

# CONNECT WITH COPE



GREAT NEWS ON HOW YOUR GIFTS  
ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

SPRING 2018

THANKS TO OUR  
PARTNER AGENCIES  
WHO COORDINATE  
UTILITIES ASSISTANCE  
TO OUR CUSTOMERS

**Catholic Charities of  
Central Colorado**

**Holy Cross Lutheran  
Church**

**Mercy's Gate**

**New Life Church**

**Peak Military  
Care Network**

**REACH Pikes Peak**

**Silver Key  
Senior Services**

**Southern Colorado  
Health Network**

**The Salvation Army**

**Westside CARES**

## Family overcomes house loss, medical bills

*In a survey conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation and the New York Times, 35% of people reported that they could not pay for basic needs such as housing, food, or heat because of medical bills.*

Don and June know full well how true this can be. After Don was unexpectedly hospitalized in July, he had difficulty returning to full employment. Just prior to his hospitalization, Don, June and their three children had moved into a new apartment because their landlord decided to sell the house they were renting. Although relieved to find a place to relocate, the apartment's higher rent was a strain on the family's budget.

When it rains it pours. After his discharge from the hospital, the family was hit with necessary

car repairs. Despite cutting their budget as much as possible, Don and his family had their phone disconnected and were facing many additional challenges that seemed insurmountable.

Thanks to the generosity of neighbors and donors like you, loss of utilities was not one of their challenges. By working with one of our partner agencies, Don and June were able to access Project COPE assistance. They also reworked their budget and were informed of other support systems to help them through this difficult time.

As Don puts it, "we were not left in the dark during my recovery – it was a great relief to me and my family to find a caring program like Project COPE. We are extremely thankful."



# What Will Be Your Legacy?

A recent gift to Colorado Springs Utilities Foundation for Project COPE has us thinking about the concept of “legacy” and our impact on the world once we are no longer here. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines “legacy” as: a gift by will especially of money or other personal property.

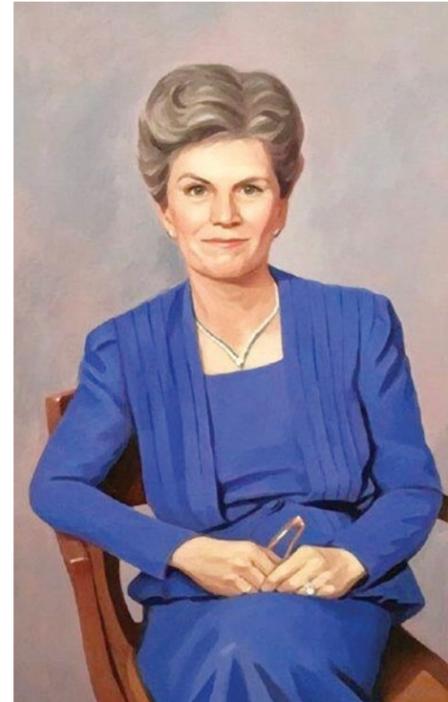
In 2017, Project COPE was the recipient of a legacy gift from the Mary E. Sinclair Inter Vivos Charitable Remainder Trust. Mary Sinclair was a long-time resident of Colorado Springs and is described as humble, compassionate and funny. She had the foresight to consider the continued wellbeing of the community she loved in her estate planning. This allowed her to make significant and impactful gifts

long after her death.

Generous during her lifetime, her legacy culminated in a \$700,000 gift to Project COPE. Many neighbors will receive a compassionate hand up because of her gift.

Like Mary, we too can be generous with what we have. Consider placing a bequest in your will. Bequests can be specific in the amount and purpose. A bequest also can also be a percentage amount of your estate and it can be unrestricted in purpose. A bequest can be left in the form of life insurance.

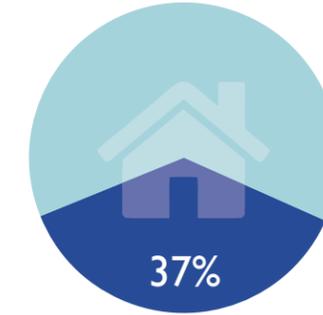
In closing, we thank Mary Sinclair for her generosity. As we do, we can't help but ask – what will your legacy look like?



