

OPERATION FUEL
power for good

2022 Annual Report

A letter from our Executive Director, Brenda Watson

I ask that you do a bit of impact dreaming with me. Let's imagine together that no one in our family or community is struggling with energy or water poverty. Let's imagine together, that everyone is living in an energy-efficient home. Let's imagine together that everyone in Connecticut has access to solar & backup power during a storm, and that our most vulnerable can afford the cost of home energy and water utilities.

I am proud to share that we at Operation Fuel, work on strengthening our impact every day. Our history is rooted in helping, innovating, and responding to the energy and water utility needs of Connecticut citizens. The last two years have put this foundation to the test. With workforce shortages, infrastructure, natural disasters, difficulty accessing safety nets, and the global pandemic, the team at Operation Fuel continues to suit up and respond.

We launched an online portal, allowing those in need to apply for our programs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We launched the Better Homes and Buildings Program, to increase access to energy efficiency programs. We participated in the Public Utility Regulatory Authority's decision to bring a low-income discounted utility rate in Connecticut.



On this year's cover, we wanted to demonstrate our team's efforts and commitment to serving by paying homage to ironworkers in 1932. The iconic photo is a symbol of hope and opportunity in a time of struggle in America. Where many may feel like we are divided, hope for a better future is what binds us, and the ability to help those in need is what inspires us. We are a team, full of hope and inspiration; grateful for the opportunities to strengthen our impact.

We at Operation Fuel, see you on this beam with us. We know you are there, the people we serve know you are there.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brenda Watson'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'B' and 'W'.

Brenda Watson

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FuelCell Energy

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Amy McLean
Energy Advocate

Peter Ludwig
Connecticut GreenBank

Operation Fuel receives a record number of applications in Summer/Fall season



6,502

households helped with utility bills and energy costs



15,466

individuals benefited from emergency help



\$5.2m

distributed to families for emergency grants

45 years of Strengthening Our Impact

Gov. Ella Grasso

Established OPF to address home heating crisis, impacting working families who did not qualify for fed/state energy assistance.

1977

Diane Casey Lee

Add-a-dollar program was written into law. Collaboration between Government, Operation Fuel, and Utility companies.

1983

Pat Wrice

Launched Energy Affordability Gap Study: The difference between what energy bills are and what people can afford.

2007

2008

Operation Fuel receives its first program infrastructure grant of \$15 million.

Gov. Jodi Rell

2015

Operation Fuel receives \$2.1 million allocation annually from rate payers in perpetuity.

SBC

2020

Per the Take Back Our Grid Act of 2020, Operation Fuel was identified to receive up to 10% of PURA fines.

10% PURA Fines

2022

Via the EPA, Operation Fuel is to receive a \$30,000 grant to promote the environmental health in local communities.

1st Fed Grant

Summary of the Programs Department

How it Started ...

A commitment to the future, means we must reflect on the past. As the nation's first fuel assistance program, established to provide the working poor with home heating relief, so much about energy has changed. But what remains constant is the annual growing demand for our services.

In FY1992, we reported serving 4,568 households. Direct bill payment assistance to fuel and utility companies totaled \$866,850 dollars as grant amounts did not exceed \$250 dollars. In this same year, the Office of Policy & Management contacted Operation Fuel, seeking our help to support the thousands of CT residents who would lose energy assistance from the federally funded Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) due to federal budget cuts. We were also in a recession with record unemployment. Our resources were limited but with the help of our 50 community fuel banks, we were able to assist an additional 2,000 households that year.

30 years later, we find ourselves in a similar situation. A recession looming, record inflation, high energy and water rates, shortages in fuel and a shortfall in LIHEAP funding. Just know that for as long as Operation Fuel exists, we will work to help those who need support with their home energy and water utilities. We are also committed to the future of energy and its transition from existing systems to clean and renewable sources. We are doing this work by educating and developing our team, increasing our partnerships with organizations committed to energy equity, pursuing local and federal grants that are focused on increasing healthy homes remediation, energy efficiency, solar and energy storage.

Operation Fuel is hard at work, ensuring that the households we serve, are not left behind in the energy transition that we find ourselves in. Therefore, we are doubling down on our commitment to energy parity.



