



Spotlight on Utility Resources!

For those having a hard time keeping up with utility bills, we're here to help!

Many households face challenges with heat, electricity, and water costs, especially during colder months, and we may be able to help you access available resources to ease that burden.

Our team is ready to connect you with available assistance programs that can help with utility costs. We can also help you apply for Weatherization to decrease your utility bills and keep them lower. We're committed to helping you stay safe and comfortable in your home.

Give us a call or text your local office to learn more and find out how we can assist you!

Healthy Meal and Eating Tips

- Keep a supply of easy-to-cook and ready-to-eat foods at home, like cereal, cheese, peanut butter, crackers, soup, fruit juices, and canned fruits and vegetables.
- Cook meals ahead of time and freeze them right away. When you are too tired to cook, you can defrost and reheat.
- Take turns preparing and sharing meals with friends and relatives.
- Eat one meal a day at a community center.
- Be creative with leftovers. Make soups, stews, or salads with leftover ingredients and cooked meat and vegetables.
- Drink water or milk instead of pop.
- Serve cold meals in the summer and hot meals in the winter.
- Make a shopping list before you head to the store.
- Serve fresh or canned fruits for dessert or a snack.

Upcoming Distributions

Call or text your local office

- Bay City: 989-894-9060
- Big Rapids: 231-660-0271
- Farwell: 989-386-3805
- Gladwin: 989-426-2801
- Hart: 231-923-3066
- Midland: 989-832-7377
- Muskegon: 231-557-7622
- Reed City: 231-791-7078

Residents of Gratiot, Ionia, Isabella, & Montcalm Counties should call 616-754-9315

For a complete list of distributions, call 989-229-0849.

Are Canned Foods Healthy?

People who consume more canned fruits and vegetables have higher fruit and vegetable intake and more nutrient intake.

Canned fruits and vegetables are canned within hours after picking to help maintain nutrients.

Canning preserves many nutrients like lycopene in tomatoes.

Canning helps make fibers in certain vegetables (beans) more soluble and more useful.

Michigan Produce Spotlight

Soybeans

Michigan has over 12,000 soybean farmers with 2.2 million acres of beans grown yearly. Soy protein is the only plant-based protein that is comparable to animal protein. Soy protein is good for cholesterol levels and reducing heart events. Not only are Michigan soybeans made into food for humans, but also animal feed, renewable diesel, and as an alternative to plastic. www.michigansoybean.org

Three-Can Chili

With almost no cooking required to prepare this chili, just open cans of beans, corn, and tomatoes, and heat everything together in a pan!

Ingredients

- 1 can beans (pinto, kidney, or black)
- 1 can corn (drained)
- 1 can diced tomatoes (undrained)
- 1 teaspoon chili powder (or more to taste)

Directions

1. Place the contents of all three cans into a pot
2. Add the chili powder to taste
3. Stir to mix
4. Continue to stir over medium heat until thoroughly heated
5. Serve warm and refrigerate leftovers

You can add 1 can of chicken (drained) for a heartier meal. Another idea is to serve the chili over cooked rice.

www.myplate.gov

Cold Weather Safety

Older adults have a higher chance of being affected by cold weather. Changes that come with aging can make it harder for older adults to be aware of their bodies becoming too cold which can quickly become a dangerous health issue.

Tips for keeping warm when the temperature drops:

- Check the weather forecast for wind and cold. A heavy wind can quickly lower your body temperature. Try to stay inside or in a warm place.
- If you must go out on a windy or cold day, limit outdoor time as much as possible.
- Let others know when you plan to spend time outdoors and carry a fully charged mobile phone.
- Keep warm blankets and extra cold-weather clothing in your car.
- Wear a hat, scarf, and gloves or mittens to prevent loss of body heat through your head and hands.
- Wear warm and loose layers of clothing. The air between the layers helps to keep you warm.
- Wear a waterproof coat or jacket if it's snowy or rainy.

www.nia.nih.gov

The material provided in intended to be used as general information only and should not replace the advice of your physician. Always consult your physician for individual medical care.

The contents of the USDA food boxes are intended for consumption only by the program recipient and no other person(s). USDA foods are specifically chosen to supplement the nutritional needs of the population served by this program.