Consumers Energy employees and community members walk the sidewalk before crossing Francis Street in downtown Jackson during the 2013 Walk for Warmth on Friday, Feb. 22. A total of 375 people took part in the walk. (File Photo)

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JACKSON, MI -- It's the coldest time of the year, and as residents heat their homes, Consumers Energy is trying to help vulnerable customers pay their bills with its annual Walk for Warmth fundraiser.

There are two walks sponsored by the Community Action Agency of Jackson in the area this week. All events are open to the public. Registration starts at 11 a.m. for the noon Friday, Feb. 20, walk at Consumers Energy Headquarters, One Energy Plaza.

Registration starts at 8:30 a.m. for the Saturday, Feb. 21 walk at the First Presbyterian church in Adrian, 156 E. Maumee St. The walk starts at 9 a.m.

"Every dollar we raise will go toward helping our most vulnerable customers, including those who are elderly and disabled, and those who can't afford to pay their heating bills," Patti Poppe, Consumers Energy's vice president of customer experience, rates and regulation, said in a press release. "Together, our steps can help ensure that our neighbors have resources to stay warm in a time of need."
Consumers Energy will match every dollar participants raise for Walk for Warmth. Last year, the group raised more than $300,000 that was given to community members through the Michigan Community Action Agency network.

For more information on Walk for Warmth and for locations of other walks happening around Michigan, visit the Consumers Energy website.