ELECTRICITY



WATER



**FUEL OIL & GAS
UTILITY**

**Then vs.
Now**



Operation Fuel, Inc.

1992



2022

How it's Going ...

There are roughly 400,000 households in Connecticut that qualify for energy assistance programs due to poverty. It is not known to what extent these same households also struggle with energy burden; however we learned during the Public Utility Regulatory Authority (PURA) investigation into an Equitable Modern Grid, that it is a struggle for vulnerable households to identify resources that can assist them with direct bill payment assistance, weatherization services and access to clean energy products and programs.

Shortly after the opening of the PURA investigation, disparities in energy costs and burdens in frontline communities became prevalent during the economic shutdown caused by COVID-19. Both the PURA investigation and COVID era utility shut off protections prompted system leaders and planners to address the inequities via energy law and regulatory interventions. The State of Connecticut is actively investing in consumer choice, energy affordability and resiliency with the promotion of renewable energy resources, such as wind, solar and now storage. Operation Fuel has expanded its suite of programs to fill in the gaps that exist within our energy systems. We will always stay true to providing direct bill payment assistance for as long as poverty exists. In the meantime, take a look at the additional programs that we now offer.

Better Homes and Buildings (BHBP)

The program provides a benefit to applicants needing assistance with the remediation of health and safety barriers, ultimately replacing a heating system with a heat pump.

Work may include but not be limited to remediation of health hazards such as moisture, mold, lead, and asbestos.

Heat Pump Installation Program for Bridgeport Residents

With a grant funded by PSEG, Bridgeport residents will receive outreach and education materials on the benefits of weatherization and heat pump conversion. Residents will be encouraged to utilize existing state resources for health and safety hazard remediation and weatherization; and we will proceed with the installation of 10 heat pumps in single-family homes and multi-family buildings within 18 months of receiving funding, thereby decreasing the energy burden and improving indoor air quality for these Connecticut residents.

Energy Storage Solutions

In partnership with the CT Greenbank, the program's goal is to provide behind-the-meter battery incentives with the goal to deploy 580 MW of battery storage by the end of 2030, with no less than 40% of residential installations in vulnerable communities, including low-income households. Our role is to help the Greenbank achieve the deployment targets for vulnerable communities and resilience priorities of the program by helping them understand the barriers to adoption and assist with the marketing.



How it's Going ...

Climate Smart Technologies

In collaboration with the Connecticut Insurance Department, CT Greenbank, Yale, and the Clean Energy Group, this project seeks to understand the investment needed in Climate Smart Technology (“CST”), including back-up power (e.g., solar power, battery storage) and stable indoor temperature (e.g., efficient heating and cooling, weatherization) to lead to deployment of such technologies in affordable housing. This may increase the resilience of tenants that are reliant on home medical devices (“HMDs”) for their health, allowing medically vulnerable residents to safely shelter in place. Funded by The Robert Wood Johnson foundation with a matching grant from the CT Greenbank, our role is to provide community outreach in vulnerable communities (e.g., Bridgeport, Hartford, and Waterbury).

EPA Healthy Communities

This project will focus on increasing the number of low- and moderate-income (LMI) single-family homeowners and tenants of residential units who receive home energy counseling and implement energy efficiency best practices in the New Haven region. Residents will receive outreach materials and one-on-one education on the benefits of health and safety hazard remediation, weatherization, and heat pump conversion.

Residents will also be educated on how to utilize existing state resources for health and safety hazard remediation and weatherization. The project is expected to result in an increase in heat pumps, thereby decreasing the energy burden, carbon footprint, and negative health impacts on these households.

Yale Tenant Energy Justice Project Advisory Board

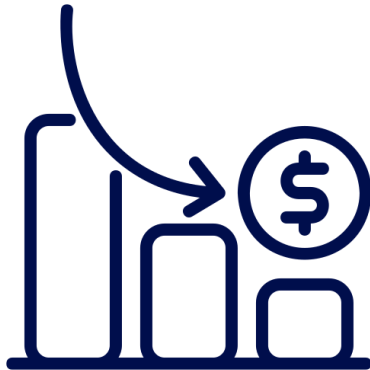
Operation Fuel is a member of the advisory board supporting the work of Yale researchers and students leading the Tenant Energy Advocacy (TEA) project. This New Haven-based project aims to identify avenues to engage tenants around home energy efficiency and to bring tenants together to advocate for the implementation of energy efficiency solutions and imagine alternative options. The advisory board guides the research team as they conduct the study, provides feedback about tenant energy justice issues, and helps the research team understand the data. Tenant representatives, local experts, and representatives from local stakeholder organizations, including New Haven-specific organizations such as Neighborhood Housing Services of New Haven, the New Haven Energy Task Force, Witnesses to Hunger, Mothers and Others for Justice, and state-wide organizations such as Operation Fuel and Efficiency for All comprise the advisory board.



