, in their digital newsletter and on their website
- Navigators from 3 different organizations provided health insurance enrollment support in 6 PGW service centers
- More than 184 hours of health insurance outreach took place at PGW sites throughout the city

# The Philadelphia Tribune

January 26, 2016

## Deadline for health insurance enrollment approaches



Midway through sign-up season, more young adults are getting coverage, officials said. — AP PHOTO/ANDREW HARNIK

Ayana Jones Tribune Staff Writer

The final deadline for consumers to sign up for health insurance through the national marketplace Jan. 31

Officials said Pennsylvanians should act now to make sure they have time to shop around, consider their options, and enroll in the plan that best fits their needs and budget. Those who don't have health care coverage in 2016 may have to pay a fine of \$695 or 2.5 percent of their income. **Philadelphia Gas Works (PGW) has partnered with Enroll America** to reduce the number of uninsured residents in the PGW will host trained health care navigators at each of its six customer service centers to help people sign up for coverage through the marketplace. Navigators will be available Monday and Friday, from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. "This gives **PGW** another way to support the city we serve," said Douglas Oliver, PGW's vice-president of external affairs. "We're very pleased to host health care navigators from the region to help the uninsured enroll during the month of January. We urge all eligible residents to take advantage of this opportunity." Health care navigators are scheduled to be at the following locations Friday: 1137 Chestnut St.; 4410 Frankford Ave.; 212 W. Chelton Ave. and 5230 Chestnut St.

The effort is part of the White House's Healthy Communities neighborhood enrollment challenge, designed to engage communities with high percentages of uninsured residents.

# ACA-Utility Partnerships



**Paulette Aniskoff** @PAniskoff44 · Jan 27

More great work out of Philly! Kudos to the @hhsregion3 team!  
[phillytrib.com/jan-marks-dead...](http://phillytrib.com/jan-marks-dead...)

4



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# ACA-Utility Partnerships



Entergy in the Mississippi Delta conducts extensive outreach to help their customers receive Earned Income Tax Credits.

Since 2011, more than \$126 million in EITC dollars have been returned to customers because of this outreach.

# ACA-Utility Partnerships



In 2016, Entergy held 21 tax assistance events in Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas and Arkansas

ACA Navigators and/or HHS staff participated in events in nine locations: Willis and Beaumont, TX; New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Monroe, and Lake Charles, LA; and Jackson and Horn Lake, MS

Hundreds of Entergy customers received health insurance information.

