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For Immediate Release

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CenterPoint Energy urges customers to prepare for winter heating season

Bill assistance and energy-saving resources available as natural gas prices could drive increase to customer bills

Evansville, Ind. – Oct. 9, 2024 – CenterPoint Energy is encouraging customers in its Indiana South natural gas territory to prepare for an increase in natural gas bills this heating season. Last winter, customers benefited from lower wholesale natural gas prices due to a less volatile natural gas market. However, this year, natural gas commodity costs are projected to increase over last year's heating season as demand is projected to continue to grow. These factors may lead to higher bills compared to last year. Yesterday, the Energy Information Administration (EIA) issued its 2024-2025 [winter outlook](#) forecasting heating bills. **As a reminder, CenterPoint does not make any profit from the overall cost of natural gas; it is passed on to customers at cost.**

This year, based upon projected natural gas commodity costs and normal winter weather, customers can expect to pay on average \$129 a month, over the 5-month heating season of November through March. By comparison, last year's average bill amount for the 5-month period was around \$110 a month.

"With natural gas prices projected to increase this winter, we encourage customers to explore all available resources as soon as they can," said Ashley Babcock, Vice President, Indiana and Ohio Gas. "For customers who may be facing financial hardship, we have tips, tools and programs to help them manage their bills and save energy."

CenterPoint utilities are not allowed to markup from the purchase and sale of natural gas. Natural gas is a commodity bought and sold in a national deregulated market where prices fluctuate daily due to supply and demand.

Only natural gas costs actually incurred and approved by the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission are recovered from customers. CenterPoint purchases natural gas on behalf of its customers and then passes those costs on to customers through the gas cost adjustment, which is listed on the bill as "Gas Cost Charge."

Even with these increases, natural gas continues to be one of the most affordable heating sources for most customers in Indiana. In fact, CenterPoint gas customers in the utility's Indiana South territory who heated their homes with natural gas last year saved up to \$790 compared to those who heated their homes with propane.

It is important to remember bills will vary by customer depending on the size and age of the home, number of gas appliances, number of people in the household, thermostat settings and levels of insulation.

Customers are encouraged to take advantage of CenterPoint's array of payment assistance options as well as energy-saving tips and energy efficiency programs to help mitigate the impact on bills.

- **Energy Assistance Program (EAP):** State and federal utility assistance dollars are available for income-eligible customers. Those that fall within 60 percent of state median income should visit their local community action agency to sign up for the EAP. To apply for the EAP, customers should call 1-800-872-0371 to locate their nearest community action agency. Customers may

also apply any time at the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority website at www.EAP.ihcda.in.gov.

- **Universal Service Program (USP):** All eligible natural gas heating customers who apply and qualify for EAP will automatically be enrolled in the USP, which provides additional gas bill reductions that range from 15 to 32 percent of the total bill received (not including EAP benefits) in the months of December through May. The USP, which has been in place since 2005, is the result of a collaborative effort by CenterPoint Energy, Citizens Energy Group, the Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor, Citizens Action Coalition and a group representing industrial customers.
- **Due Date Extension and Payment Arrangement:** These are two free offerings available to customers in need of a special payment plan to temporarily keep their service connected and better manage energy costs.
- **Energy Efficiency Resources:** CenterPoint offers energy efficiency tips, appliance rebates and energy-saving tools to help customers lower their natural gas bills. All Indiana residential and small commercial natural gas customers are eligible. Visit CenterPointEnergy.com/SmartSavings or call 1-866-240-8476 for a list of rebates, qualifying appliances and energy efficiency tips.
- **Budget Bill:** Under this billing plan, a customer's estimated costs for gas service are spread in equal amounts throughout the year. This leveling of monthly bill amounts reduces the need to pay the full amount in the winter and spreads some of those higher bill charges into the non-heating months. Customers can learn more and enroll for free at CenterPointEnergy.com or by calling 1-800-227-1376.

Customers needing further financial assistance are also encouraged to apply for programs available through local community action agencies and local non-profits.

CenterPoint Energy's Indiana South territory delivers natural gas to approximately 115,000 customers in Daviess, Gibson, Knox, Martin, Pike, Posey, Spencer, Vanderburgh and Warrick counties.

Forward Looking Statement:

This news release includes forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. When used in this news release, the words "anticipate," "believe," "continue," "could," "estimate," "expect," "forecast," "goal," "intend," "may," "objective," "plan," "potential," "predict," "projection," "should," "target," "will" or other similar words are intended to identify forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements are based upon assumptions of management which are believed to be reasonable at the time made and are subject to significant risks and uncertainties. Actual events and results may differ materially from those expressed or implied by these forward-looking statements. Any statements in this news release regarding future events, such as the potential increases in natural gas prices, potential increases in customers' natural gas bills, potential savings that customers may achieve, including through the use of natural gas, and any other statements that are not historical facts are forward-looking statements. Each forward-looking statement contained in this news release speaks only as of the date of this release.

Important factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those indicated by the provided forward-looking information include, but are not limited to, risks and uncertainties relating to: Important factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those indicated by the provided forward-looking information include, but are not limited to, risks and uncertainties relating to: (1) CenterPoint Energy's business strategies and strategic initiatives; (2) changes in market demand; (3) CenterPoint Energy's ability to fund and invest planned capital and the timely recovery of CenterPoint Energy's



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investments; (4) financial market conditions; (5) general economic and political conditions; (6) the timing and impact of regulatory proceedings and actions and legal proceedings; (7) effects of competition; (8) catastrophic events including public health threats; (9) weather variations and the impact of climate change; (10) changes in business plans; (11) continued disruptions to the global supply chain including volatility in commodity prices; (12) changes in technology; (13) legislative actions, including tax and developments related to the environment such as global climate change, air emissions, carbon, waste water discharges and the handling of coal combustion residuals; (14) CenterPoint Energy's ability to execute on its initiatives, targets and goals and operations and maintenance goals and (15) other factors discussed CenterPoint Energy's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2023 and CenterPoint Energy's Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the quarters ended March 31, 2024 and June 30, 2024, including in the "Risk Factors" and "Cautionary Statement Regarding Forward-Looking Information" sections of such reports, and other reports CenterPoint or its subsidiaries may file from time to time with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

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