

Weatherization Assistance Program Overview

The Vermont Low Income Weatherization Assistance Program creates warmer, safer, and more energy efficient homes. Weatherization is an anti-poverty program that puts money saved via energy efficiency back into the pockets of low income Vermonters. It is the only statewide program providing weatherization services at no cost to income-eligible Vermonters.

Statewide Administration of the Weatherization Program:

The statewide program is administered by the Department for Children & Families Office of Economic Opportunity. Three full time OEO staff provide guidance, training, quality control and quality assurance of the program to ensure its effectiveness.

Local Weatherization Providers:

Local Weatherization (Wx) services are provided by four Community Action Agencies and one non-profit organization. The 5 WAP's (Weatherization Assistance Programs) are "crew based" meaning their well-trained employees install the energy saving and health and safety measures in each home. The WAP's hire local heating contractors, plumbers and electricians when that work is needed.

Who: Vermont homeowners and renters with household income below 80% of area median income or 200% of the federal poverty limit are eligible for no cost Weatherization service.

Prioritization of Service: Due to often long wait lists for service, prioritization is done via the statewide Wx Data Management System, Hancock Energy Software (HES). The prioritization criteria include:

- Fuel Assistance (LIHEAP) home
- Household income less than 60% of the state or county median income (higher priority for < 30% SMI)
- High energy usage in home
- Families with elderly member in the home
- Families with disabled member in the home
- Families with children under 6 in the home

Services:

- **Efficiency Coaching** on energy saving behaviors and upgrade of electrical efficiency
- **One Touch Screening & Referral** for health and social service programs, such as the Vermont lead-based paint program, Head Start, aging services, Vermont Quit Hot line, etc.
- **Energy Audit** of home to identify where the most cost-effective energy efficiency improvements can be made – including blower door testing, infra-red scan and inspection of attics, knee walls, basements and crawl spaces, as well as testing of all combustion appliances for safety and efficiency
- **Energy Renovation** such as insulation and air sealing by 5 WAP's "in house" Weatherization crews

- **Health & Safety Improvements** such as improving ventilation, addressing carbon monoxide and unsafe combustion appliance issues. Local Fuel Dealers or Heating Contractors are hired by WAP's
- **Quality Control Inspection**, to Building Performance Institute (BPI) standards, of all completed work before reporting to the state

Impact:

- 6,871 homes weatherized in the past 6 years
- 896 homes to be weatherized in FY 2018
- Average cost of job: \$8,467 of which approximately 15% goes towards Health and Safety
- Estimated 24% energy savings per home

Single Family and Multi Family Homes:

- Both owner occupied and rental homes can be weatherized if an income eligible client resides there.
- No cost to low income owner occupied households
- Landlords are responsible for correcting any Health and Safety issues before the Wx Program provides no cost energy efficiency measures
- In FY17, 60% of the homes Weatherized were 1-unit homes. 23% were Multifamily homes of 2 to 4 units and 17% of the homes were 5 or more units

FY 18 Weatherization Grants:

US Department of Energy	\$1,230,806
Home Weatherization Assistance Fund (Fuel Tax)	\$8,744,738**
TOTAL	\$9,975,544***

**includes \$2.8 million LIHEAP "swap"

***The totals above do not include the costs for the Office of Economic Opportunity Administration of the Program

The Big Picture:

- **Cost Effective:** Testing and analysis of every home ensures the program spends the Wx funds in the most effective and beneficial manner for clients
- **Effective:** The Program allows low income households to stay in their home by making it more affordable and safer
- **Comprehensive:** We never leave an uninsulated surface or unsafe condition and test to ensure this
- **Holistic:** Efficiency Coaching and One Touch Program help the program have an effective and large impact on our client's lives

Program Year 2017 Updates

- The Office of Economic Opportunity received a **National HUD Healthy Homes Award for its implementation of the One Touch Screening and Referral Process.**
- 20 Energy Auditors and Efficiency Coaches were trained in Healthy Homes Assessment as we look to maximize the health outcomes for Vermonters who have their homes weatherized through the low-income Weatherization Assistance Program.
- Vermont's Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program leads the nation in developing approaches to address vermiculite insulation (a known asbestos containing material) so that the home can be safely weatherized. In addition, it is the first program to leverage Zonolite Trust funds (private) to cover the additional cost for low income homeowners.