



For Immediate Release – April 1, 2010

Federal government pulls the plug on energy efficiency grants, leaving homeowners and commitment to climate change out in the cold

The federal government announced late on March 31, 2010, without warning or consultation, that they are pulling out of providing homeowner grants for new applicants to the popular and proven effective ecoENERGY Retrofit - Homes energy efficiency program. Thus, ecoENERGY grants will not be provided to homeowners who are not currently registered in the program. Homeowners who have already had an initial audit under the ecoENERGY program will still be able to take advantage of both federal and provincial grants by having a follow-up home evaluation (an "E" visit), if they have not already, no later than March 2011. Second follow-up home evaluations (known as "F" visits) are no longer available.

"The Harper administration cancelled the grant in 2006, reinstated it under public pressure in 2007 and now is pulling it again. Funding is provided and then funding is pulled away. This is no way to build a strong green economy and workforce in Canada" states Lynda Bausinger, Executive Director for Elora Environment Centre. "To date, less than 10 per cent of homes in Canada have been through an energy efficiency retrofit program. The end of new entries into the ecoENERGY program represents a tremendous lost opportunity to create green jobs and tackle national climate change issues."

Residential energy efficiency incentive programs are one of the most cost effective means to:

- Take action on climate change
- Stimulate local economies
- Support business and industry installing energy efficiency equipment
- Help homeowners reduce their energy bills
- Grow a green workforce that will strengthen Canada as a leader in the energy conservation sector

Many countries, like the United States and United Kingdom, are progressively ramping up their efforts to support energy efficiency retrofit and grant programs and leverage the multiple benefits that these programs provide. For example, the UK has committed to retrofit all homes by 2030, with firm interim targets for the next 5-10 years. In contrast, Canada has shown a lack of leadership and vision on supporting energy efficiency programs.

Despite the lack of on-going support for energy efficiency from the federal government, Green Community service providers are encouraging homeowners who have already received their initial audit to book their follow up audits and complete their energy saving

measures. The Elora Environment Centre staff are endeavouring to provide their customers with the latest information and continue to book follow audits which allow homeowners to receive their grants. In addition, even after March 31st, staff members at the Elora Environment Centre are more than happy to book an initial home evaluation for homeowners to help them increase the energy efficiency of their home – always a cost-saving measure!

Since its inception as an environmental non-profit organization in 1993, the Elora Environment Centre has audited over 30,000 homes, translating into a reduction of 10,000 tonnes of greenhouse gases per year. Homeowners have received, on average, \$4,000 in grants from the ecoENERGY program alone by performing energy upgrades.

For more information or to book your home evaluation or follow-up, please call the Elora Environment Centre at 1-866-865-7337. Website: www.EloraEnvironmentCentre.ca.

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