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Free energy evaluations available for low-income residents

Over the last five months, Campbell River residents have lowered their monthly energy bills thanks to free home energy evaluations. Now, it's even easier for low-income residents to participate.

Starting this month, applicants to the City's Leisure Involvement for Everyone (LIFE) program will also have an opportunity to apply for the Energy Conservation Assistance Program (ECAP), which provides qualified lower-income BC Hydro residential account holders with free home energy evaluations and energy-saving products.

When City staff members screen for the LIFE program, they will also determine whether an applicant meets the income qualification requirement for the ECAP program – and sign a voucher for qualified applicants to use to apply for ECAP. People who currently hold a LIFE pass, or will soon be registering for one, should visit the Community Centre or Sportsplex and ask about the ECAP program to determine whether they may be eligible for a free energy evaluation and home energy-saving products.

“By working with the LIFE program, it will make it a lot easier for Campbell River residents to take advantage of this great program,” says Amy van den Hooven, Energy Challenge Coordinator. “Qualified households on limited income will receive valuable information and free energy-saving products, like energy saving light bulbs, faucet aerators for the kitchen and bathroom, water-saving showerheads and many more products to help reduce monthly energy bills.”

The program for low-income residents follows the success of the City of Campbell River and BC Hydro's first Energy Rebate Program, which offered free home energy audits to Campbell River residents between January 1 and July 31, 2013.

“To date, more than 75 Campbell River residents have made a home energy reduction pledge and been awarded free home energy audits that gave them ways to reduce energy use, add value to their home, and help lower greenhouse gas emissions in Campbell River,” says van den Hooven. “One family expects a five per cent home energy reduction after pledging to install new programmable thermostats and teach their children to turn off the lights when they leave a room. Another family pledged to replace incandescent light bulbs with CFL or LED bulbs, insulate all electrical outlets and light switches, unplug appliances that are not used and on stand-by, and install black-out blinds on sunny windows to reduce the need for air conditioning in the summer.”

“This program has been very eye opening,” says Alicia DeHart, Energy Rebate Program participant. “We are excited to lower our energy consumption by replacing our single pane window, insulating the crawlspace, and upgrading to Energy Star rated doors and fans in the bathroom.”

These programs are a partnership between the City of Campbell River, BC Hydro Power Smart and FortisBC – and a key step in implementing the City's Community Energy and Emissions Plan. Buildings represent approximately 51 per cent of energy use and 23 per cent of Campbell River's greenhouse gas emissions. Visit www.bchydro.com/ecap or call 1-877-806-3242 to learn more about ECAP, the eligibility requirements and how to apply.

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