



American Recovery and Reinvestment Action (ARRA) State Energy Efficient Appliance Rebate Program (SEEARP)

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Program Overview

The US Department of Energy provides federal stimulus funds for states to provide rebates for ENERGY STAR qualified appliances. More than 70 percent of the energy used in homes is for appliances, refrigeration, space heating, cooling and water heating. Replacing old appliances and equipment with ENERGY STAR equipment can help American families lower their energy use and reduce their energy bills.

Each state appliance rebate program will be unique. Each state has specific energy needs and the flexibility to design a program for its residents.

Oregon has chosen to issue the rebates to low-income homeowners replacing non-functioning or low-efficiency furnaces and heat pumps.

Implementation

As of January 1, 2010 Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS), in partnership with Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE), will have federal stimulus funds to provide low-income Oregon homeowners with a "first come, first served" rebate of 70 percent (up to \$2,000) for ENERGY STAR qualified heating systems. The program will be administered by the local Community Action Agencies through their existing Low Income Home Energy Assistance and Weatherization programs. If homeowners are approved through the existing program at their local community action agency the cost will be covered 100%.

There will also be a "Stand Alone" program for those homeowners who choose not to go through their local CAP. This part of the program will be administered at OHCS. Homeowners will call OHCS and go through an initial screening process. If it's determined they may be eligible for the program they will be sent an application packet and asked to verify income and homeownership. Once the application is received and approved at OHCS the homeowner will be sent the voucher. It will be the homeowners' responsibility to find a contractor to do

the work and to pay for all costs up front. Once the furnace is installed it will be up to the homeowner to send their rebate certificate and accompanying documentation to ODOE in order to receive the rebate.

This appliance program for low-income homeowners was selected because Oregon has a Residential Energy Tax Credit incentive program for Oregonians who purchase high efficiency appliances.

Who is Eligible for the Appliance Rebate?

Eligible homeowners in Oregon are those earning less than 60 percent of the state's median income levels. The applicant must also be the homeowner.

Income Guidelines for Oregon (Program Year 2010)		
Size of Family Unit	Annual Income 60% of Median	Monthly Income 60% of Median
1	\$21,093	\$1,757.75
2	\$27,583	\$2,298.58
3	\$34,073	\$2,839.42
4	\$40,563	\$3,380.25
5	\$47,053	\$3,921.08
6	\$53,543	\$4,461.92
7	\$54,760	\$4,563.32
8	\$55,977	\$4,664.73
9	\$57,194	\$4,766.14
10	\$58,411	\$4,867.55
11	\$59,629	\$4,968.95
12	\$60,844	\$5,070.36
each additional member over twelve	\$1,217	\$101.42

What is our goal?

We expect the appliance rebate program to replace and recycle approximately 1,800 nonfunctioning or low-efficiency furnaces and heat pumps across the state for eligible households.

How do I apply for this appliance rebate program?

If you qualify (see section on “Who is Eligible”) you should contact your local Community Action Program (CAP) agency (This link provides the name of the CAP Agency by county and their phone number.) .

<http://www.ohcs.oregon.gov/OHCS/CRD/SOS/docs/EnergyAssistanceReferrals.pdf> The appliance rebate program will be administered through the existing low-income home energy assistance and weatherization programs.

If the homeowner is determined eligible for weatherization or emergency energy assistance a CAP agency representative may inspect and determine if the heating system is in need of replacement, determine the type of heating system (brand and model) to be installed and arrange for a CAP-certified contractor to install the new system. Once the system is installed, it will be inspected. The ODOE rebate will pay the CAP agency directly for the equipment (70 percent up to \$2,000). The CAP agency will also pay the contractor directly for the remaining costs including installation. The homeowner will be asked to sign a release for the funds, but will not need to pay for either the equipment or installation.

If homeowners choose to go through the “Stand Alone” program they will call OHCS and be pre-screened. They will be asked to verify income and homeownership. Once income and homeownership are verified a rebate voucher will be sent to them. The homeowner will be solely responsible to get bids for the furnace, pay up front for the installation and equipment, and return the rebate voucher with all of the proper documentation to ODOE for payment of the rebate. If your rebate is over \$600 you will receive a 1099 form for tax purposes at the end of the year from ODOE.

To apply for the “Stand Alone” program respond to furnacerebate@hcs.state.or.us or call toll free 1-800-453-5511 option 2 selection 4 and follow the prompts.

How long will these funds last?

The funds are expected to cover 1,800 heating systems. OHCS, ODOE and local CAP agencies are anticipating that there are many qualified households and will be working as efficiently as possible to ensure that these homes are served as soon as possible. CAP agencies focus on replacing non-functioning heating systems first and then on low-efficiency systems.

Do all counties get equal access to the funds?

Initially, a portion of the funds are being distributed on a formula basis. After the first six months, more funds will be distributed as the CAP agencies request them. This is a statewide program so all counties in the state will have access to funds.

How do contractors become CAP-certified?

Contractors should contact local CAP Agencies to inquire about becoming certified to do work for the CAP.

<http://www.ohcs.oregon.gov/OHCS/CRD/SOS/docs/WeatherizationReferrals.pdf>

Why was this program selected and not one that all Oregonians could access, such as a rebate on new energy-efficient refrigerators?

Oregon already has a financial incentive program for refrigerators (and other energy efficient appliances) in the Residential Energy Tax Credit program <http://www.oregon.gov/energy/cons/res/retc.shtml>. All Oregonians can take advantage of the Residential Energy Tax Credit Program.

CAP agencies have had limited funding that is insufficient to meet current needs to replace non-functioning and low-efficiency heating systems for low-income homeowners. This program will allow CAPs to replace such systems and Oregonians in need of assistance to save on future energy use and energy costs.

For more information, contact Sally Dorman, Energy Programs Specialist, at 503.986.2000 or by e-mail sally.dorman@hcs.state.or.us