

State of Vermont  
Department for Children and Families  
Office of Economic Opportunity

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### Weatherization Assistance Program Overview

**The Vermont Low Income Weatherization Assistance Program creates warmer, safer, healthier and more energy efficient homes. Weatherization is an anti-poverty program that puts money saved through energy efficiency back into the pockets of low income Vermonters. It also does much more...**

#### **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 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 (~\$63,760 for a 4-person family) or 200% of the federal poverty limit are eligible for no cost Weatherization service. Due to often long wait lists for service, prioritization is done via the statewide Wx Data Management System, Hancock Energy Software (HES). Prioritization criteria below is ranked high to low.

- Fuel Assistance (LIHEAP) home
- Household income is less than 60% of the state or county median income
- 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

In SFY 2018, 821 households were served, with 1,417 total occupants – 406 were elderly, 256 were living with a disability, 380 were children.

#### **Service:**

- **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 BPI\* standards, of all completed work before reporting to the state

\*BPI is the Building Performance Institute. [www.bpi.org](http://www.bpi.org)

**Impact:**

- 7,692 homes weatherized in the past 7 years
- 860 homes to be weatherized in FY 2019
- Average cost per job: ~\$8,500 of which approximately 15% goes towards Health and Safety
- Estimated 29% energy savings per home
- 25% of the home owners receive a warm handoff to another health or human services program through One Touch
- In SFY 2018, the Emergency Heating System Repair and Replacement Program helped 392 low income households (818 people) restore safe heat when they had a dangerous or no heat situation in their 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 FY18, 63% of the homes weatherized were 1 unit homes, 19% were small multifamily homes consisting of 2-4 units, and 18% were large multifamily homes comprising of 5 or more units in the building.
- Approximately 35% of the completed homes each year are mobile homes.

**FY 20 Weatherization Grants\* - Proposed:**

US Department of Energy - Weatherization **	\$1,159,814
Home Weatherization Assistance Fund (Fuel Tax)	\$5,794,880
Low Income Heating Assistance Program (Federal) ("swap")	\$2,845,764
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$9,800,458</b>
General Fund (one-time) – ~45 homes	\$500,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$10,300,458</b>

\* Does not include Office of Economic Opportunity Administration of the Program

\*\* Anticipate the DOE Award may have up to an additional \$205,613

**The Big Picture:**

- Cost Effective: Testing and analysis of every home ensures Wx funds in the most effective and beneficial manner for clients
- Effective: Allows low income households to stay in their home by making it more affordable and safer
- Comprehensive: Tests to ensure that no surface is left uninsulated and the home is safe after Wx
- Holistic: Efficiency Coaching and One Touch Program help have an effective and large impact on our client's lives
- As the Thank You note below implies, the Program often changes clients lives beyond the tangible benefits. (Note was sent to one of the 5 WAP's after Weatherization was completed)