# ACA-Utility Partnerships



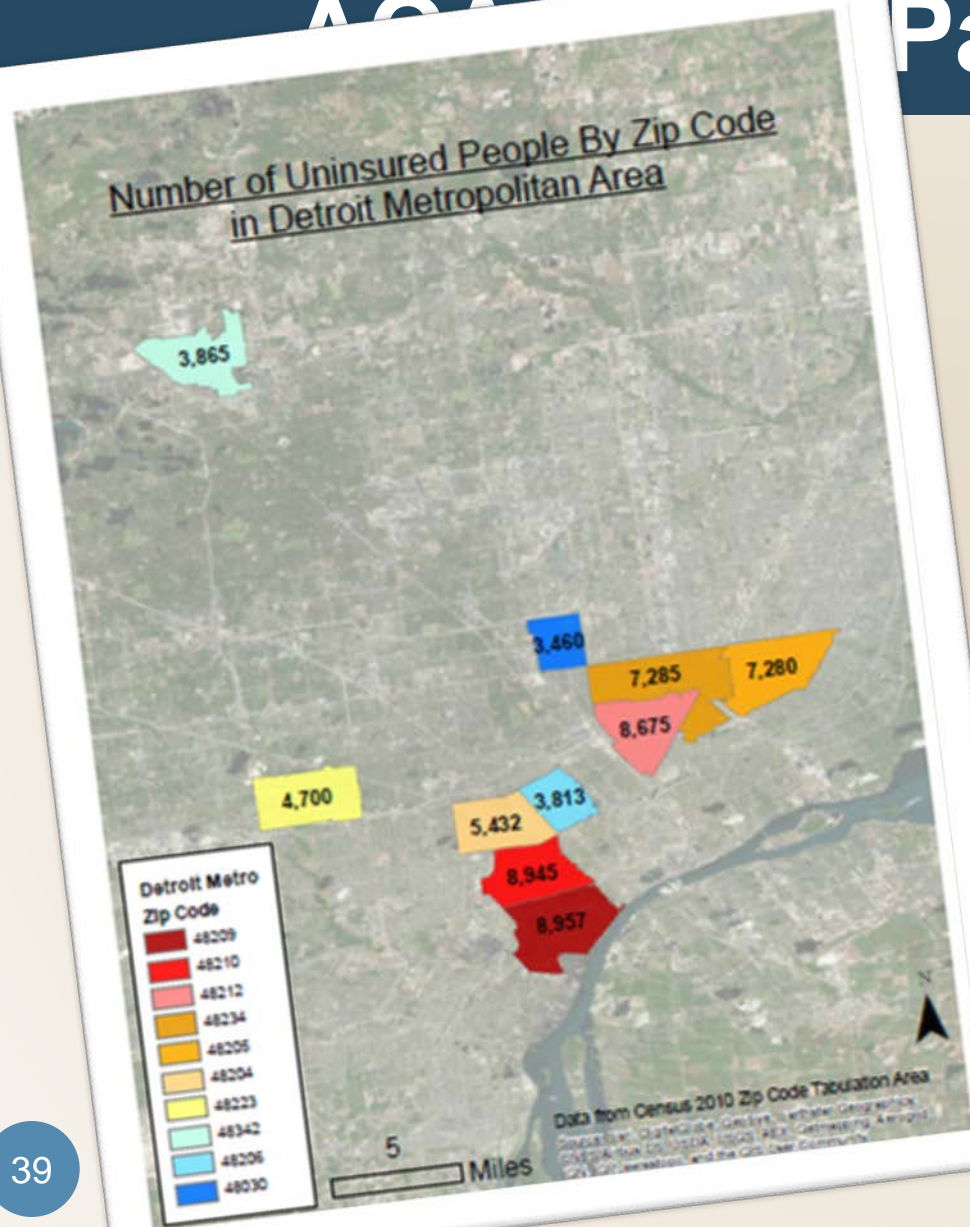
Formed health team with:

- Federal HHS
- The Detroit Health Department
- Enroll America

Met with DTE to discuss how they can support health insurance outreach in targeted zip codes in Detroit



# Partnerships



Targeted ZIP Codes with the highest shut-off rates and poor health indicators such as asthma, heart disease and infant mortality

Partnership planned for Open Enrollment 4

# ACA-Utility Partnerships

## Utility Partnership to Reach the Uninsured

### A Partnership with a Purpose

This toolkit contains instructions and materials to facilitate and support a partnership between the federal government, utility companies, and other key stakeholders with the aim of reaching the uninsured with affordable health care coverage. The toolkit provides sample templates for key partnership documents.



# Discussion Prompts

- This is a pilot project, so we welcome your feedback, thoughts and ideas on this partnership.
- Are there other existing partnerships between utilities and community groups that can serve as models?
- Are there other ways that utilities can help channel resources to low-income people? (Without utilities becoming social service providers!)

# General Q & A

## General Resources:

- Main ACF website
  - [www.acf.hhs.gov](http://www.acf.hhs.gov)
- LIHEAP website for official guidance, statute, regulations, etc.
  - [www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/programs/liheap](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/programs/liheap)
- LIHEAP Clearinghouse website for general information about grantee program design variations
  - [liheapch.acf.hhs.gov](http://liheapch.acf.hhs.gov)
- LIHEAP Performance Management web site for creating analytical data graphics
  - [liheappm.acf.hhs.gov](http://liheappm.acf.hhs.gov)
- Main ACA web site
  - [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov)