

How to...

1.0 ..save 19% of your utility bills through UTAP

1.1 ..enroll yourself in UTAP

2.0 ..offset overseas prices of non-housing goods and services

3.0 ..purchase heating oil correctly

4.0 ..get additional help when struggling with increasing costs

1.0 .. save 19% of your utility bills through UTAP

With the rising costs of utilities, you could find that your end of year (reconciliation) utility bills could increase by €500-€1000 more than previous years. The Utility Tax Avoidance Program (UTAP) can save you 19% on your gas (EWV) and electricity (NEW Energie). **Use a VAT Form for your heating oil delivery** to save 19%. In total The UTAP enrollment will save you approx. \$1,000-\$1,500 on your electric, heat-pump, & natural gas bills (on a 3-year tour for each utility). There is also another option in saving on your heating oil by purchasing oil through the NATO VAT Office. Their VAT form is €20.00 for purchases between €1000.00-€5000.00



**Special Announcement:** From 1 October 2022 until March 2024 the VAT was reduced from 19% to 7% for Gas only.

The reduction is a resolution of the German federal government.

If you are enrolled with UTAP, bring in your **annual reconciliation bill** to the US VAT Office for a courtesy review to make sure that your utility bills have been calculated without the 19% VAT.

## 1.1 ..enroll yourself in UTAP

Bring the following to the U.S. VAT Office:

- 1- Your original NEW Energie electric statement.
- 2- Your EWV gas statement (if you have natural gas heating). NOTE: If you don't have your utility statements, contact the company for a copy.
- 3- Take a picture or write down your current meter readings.
- 4- US & NATO ID cards.
- 5- Your bank IBAN number.
- 6- One-time fee of \$99 for the U.S. VAT Office (VISA, AMEX, MC accepted).
- 7- One-time fee of €30 per utility for the NATO VAT Office (cash preferred).

NOTE: The following companies have an agreement with NATO to provide tax free utilities:

- 1- NEW Energie for electricity and heating pump. Email: ServiceCenter@new-energie.de
- 2- Energie und Wasser Versorgung (EWV) for natural gas. Email: Petra.Taschbach@ewv.de

If your energy provider is a different utility company, contact the VAT Office to see how you can transfer over to NEW/EWV and save. Make your appointment through

<https://app.2meters.app/p/470abstaxrel>. For questions: [470abs.svfa@us.af.mil](mailto:470abs.svfa@us.af.mil) & DSN: 458-4114 or Commercial: 02451 9151 4114 or 02451 63 7219

## 2.0 ..offset overseas prices of non-housing goods and services

The Overseas Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) is a non-taxable supplemental pay allowance, designed to offset overseas prices of non-housing goods and services as well as to equalize purchasing power. The prices of goods and services overseas are compared with the prices of equivalent goods and services in the United States. The result of this price comparison is an index that reflects a cost of living. If prices in CONUS are rising at a greater rate than those overseas, your Overseas COLA will decrease, and vice versa. However, if prices rise or fall at the same rate, your Overseas COLA will stay the same. Two surveys determine the relative cost of living overseas compared with the U.S.:

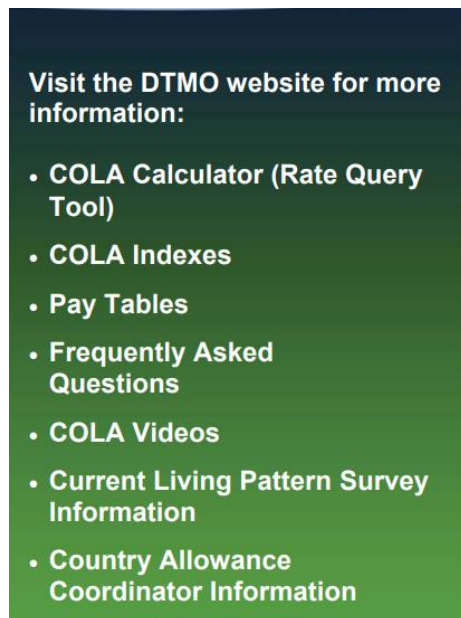
- Living Pattern Survey (LPS) - asks Service members where they shop (e.g., Commissary, Exchange, catalog, internet) and what percentage of goods they purchase at each of these places
- Service members can have a direct impact on Overseas COLA indexes by participating in the LPS
- Retail Price Schedule (RPS or Market Basket Survey) - annually prices approximately 120 goods and services based on information from the Living Pattern Survey

Overseas COLA is not a fixed amount and may vary for each Service member. Payments are determined by:

- Location
- Rank

- Years of Service
- Number of Dependents

Overseas COLA is only based on a Service member's income, not a spouses'. Its fluctuations should be considered in household budgeting and fixed expenses, such as car payments, should be based on what a Service member can afford without Overseas COLA. It will fluctuate based on the exchange rate and could go up or down from pay period to pay period Learn more at [www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/cola.cfm](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/cola.cfm)



### 3.0 ..purchase heating oil correctly

With the high price of heating oil, please be careful not to exceed the maximum amount of your daily purchase for the NF1 (cost \$10.00 non-priced) VAT Form. The NF1 VAT Form is designed to be used for purchases of up to €2499.99 without VAT (€2974.99 with VAT), offering €475.00/19% savings.

The cost of heating is between three and four times higher than last year. However, the maximum Euro amount on the VAT Form has not changed. Customers exceeding the €2499.99 (VAT Free) will have to pay the 19% and will receive a VAT/Customs violation. It is the customer's responsibility to ensure that the amount on the VAT Form doesn't exceed the amount €2499.99, **not the vendors or landlords**. Customers can arrange multiple oil delivery days to keep under the allowed maximum.

The other option, is for the customer to utilize the NF2 VAT form (cost \$100.00), designed for fixed price purchases (normally for cars, scooters, & E Bikes). However, with today's oil prices, the use of the NF2 VAT Form is used more often. Customers will need to secure an offer from oil company and ask if the company if they accept a Euro cashier's check for payment. With the combination of the offer and the cashier's check, we can issue a NF2 VAT Form (\$100.00) for the exact amount the oil purchase. See examples below, Year Winter & Spring 2022.

**Good-** Summer 2020 Example: 4000 liters x €0.38 per liter = €1520.00 / 1.19 (19%) = €1277.31 under the authorized NF1 VAT form.

Violation- Winter 2022 Example: 4000 liters x €1.55 per liter = €6200.00 / 1.19 (19%) = €5210.00 two times over the authorized NF1 VAT form amount.

Violation- Spring 2022 Example 4000 liters x €1.13 per liter = €4520.00 / 1.19 (19%) = €3798.32 this is €1298.32 over the authorized amount.

**Good-** NF1 VAT Form example for the current average oil price: amount 2632 liters x €1.13 per liter = €2974.16 / 1.19 (19%) = €2 499.29 VAT Free. This is the price for the oil, including delivery. You can find the “Guide for Buying Heating Oil” in the VAT office brochure rack and at the M&FRC.

Please review the NF2 guidance for over €2500.00 purchases.

For questions: [470abs.svfa@us.af.mil](mailto:470abs.svfa@us.af.mil) & DSN: 458-4114 or Commercial: 02451 9151 4114 or 02451 63 7219. Scan the 2Meters QR Code to schedule an appointment with the VAT office prior to scheduling a delivery.



#### 4.0 ..get additional help when struggling with increasing costs

With the rising costs of utilities (gas and electric) in Germany and the approaching Winter season, the members of the 470th Air Base Squadron would like to remind you about the following resources to help ease any troubled times:

##### **Finance Office:**

- Pay Advances: PCS pay advance; equal to 1-3 months of base pay less deductions; can be requested 30 days prior to PCS or within 60 after.
- OHA advance: Can be approved for advance rent, security deposits, or move-in expenses; equal to 1-3 months of rent. Payable any time during your tour.
- Family Supplemental Subsistence Allowance: FSSA is designed to bring the military member's

household income up to 130% of the federal poverty level, as established by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The benefit is paid in whole dollars, equal to the amount needed to bring the military member's household income up to 130% of the federal poverty level. The current maximum payable FSSA rate is up to \$1,100 per month, not to exceed 130% of the poverty level. FSSA benefits are prorated if you are not eligible for the entire month.

[\(https://themilitarywallet.com/family-supplemental-subsistence-allowance/\)](https://themilitarywallet.com/family-supplemental-subsistence-allowance/)

- Basic Needs Allowance: BNA is a new, taxable allowance that will boost the gross household income of eligible active duty service members to 130% of the federal poverty level, according to a DOD fact sheet on the new program. Also BNI is taxable and does not pay out until 2023.

[\(https://themilitarywallet.com/basic-needs-allowance/\)](https://themilitarywallet.com/basic-needs-allowance/)

### **Housing Office**

Members of the housing office will gladly come to your residence and conduct a walk through to help point out some energy saving tips. Please contact the housing office to schedule an appointment.