

Sharing the Warmth – Energy Assistance Recipients

Kathy R. was living the American dream – a good job, her own home, yearly vacations -- until she contracted debilitating rheumatoid arthritis at age 39. Now she lives in and out of a wheelchair and has been through numerous painful foot surgeries. She tries to supplement her disability income with part-time work but her medical bills are overwhelming. One dream she continues to hold on to is staying in the home she owns. Energy Outreach Colorado provided her with energy assistance to help pay her utility bill. EOC also partnered with non-profit Rebuilding Together to replace the furnace in her 1967-era house.

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Leona and Kenny H. vowed to support each other in sickness and in health more than 40 years ago. Now in their 60s, Leona suffers from chronic pancreatitis, an esophagus condition and other disorders that require her to maintain a strict diet and juggle 17 prescriptions. Kenny survived a major stroke, heart surgery and a bleeding ulcer and is diabetic. The couple lives on a fixed income of social security benefits. Both had productive work careers and saved for their retirement but their disabilities required that they both retire early. Their savings have gone toward medical bills and daily living expenses. Energy Outreach Colorado helped them pay off the overdue portion of their energy bill, which allowed them to set up monthly payments.

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Senior citizens Sylvia and Roy C. were without propane or electricity and down to one day's supply of firewood in the middle of a cold February. Both in their 70s, Sylvia was suffering complications from hip-replacement surgery and Roy was on oxygen and bedrest after being hospitalized for COPD attacks related to emphysema. Three-foot high snow drifts surrounded their Salida home. Roy, a truck driver for 58 years, had been laid off. Sylvia, a certified cardiovascular technician, had taken time off for her surgery. EOC's partner organization, the First Presbyterian Church of Salida, arranged for a new tank of propane and a load of firewood to be delivered. EOC funds paid up the amount owing on their energy bill.