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Greene County Emergency Rental Assistance Keeps Hundreds in Homes; More Seeking Help

By Kaitlyn Schumacher

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SPRINGFIELD, Mo. (KY3) - Greene County is distributing millions of dollars to help keep people in their homes.

With the cost of utilities rising, more people are needing help to make ends meet. The county has received \$18 million to assist residents with rent and utility payments. OACAC Rental Assistance Specialist Kieth Mullins says appointments for assistance fill up every week. As the cost of gas rises, more people are needing help making ends meet.

“Everything’s expensive gas food and a lot of people are really needing assistance that has never had before,” said Mullins. “We’ve distributed well over \$2 million in rental assistance. It’s something that is a desperate need in our community and a lot of people have really benefited from it.”

The program was first developed to help people who had financial hardship during the pandemic. While COVID-19 cases are down, there are several people who the virus has financially impacted.

“We are still seeing people that are being affected by COVID,” said Emergency Rental Assistance Specialist Andrea Smith. “They struggle with long-term effects and having to take off time from work. That leaves them behind with multiple payments not just rent but utilities, car payments, and so on. With us being able to help sometimes with going forward in rent and utility arrears we can get them caught up and where they need to be.”

With the cost of utilities rising, more people calling to book appointments to help keep the lights on.

“It seems to be an ever-growing need, probably more so than ever before,” said Smith. “Since I have worked for OACAC it does definitely seem like just things are difficult for the majority of

people, and everybody can use a little help”

The 6 charities providing rent and utility assistance are:

- Ozarks Area Community Action Corporation (OACAC) - (417) 447-0554
- Consumer Credit Counseling Services - (417) 889-7474
- Community Partnership of the Ozarks - (417) 888-2020
- Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri - (417) 268-9998
- Council of Churches of the Ozarks - (417) 887-3545
- The Salvation Army - (417) 862-5509

For more information on the Greene County Emergency Rent Assistance Program [CLICK HERE](#).

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