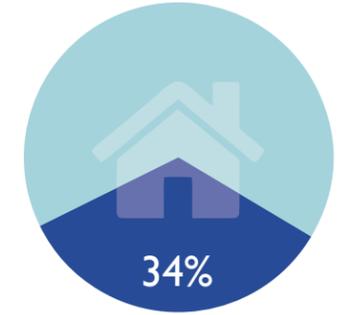
## A Survey of Low-income Households Reveals Diverse Responses to High Energy Bills



Went without food for at least one day



Went without medical or dental care



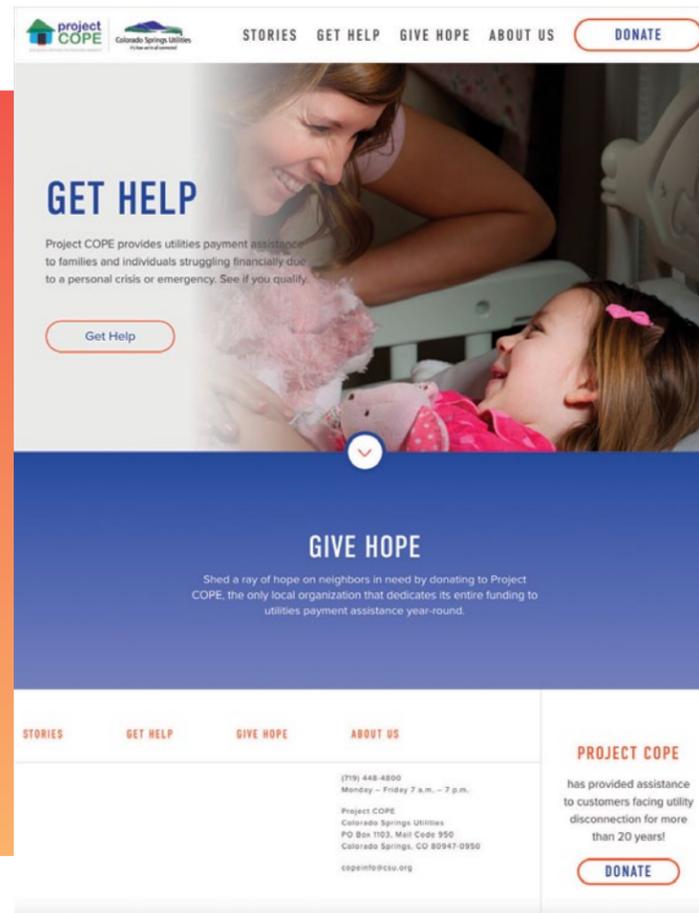
Didn't fill prescription or took reduced dose

Source: National Energy Assistance Directors Association

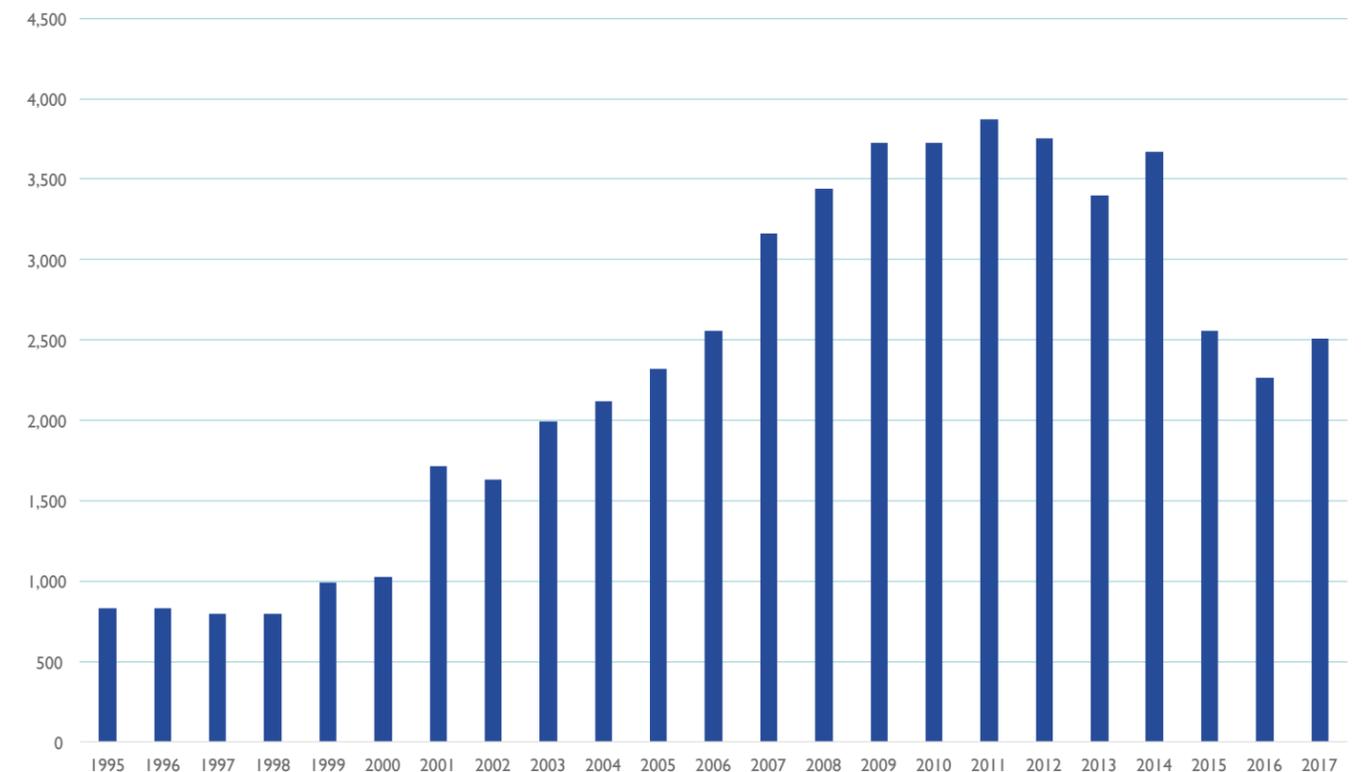
## VISIT US TODAY!

