



## Media Release

### HORIZON UTILITIES PROVIDES FUNDING FOR WINTER WARMTH

**(St. Catharines, ON) February 25, 2010** – Individuals and families experiencing difficulties paying their energy bills this winter can apply to receive assistance through the Winter Warmth program, funded, in part, by Horizon Utilities Corporation, through the United Way of St. Catharines and District, and administered by Community Care of St. Catharines & Thorold.

During the 2008-2009 winter season, the Winter Warmth program provided energy assistance grants totalling more than \$6,000 to 21 households in St. Catharines. In Ontario, over \$1.2 million was distributed to 3,400 eligible households to help cover the cost of utility bills for those in need.

“Horizon Utilities recognizes that 2009 was a tough year for many of our customers. We feel it is important for us to partner with other utility companies to support Winter Warmth and the United Way of St. Catharines and District, and Community Care of St. Catharines & Thorold to help people stay warm this winter,” said Eileen Campbell, Vice-President of Customer Services for Horizon Utilities.

Frances Hallworth, Executive Director of the United Way of St. Catharines and District said, “United Way is grateful for this partnership that enables less advantaged families to benefit from utility support. Winter Warmth partners like Horizon Utilities are making a difference locally and at a time when it’s needed the most.”

“Community Care of St. Catharines & Thorold is grateful to Horizon Utilities for providing funds to help needy families with energy assistance,” said Betty-Lou Souter, Chief Executive Officer of Community Care of St. Catharines & Thorold. “This service ensures housing stability for our clients, providing support to those who need it most.”

### **How the Fund Works**

Families and individuals needing financial assistance to pay their heating and hydro bills can obtain information about the Winter Warmth fund at their nearest community agency participating in the program.

Horizon Utilities Corporation's call centre will also advise customers about the fund, where applicable, and direct them to the appropriate agency. After a successful application process, one-time funding will be credited directly to the applicant's utilities account.

### **Eligibility**

Eligible grant recipients include low-income households who are in arrears or at risk of going into arrears on their energy bills and have exhausted all other sources of financial support.

Customers can contact the following agency to determine funding eligibility and submit an application:

#### **COMMUNITY CARE OF ST. CATHARINES & THOROLD**

905-685-1349

The fund was established in Toronto during the winter of 2004 and has expanded to include ten utilities, local United Ways and community service agencies throughout Ontario. The ten utility companies – Burlington Hydro Inc., Enbridge Gas Distribution, Enersource Hydro Mississauga, Horizon Utilities Corporation, Hydro One, Hydro Ottawa, PowerStream, Toronto Hydro-Electric System Ltd., Union Gas Limited and Veridian Connections – will combine efforts with United Way to coordinate the fund through over forty community agencies across the province.

More information about Winter Warmth is available at [www.horizonutilities.com](http://www.horizonutilities.com).

### **About Horizon Utilities**

Horizon Utilities Corporation, named Company of the Year by the Ontario Energy Association, is one of the largest municipally owned electricity distribution companies in Ontario providing electricity and related utility services to more than 230,000 residential and commercial customers in Hamilton and St. Catharines. Horizon's employees are committed to delivering a safe and reliable supply of electricity, providing unparalleled customer value and helping to create a culture of energy conservation in Ontario.

For more information, visit: [www.horizonutilities.com](http://www.horizonutilities.com)

### **About United Way of St. Catharines and District**

United Way of St. Catharines and District funds more than 65 programs in St. Catharines, Thorold, Grimsby, Lincoln, West Lincoln and Niagara-on-the-Lake. Since its inception in 1953, more than 78 million dollars have been invested in programs and services in these communities. These programs form a network of care for over 152,000 people in the community. In United Way's expanded role as Community Builder, the ability to leverage dollars and partners from both the public and private sector enables the organization to address local issues and deliver solutions that bring about lasting change.

### **About Community Care of St. Catharines & Thorold**

Community Care of St. Catharines & Thorold is a non-profit organization that provides comprehensive emergency services to those in need. Services include but are not limited to food security, shelter security, money management, emergency assistance such as energy assistance, medical and dental emergencies and life skills programming. The agency is funded in part by the United Way, the Regional Municipality of Niagara and the business and faith communities, with the majority of the revenue coming from the community at large.

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**Company of the Year**  
Ontario Energy Association