

Weatherization Assistance Program

Weatherization Works!

Helping Low-Income Families Save on Energy Bills

As America celebrated its bicentennial in 1976, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Weatherization Assistance Program was launched to help low-income Americans gain another form of independence. High energy costs during peak heating and cooling seasons create an unmanageable burden for low-income families, who spend an average of 14 percent of their annual income on energy costs, while other households spend only about 3.5 percent. Weatherization helps these low-income Americans achieve a higher level of financial stability by reducing their energy costs and freeing limited resources for other uses.

The Weatherization Program operates on a simple, yet effective, premise — increasing the energy efficiency of a dwelling will result in a decrease of the occupant's energy costs. Rather than offering a temporary fix through bill assistance, Weatherization provides a lasting solution by addressing the cause of high energy bills.

Before any work was done, my electric bill for the previous month was \$200.33...[After Weatherization] my current bill is only \$105.68.

— Mother of three

Since its inception, the Program has weatherized over five million low-income homes, at no charge to its clients, using federal and leveraged funds.

Weatherization implements the most cost-effective measures in each home, thereby ensuring equitable distribution of funds. Yet there is still a lot of work to do, as only 16 percent of eligible households have been served.

How Weatherization Works

Weatherization casts a wide net, delivering services to every county in the nation through a network of partnerships between DOE and more than 970 local Weatherization agencies. DOE's six Regional Offices award grants to the states, which then contract with the local agencies to carry out the work.

Low-income Americans in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and among Native American Tribes are eligible to apply for the Program. Among low-income households, the Program prioritizes those with elderly residents, individuals with disabilities, and families with children. More than 100,000 low-income dwellings are weatherized every year.

Benefits to Families, Communities, and our Nation

The Weatherization Assistance

Program works to:

- Reduce high energy costs for low-income families
- Decrease the nation's energy consumption and reduce dependence on imported oil
- Improve local air quality and avoid greenhouse gas emissions
- Provide a wise investment of taxpayer dollars, producing compound benefits for low-income Americans and the communities where they live
- Educate consumers in energy efficiency practices.

Weatherization
Assistance Program



Weatherization benefits the environment, the economy, and communities.

- **Environmental Impact**—

Weatherization measures contribute to a reduction in the environmental consequences of energy use.

Weatherization reduces carbon dioxide emissions by an average of one ton per weatherized home and decreases national energy consumption by the equivalent of 15 million barrels of oil every year.

- **Economic Impact**—Weatherized households have average energy savings of \$224 per year, which amounted to a cost savings of more than \$1 billion for all homes served during winter 2000.

- **Job Creation**—52 direct jobs are created for every million dollars invested in the Program. Current DOE funding directly supports about 8,000 jobs nationwide. The Program provides technical training to crews and contractors in the areas of building science, health, safety, and construction practices. The Program's entry-level laborers learn a valuable, specialized trade.

In the Client's Own Words

Ohio resident Faith H. is among the millions of Americans whose quality of life has been improved by Weatherization. Before Faith's home was weatherized, it was so cold during



Eva Collier was living on \$600 a month when her gas bills soared to \$800. In November 2001, her home became the five millionth home weatherized by the Program.

the winter that her children could not invite friends over to play. Desperate for a lasting solution, she applied for Weatherization help. The Weatherization auditor found her house lacked insulation and the furnace was not operating properly. The Weatherization crew sealed the roof to prevent air and water leakage, properly insulated the walls and ceiling, installed a new furnace, and replaced broken window panes.

In a thank you note to the local agency, Faith exclaimed, "The snow will no longer blow through the house!" She also shared a remark from her youngest daughter: "Mom, now I can wear just my pajamas instead of a sweatshirt and sweat pants over them." Thanks to Weatherization, Faith's home is comfortable and energy-efficient, and her children can invite their friends over to play—regardless of the season.

A Strong Energy Portfolio for a Strong America

Energy efficiency and clean, renewable energy will mean a stronger economy, a cleaner environment, and greater energy independence for America. Working with a wide array of state, community, industry, and university partners, the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy invests in a diverse portfolio of energy technologies.



U.S. Department of Energy
**Energy Efficiency
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