We have updated our website and invite you to visit us at [www.projectcopecs.org](http://www.projectcopecs.org). If you have friends, family, co-workers, or neighbors going through a difficult time financially, refer them to this website. They can click on **GET HELP** for eligibility and assistance information.

If you are in a position to help, please click on **GIVE HOPE** to make your secure, online donation today. It's how we're all connected!



## Number of Households Assisted



In 2017, 2,508 households received utilities assistance from Project COPE – totaling \$881,121.

# The History of Project COPE

History has shown that utilities workers have big hearts. After watching employees dig into their own pockets to assist customers, Colorado Springs Utilities decided to put the organization's unclaimed gas deposits to good use and, in 1983, Citizens Option to Provide

Energy (Project COPE) was established. For many years, those funds sustained the program and provided approximately \$1,000,000 in home heating

assistance. In 2007, the Colorado Springs Utilities Foundation was created. Since then, Project COPE has relied on contributions from Utilities customers, businesses and employees supplemented by grants to provide more than \$10 million in customer support. Colorado Springs Utilities matches all customer contributions, dollar for dollar, up to \$500,000 annually.

Project COPE provides emergency assistance to Colorado Springs Utilities' customers who are past due and/or facing utilities disconnection. Project COPE strives to help customers meet some of their most basic shelter needs during difficult times. People without utilities lack access to water, heat, electricity, and wastewater disposal. In many instances, renters may be evicted if utilities are disconnected. When this happens, having access to utilities



means far more than warmth and light. It becomes a means for shelter.

Qualifying customers are often those who fall into the "at-risk" category including elderly, single parents, disabled, unemployed, and individuals coping with catastrophic illness. However, Project COPE is not a monthly handout – nor is it income based. Project COPE provides a bridge from a time of crisis to a chance

for stability. Individuals and families are given a utilities assistance grant to help move their bill from arrears to current. Grants generally average less than \$500 per household. In 2017, Project COPE provided \$881,121 in utilities assistance to 2,508 households with 3,428 children in residence.

Project COPE relies on 10 nonprofit partner agencies to work directly with customer applicants. This model offers all customers much more than utilities assistance. Local nonprofits work to assess clients' needs and offer assistance through additional resources. Case workers are also required to help customers in need develop a budget and identify steps toward financial stability. One hundred percent of Project COPE's administrative costs are covered by Colorado Springs Utilities.

THANKS TO  
OUR GENEROUS  
CORPORATE  
DONORS

**GOLD LEVEL SUPPORTERS**



**SILVER LEVEL SUPPORTERS**



**MID CO CONSTRUCTION**



Thank you for making a difference in our community. For more information about becoming a corporate donor, contact April Speake at [copeinfo@csu.org](mailto:copeinfo@csu.org) or (719) 668-3836.