How it's Going ...

Shared Clean Energy Facilities

This program provides solar access for consumers who are unable to install solar panels, because they live in a multifamily building, or are renting the home they live in. A subscription to a shared clean energy facility (SCEF) overcomes that barrier and provides the benefits of solar via on bill credits to qualified LMI customers. To learn more about SCEF, contact the SCEF Team at SCEF@eversource.com or scef@uinet.com



Low Income Discount Rate

The Public Utility Regulatory Authority (PURA) issued a ruling to create a more affordable electricity rate for low-income CT residents. Starting January 2024, qualifying customers will receive 10% (Tier 1, 60% SMI or below) or 50% (Tier 2, 160% FPG or below) discounts on their electricity bills. This all started under the leadership of Operation Fuel's former Executive Director, Patricia Wrice. For many years she advocated for a discounted utility rate - in fact, it was the organization's first policy effort. Because of Pat's leadership and vision, we were able to engage in this process. We thank you Pat for setting the foundation for where Operation Fuel is today!

Follow us on
social media!



Operation Fuel, Inc.



@operationfuelinc



Operation Fuel



@operationfuel



Policy and Public Affairs Director, Gannon Long (right) with Robbie Goodrich of RACCE (left) at the E-bike Day Event held at The Capitol.



FirstLight and New Leaf Energy donated to Operation Fuel to provide energy efficiency training to our staff.

From left to right: VP of Development for New Leaf's New England Region, Jared Connell; Executive Director, Brenda Watson; CEO of FirstLight, Alicia Barton, Senator Heather Somers; Executive Director of TVCCA, Deborah Monahan; TVCCA, Zachary St. John.

A look back into 2022



Executive Director, Brenda Watson (left) in a panel discussion with Senator Chris Murphy (right) on the topic of energy affordability.



Gannon Long, Policy and Public Affairs Director engaging with the community while at the Auerfarms festival.

Financials: Fiscal Year 2022

Statement of Financial Position

For the year ended June 30, 2022

ASSETS	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$1,019,909
Marketable Securities	\$1,680,867
Grants and Other Receivables	\$17,882
Prepaid Expenses	\$44,196
Security Deposit	\$3,341
Total Current Assets	\$2,766,195

OTHER ASSETS	
Property and Equipment	\$35,781
Total Assets	\$2,801,976

Liabilities and Net Assets

For the year ended June 30, 2022

LIABILITIES	
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	\$104,990
Charitable Gift Annuity Payment	\$5,794
Total Current Liabilities	\$110,784

NET ASSETS	
Unrestricted	\$2,494,674
Temporarily Restricted	\$196,518
Total Assets	\$2,691,192

