



Chicagoans are struggling with energy insecurity.

Nearly 90 percent of lower income homeowners in Chicago report being energy insecure, or being without access to affordable and reliable energy sources to heat and power their homes.

Energy insecurity can involve unaffordable electricity and natural gas bills, being at risk of disconnection, making sacrifices on other necessities to pay utility bills, being uncomfortable at home, and using coping strategies like supplemental heaters or occupying only part of the house to get through extremely cold or warm weather.



51%

made sacrifices on other necessities to pay energy bills



68%

conserved energy to uncomfortable levels to save money



49%

were extremely hot or cold

Energy improvement programs can help.

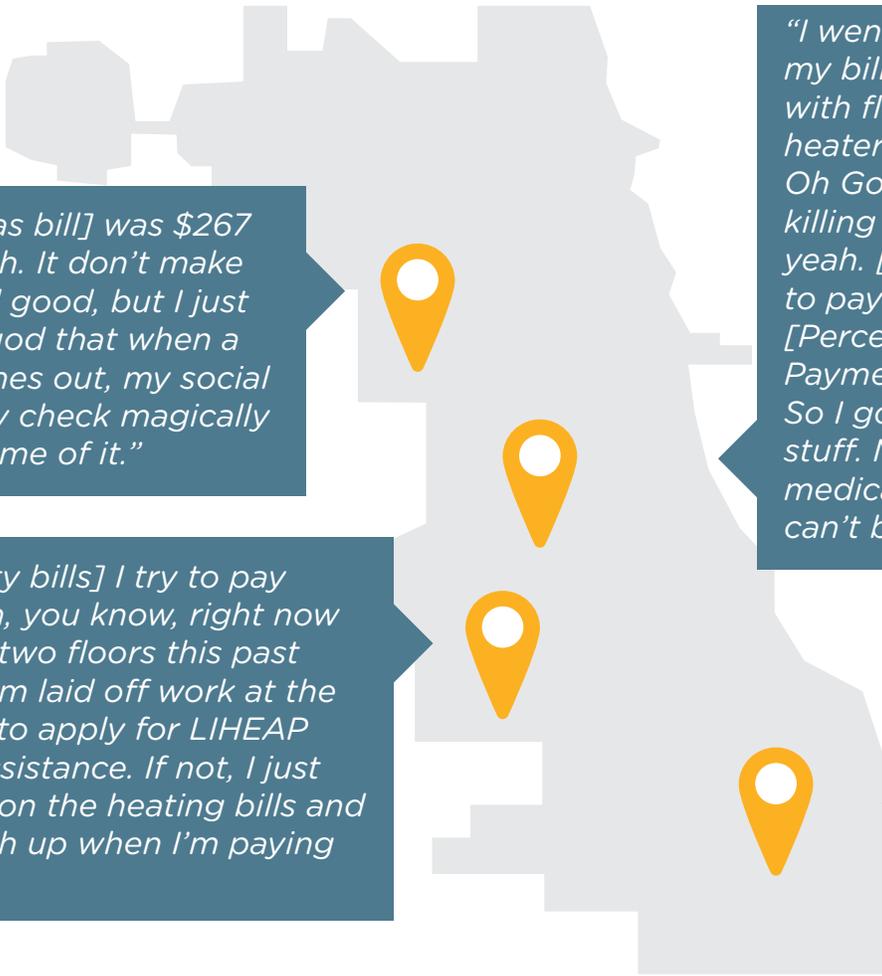
Home energy improvement programs that offer energy efficiency, electrification, and other upgrades can help alleviate energy insecurity and help seniors age in place. The programs offered by Elevate Energy reduce energy costs between 15 and 30 percent on average.

Energy bill assistance programs do not sufficiently address the need; in 2017, less than 13 percent of eligible households in Illinois received help from the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).



Energy insecurity is a problem across Chicago neighborhoods.

Residents on the west and south sides of Chicago told us the following:



"[My gas bill] was \$267 in March. It don't make me feel good, but I just thank god that when a bill comes out, my social security check magically gets some of it."

"The [utility bills] I try to pay when I can, you know, right now is heating two floors this past winter. If I'm laid off work at the time, I try to apply for LIHEAP and get assistance. If not, I just pay some on the heating bills and try to catch up when I'm paying them off."

"I went up over my limit on my bill, because I was sick with flu, and I kept the heater going constantly. Oh God, it killed me. It's killing me now. I mean, yeah. [My bill is] \$142, I got to pay to stay on [Percentage of Income Payment Plan], you know. So I gotta do without other stuff. Medications, some medication, sometimes I can't buy it."

"Lot of times when I get a utility bill I feel a little anxious."

Get more information.

Elevate Energy surveyed and interviewed lower income homeowners in 2019 and found widespread energy insecurity across Chicago. The full study report can be found on our website. Elevate Energy seeks to create a world in which everyone has clean and affordable heat, power, and water in their homes and communities — no matter who they are or where they live.