As you may be aware, due to a variety of factors the cost of natural gas and electricity has increased significantly throughout the world. Accordingly, New York customers may see rising energy supply costs this winter.

Energy commodity markets are dynamic. They're influenced by many factors such as weather, supply and demand levels, availability and price of alternative fuels, global markets, and most recently the COVID-19 pandemic. NYSEG and RG&E do not set or control the commodity cost of natural gas and electric.

NYSEG and RG&E join regulators and elected officials in their concern about how higher energy commodity costs could impact hard working families.

However, there are tools and programs that our customers can use to help manage the impact of electric and gas commodity cost increases. While we do not control the price, we can help customers manage their overall cost by reducing energy use and stabilizing bills.

We are actively communicating with our customers now and throughout the winter and are encouraging them to:

- Enroll in budget billing programs throughout the winter months, which will allow them to spread their total energy costs evenly over a specified time period.
- Talk to us if they are having difficulty paying their bills. We can review potential assistance programs which they may qualify for.
- Talk to us about steps they can take to improve energy efficiency and reduce energy bills.
- Many utilities like NYSEG and RG&E have implemented nation-leading energy efficiency programs designed to lower energy consumption and empower customers to efficiently manage their energy use.

We encourage customers to consider some or all the following, and encourage you to share these with your constituents:

Inspect your heating system
Have your heating systems inspected and tuned up annually by a professional. An inefficient heating system is not only unsafe, it can also increase fuel consumption. Whether you use a furnace or a heat pump to keep your home warm, check and clean or replace filters periodically. Dirty filters make your home heating system work harder, which means more energy is being wasted.

Insulate and seal your home
Just like a leaky faucet can waste water, a drafty house can waste energy. In fact, your home could be losing up to 30% of your heated and cooled air!

Upgrade your appliances
Upgrading your old appliances to new, energy-efficient models is an easy way to increase the energy efficiency of your home, save money, and help the environment. According to ENERGY STAR, a typical household can save about $450 on their energy bills by switching to ENERGY STAR products. Many utilities offer discounts and rebates on energy-efficient lighting, smart thermostats, power strips, air filters, and electric vehicle chargers.

Turn down the temperature
Set your thermostat as low as comfort permits — each degree lowered can save an average of 3% on your heating bill.

Save even more energy by lowering your thermostat at night while you and your family sleep. If you own a smart programmable thermostat, make the most of its ability to automatically turn down the temperature to save energy when sections of your home are unoccupied. If you don't already own one, consider installing a programmable or smart thermostat this season.

Additional information and resources are available at nyseg.com or rge.com. Customers may also contact NYSEG at 800.572.1111 or RG&E at 800.743.2110 for assistance.