

AmerenUE Launches \$3 Million 'Clean Slate' Program for Low-Income Elderly/Disabled Customers

ST. LOUIS, June 30 /PRNewswire/ -- AmerenUE today announced it is giving \$3 million to needy customers to help them get a fresh start in managing their utility payments.

Called "Clean Slate," the program will help qualified customers pay off their past-due utility bills. The \$3 million from AmerenUE will first be earmarked to help low-income elderly and low-income disabled UE customers who have fallen behind on their bills. Any remaining funds will be directed to assist other low-income customers. This effort is fully funded by UE; customers will not be charged for the program.

"Our goal is to reach customers who literally have to choose each month between paying for utilities and paying for food, medicine or other essential services," said Warner Baxter, AmerenUE president and chief executive officer. "It is part of our ongoing efforts to listen, respond and deliver to our customers -- especially our most vulnerable customers, who are experiencing significant challenges during these difficult economic times."

"With past Clean Slate programs, we have helped nearly 8,000 customers take steps to regain financial stability. We all know times are especially challenging right now, and this is another way we are helping our customers," added Richard Mark, AmerenUE Senior Vice President, Energy Delivery.

Customers must apply at a participating Clean Slate agency, which may define age limits and eligibility using poverty guidelines and other circumstances. Participating agencies can be found on Ameren's Web site, www.ameren.com/cleanslate, or by calling the United Way Information and Referral number, 1-800-427-4626. In addition, Ameren's automated voice response program offers information to customers who call into the Customer Contact Centers. Customers can dial 314-342-1111, or toll-free 1-800-552-7583, and choose menu option number "4." Then enter "2" and the ZIP Code when prompted.

With the program announced today, each qualified potential participant who is an active UE customer is being asked to pay 10 percent of the delinquent amount on his or her bill to qualify for a Clean Slate pledge that will cover the rest of the outstanding balance.

Inactive qualified customers -- those who have been disconnected for nonpayment -- will be required to pay 20 percent of their arrearages. Once the qualified customer has paid that portion, Clean Slate will pay the entire balance on a UE customer's account.

Through Clean Slate, eligible customers also can sign up for UE's Budget Billing program, which allows them to pay a regular monthly amount -- avoiding the peaks that come with either summer air conditioning or winter heating.

Other available assistance includes:

- **Dollar More**, the state's largest privately funded energy assistance program.
- **Meet the Heat**, UE's effort to reach out to low-income and elderly customers and provide them with information about how to stay safe in summer heat.
- **Be Cool**, UE's annual ENERGY STAR(R)-qualified air conditioner giveaway program. Late last week, UE distributed 400 energy efficient window-unit air conditioners to social service agencies across the state and the metropolitan St. Louis area.
- **Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)**. LIHEAP funds are administered by state agencies to help eligible low-income households, elderly persons and people with disabilities pay for energy services.
- **The Low Income Weatherization Program**. UE provides funding for 13 Community Action

- Agencies and the Urban League to help eligible customers weatherize their homes.
- **Third-Party Notification.** UE will attempt to contact a designated third-party of a registered elderly person or a customer with disabilities before disconnecting service for nonpayment of utility bills. The designated third-party will receive copies of all bills and disconnect notifications.

Information about all of these programs can be found at www.ameren.com.

With residential electric retail rates that are approximately 40 percent below the national average, AmerenUE provides electricity and natural gas to 1.2 million customers in Missouri. With assets of approximately \$23 billion, Ameren Corporation (www.ameren.com) serves 2.4 million electric customers and one million natural gas customers in a 64,000-square-mile area of Missouri and Illinois.