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**For Immediate Release**

**LICKING COUNTY UNITED WAY RECEIVES \$13,504 FROM AEP OHIO TO HELP WITH HEALTH AND HOUSING NEEDS**

*Donation part of AEP Ohio's Partnership with Ohio Program*

Nearly 50 United Way agencies around Ohio will be able to help more families in need this summer, thanks to donations by AEP Ohio totaling \$500,000. The donations are part of the company's overall focus on issues around hunger, health and housing through its Partnership with Ohio (PWO) program.

The Licking County United Way, selected by AEP Ohio to coordinate the Licking County Health and Housing funds, has awarded funding to the Licking County Coalition for Housing, Salvation Army, American Red Cross-Licking County Chapter, and Arthritis Foundation Central Ohio Chapter-Licking County Branch. Funds will be used to assist AEP customers who are at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. Housing funds will assist with rent, mortgage and rental deposit needs. AEP Customers in need of housing assistance may contact the Salvation Army at 740-345-8120 or the Licking County Coalition for Housing at 740-345-1970, or toll free at 1-877-421-5224. AEP customers who have been displaced from their home due to disaster may contact the American Red Cross at 740-349-9442. AEP Customers in need of arthritis related medication/medical equipment may contact the Arthritis Foundation at 1-888-382-4673.

AEP Ohio's PWO program is a three-year, \$15 million commitment by the company to help agencies throughout Ohio address issues around hunger, health and housing affecting Ohio residents. Last year, AEP Ohio committed \$1,000,000 to United Way agencies and area food banks, as well as contributing \$2.3 million to assist families in need of assistance to pay their electric bill through the AEP Ohio Neighbor-to-Neighbor program, a part of the PWO initiative, which began at the end of 2008.

"Many Ohio families continue to struggle during these challenging times. AEP Ohio established the Partnership with Ohio program to provide meaningful assistance to families in need," said Jo Hamrock, president and chief operating officer for AEP Ohio. "Continuing to partner with outstanding community resources like United Way agencies ensures that our contribution will be effective, and will be quickly used to provide assistance for thousands of families throughout the region."

*American Electric Power delivers electricity to more than 5 million customers in 11 states and ranks among the nation's largest generators of electricity, owning nearly 38,000 megawatts of generating capacity in the U.S.*

*The Licking County United Way works to create long-lasting changes that prevent problems from happening and provide a safety net of services that assist those in need. Last year, donations enabled United Way partner programs to serve 139,433 residents.*

*The Salvation Army provides a wide range of emergency and social services, last year assisting 32,622 individuals with rent, mortgage and utility assistance; clothing; counseling; emergency shelter; food/meals and social skills development.*

*The Licking County Coalition for Housing provides transitional housing to homeless families and individuals and a one-stop homelessness prevention program that assisted 3,435 individuals last year with emergency rent/deposit/mortgage assistance, budget counseling, and landlord/tenant assistance.*

*The American Red Cross-Licking County Chapter served 18,316 individuals last year, providing assistance to victims of disasters, provides CPR/first aid training, services to the military and their families, and assists with the blood collection process.*

*Arthritis Foundation Central Ohio Chapter-Licking County Branch assisted 125 individuals last year with support groups, self-help courses, public and professional education, exercise, financial assistance and an equipment loan for people with arthritis.*

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