

Utili-Facts

Programs For Making Homes More Energy Efficient

The 76th Texas Legislature passed a law requiring electric utilities to meet energy efficiency goals. The Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC) Substantive

Rule §25.181 (Energy Efficiency Rule) establishes procedures for meeting these goals.

To comply with the Energy Efficiency Rule, electric utilities offer energy efficiency programs to customers. These programs involve the installation of energy efficiency measures such as insulation, high efficiency lighting and more. In addition, the utilities also offer programs to help schools and local governments reduce operating costs and save energy.

Utilities partner with independent, third-party service providers who are responsible for installing

energy efficiency measures at residences and businesses. Project sponsors include air conditioning contractors, insulation installers, lighting contractors, retail electric providers, energy service companies, and other energy efficiency service contractors. The project sponsors receive incentive payments from the utilities for installing energy efficiency measures that result in peak demand reductions and electricity savings.

Project sponsors contact residential and commercial customers about performing work to save energy and reduce their electric bills. This gives each customer a variety of energy efficiency alternatives. Customers select the contractor from each utility's list, decide what equipment will be installed, and choose what work the contractor will do. Price, warranty, financing, and other purchasing matters are entirely between the contractor and customer.

Standard Offer Programs

The following entities are encouraged to market and/or install energy efficiency improvements/products in homes and businesses:

- Energy service companies
- Air conditioning dealers
- Insulation and lighting contractors
- Non-profit housing agencies
- Retail electric providers

The utilities pay these entities for every kilowatt of peak electricity demand savings and every kilowatt hour of energy savings estimated for each type of energy efficiency improvement.

Who is Eligible to Participate?

Customers eligible to participate in the incentive programs include any single-family, multi-family, or commercial customer located within a utility's service area. Renters may participate in the energy efficiency incentive program with their landlord's approval.

In order to be eligible for incentives, home improvements must produce measurable peak demand and energy savings and must exceed minimum efficiency standards. Each utility maintains a list of energy efficiency companies. These lists can be found at www.texasefficiency.com.

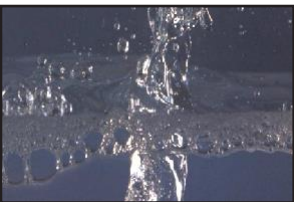
"Hard to Reach" Programs

At least 5% of each electric utility's energy efficiency savings must be achieved through programs for "hard to reach" consumers (ie. those with annual household incomes at or below 200% of federal poverty guidelines). The incentive rates for these consumers are about double the rates offered under regular standard offer programs and are intended to encourage total retrofitting of energy-in-efficient homes.

"Targeted Low Income" Programs

At least 10% of each Transmission and Distribution Utility's (TDUs) energy efficiency savings must be achieved through programs for "low income" consumers, those with annual household incomes at or below 200% of federal poverty guidelines.

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These programs incorporate a whole-house assessment and applicable energy efficiency measures are installed at no cost to the consumer. To see if you qualify and if this program is offered in your utility's service area, visit the

website mentioned below.

How do I sign up?

To participate in an energy efficiency program, you may visit www.texasefficiency.com where you can find additional information on the programs offered and participating contractors.

QUESTIONS:

Call: 1-888-782-8477, in Austin 512-936-7120
(TTY 512-936-7136) (FAX 512-936-7003)

Write: PUC - Consumer Protection Division
P.O. Box 13326, Austin, TX 78711-3326

Online: <http://www.puc.texas.gov/consumer/complaint/Complaint.aspx>

