

Free energy efficiency/conservation programs for low-income consumers

Low-income Energy Efficiency Assistance Program for Houses

Under this pilot program funded by the Ontario Power Authority, energy conservation and efficiency measures designed to reduce consumption in electrically-heated homes (including draft-proofing and fridge replacement) are provided at no charge to low-income households that rent or own single-family private homes in Ontario. The pilot program, which was delivered by EnviroCentre and Green Communities Canada, ended in December 2007. The OPA will launch a provincial program later this year.

Enbridge Gas Distribution: Low-Income Home Weatherization Retrofit

The Enbridge Home Weatherization Retrofit program provides income-eligible participants with a free home energy assessment and weatherization upgrades at no cost, to improve the energy efficiency of their home. Approximately 300 qualifying low-income Enbridge Gas customer households will benefit from this pilot program that will be delivered by GreenSaver in the City of Toronto, Peel, York and Durham Regions and by EnviroCentre in the Ottawa area. The pilot runs until December 31, 2008, and applications must be received by November 30, 2008. For more information, eligibility criteria and to obtain an application form, visit the GreenSaver website at http://www.greensaver.org/audit_eeph.html OR call 416-203-3106 ext. 304 (1-800-855-3106 toll-free) or EnviroCentre at www.envirocentre.ca or call 613-590-2582, #3.

Enbridge Gas Distribution: Enhanced TAPS program

The Enhanced Thermostat, Aerator, Pipewrap, Showerhead (TAPS) Program is available at no cost to qualifying low-income families and individuals through to December 31, 2008. The following energy efficiency measures are supplied and installed: programmable thermostat, low-flow showerheads, and hot and cold water pipe wraps. Kitchen and bathroom aerators are provided for recipients to install themselves. Applications are available through United Way agencies participating in the Winter Warmth program. For more information, please visit the Enbridge Gas Distribution website at: www.enbridge.com/gas, select "About Us" then "In the Community" and then select Winter Warmth.

Union Gas: Helping Homes Conserve

Union Gas has developed a free energy efficiency and conservation program, "Helping Homes Conserve", targeted at low-income homeowners and low-income tenants who pay for their energy bills directly and are Union Gas customers. Low-income participants will benefit from the free installation of an Energy Saving Kits (which contain up to 2 low-flow showerheads, two faucet aerators, and pipe insulation) and the free installation of a programmable thermostat. Customers must have a natural gas water heater to qualify for the ESK installation, and a natural gas furnace to qualify for the programmable thermostat installation. The program was launched in Hamilton on August 17, 2007 and continues throughout 2008 in Hamilton, and is now being offered in Windsor and Sudbury. For more information, visit www.helpinghomes.ca OR call 1-866-354-5098.

Union Gas is also in the process of developing a low-income home retrofit weatherization program that will launch later in 2008.

Discretionary benefit to cover energy conservation measures

This is a \$50 one-time benefit to pay for pre-approved, low-cost energy conservation measures, such as caulking, sealing or weather stripping around doors and windows, insulating hot water pipes and hot water tanks, and installing flow restrictors in showerhead pipes. It is available to OW and ODSP recipients, who can contact their caseworkers for more information.

Ottawa's PowerPlay program

The PowerPlay program, launched in 2005 and delivered by EnviroCentre and the City of Ottawa, provides an in-home electricity audit showing how to reduce electricity and gas consumption and installs up to \$300 worth of conservation devices, free-of-charge, to Ontario Works recipients in the City of Ottawa who have an individual account with Hydro Ottawa or Hydro One. Call 613-580-2582 (ext 3) for more information.

Social housing

The Ontario Power Authority (OPA) helped fund energy efficient lighting and appliances in 5,000 existing social housing units. The first phase of the program was primarily for providers already involved in Social Housing Services Corporation's (SHSC) "Green Light Initiative" Energy Management Program pilot.

The Affordable Housing Energy Efficiency Program, Phase One, targeted 5,000 units of new housing being built under the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program. The program offered rebates of up to \$850 per unit to offset the cost of purchasing and installing a wide range of energy efficient products, including ENERGY STAR® qualified appliances such as refrigerators and laundry machines, lamps and lighting fixtures, and heating and ventilation equipment, including furnaces, boilers, pumps, fans and motors. The program also incorporated an education and awareness component which was delivered to affordable housing stakeholders including municipalities, housing providers, builders, architects, developers and residents.

The new OPA Multi-Family Buildings Program, which will be rolled out in 2008, will have a social housing component. Contact your social housing provider for more information.

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★ Note: This summary is not an exhaustive list. It represents LIEN's best efforts to identify available programs to assist low-income consumers and will be updated regularly.