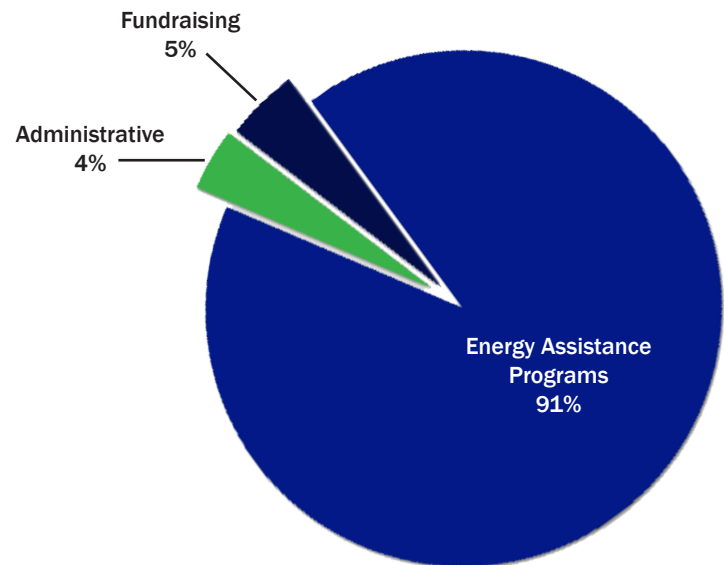
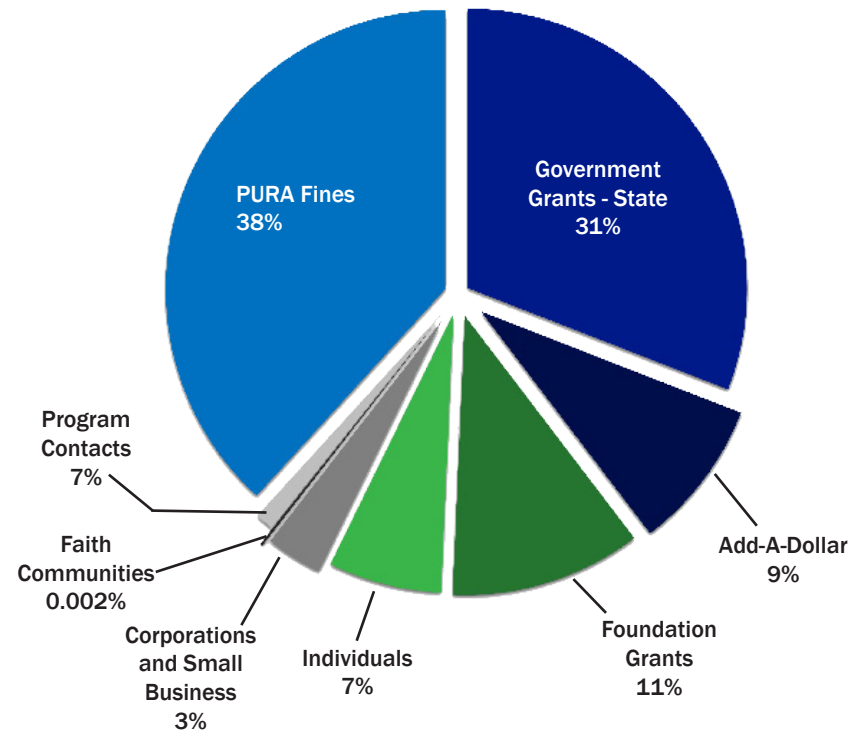
Total Liabilities and Net Assets \$2,801,976

Revenue and Expenses

For the year ended June 30, 2022

REVENUES AND SUPPORT FOR PROGRAMS	
Government Grants - State	\$2,100,000
Add-A-Dollar	\$592,290
Foundation Grants	\$751,851
Individuals	\$444,818
Corporations and Small Businesses	\$222,367
Faith Communities	\$10,779
Program Contacts	\$74,382
PURA Fines	\$2,596,500
Interest and Investment Income	(\$145,009)
Grand Total Revenue and Support	\$6,647,978

EXPENSES	
Energy Assistance Programs	\$6,244,144
Administrative	\$266,902
Fundraising	\$310,254
Total Assets	\$6,821,300



Thank You To Our Funders & Supporters

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Peter Begin
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The Franklin Conklin Foundation
The Hartford - Windsor Committee
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Theresa Hopkins-Staten
Thomas Atkins Memorial Fund Trust
Thomas Daniels
Thomas Peckingham
Town Square Energy
Travelers Foundation
Travelers Championship
UBS Matching Gift Program
UIL Holdings Corporation United Illuminating (UI)
Unitarian Universalist Society: East
UnitedHealth Group
Valley Community Foundation
Valley Community Foundation COVID Relief Funds
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Webster Bank
Wethersfield Greater Together Community Fund
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William R. Massa, Jr.
William Wynne
Windsor Locks Greater Together Community Fund



Owner of Home Comfort Practice and board member, Lorenzo Wyatt spoke to CBS News about what residents can do to keep their homes warm this winter.

When CBS news reporter, Meg Oliver, asked why we are seeing an increase in home heating cost, Wyatt responds, “It’s supply and demand. First and foremost, you have a global market for energy; for oil, natural gas, and then those cost have gone up because there are shortages.”