



# New Jersey Board of Public Utilities

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **BPU'S CLEAN ENERGY PROGRAM<sup>TM</sup> INCREASES ENERGY-EFFICIENT INCENTIVES AND EXPANDS ELIGIBILITY FOR HOMEOWNERS**

*NJ residents may receive up to \$10,000 and a zero interest loan – New incentives now available To customers with oil and propane heating systems and residents of municipal electric utilities*

(NEWARK, NJ) – The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (BPU), through *New Jersey's Clean Energy Program*, is offering enhanced financial incentives to help New Jersey residents pay for energy-saving improvements through the *Home Performance with ENERGY STAR* program. Garden State residents may be eligible to receive up to \$10,000 *and* a zero interest loan based on the estimated heating savings of the improvement package they choose to install. Previously, customers were given the option of receiving up to \$5,000 cash back *or* a low interest loan, depending on their estimated heating savings.

Because of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), the BPU has made *Home Performance with ENERGY STAR* incentives available to customers who use oil and propane as heating fuel and to customers of the 10 municipal electric utilities located throughout the state. These include Butler, Lavallette, Madison, Milltown, Park Ridge, Pemberton, Seaside Heights, South River, Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative and Vineland. Municipal electric utility customers – along with heating oil and propane users – previously were not eligible for *New Jersey's Clean Energy Program* rebates because they do not contribute to the Societal Benefits Charge, which funds *New Jersey's Clean Energy Program*.

*Home Performance with ENERGY STAR* provides “whole house” solutions for greater energy efficiency, which can save homeowners up to 30 percent on energy costs while increasing the comfort, safety and durability of their homes. Contractors certified by the Building Performance Institute (BPI) assess homes from top to bottom, identifying areas where homeowners can save energy and money.

“The cost of operating a home can become a real challenge as household budgets get smaller and energy costs rise,” said BPU President Jeanne M. Fox. “These new incentives will help make energy efficiency improvements more affordable for New Jersey homeowners while also helping the state reduce energy use 20 percent by 2020 under New Jersey's comprehensive Energy Master Plan.”

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The goals of New Jersey's Energy Master Plan include reducing projected growth in energy use by 20 percent, decreasing peak electricity demand by 5,700 MW, and meeting 30 percent of the state's electricity needs from renewable sources, all by 2020.

Customers receiving a *Home Performance with ENERGY STAR* assessment through *New Jersey's Clean Energy Program* can now receive the following services and financial incentives to make their homes more energy efficient:

1. **Visual inspection of the home and combustion appliance testing.** Customers pay \$125 for a whole house energy assessment. If a minimum of \$2,000 worth of energy saving enhancements are completed within three months of the assessment date, the initial \$125 is reimbursed.
2. **Subsidized air sealing visit.** If no health and safety issues are found, and air sealing opportunities are identified during the home assessment, customers will be offered, at no cost to them, up to \$1,000 worth of air sealing work to be completed during a second visit to the home. During this visit, contractors will use a blower door to measure air infiltration throughout the home and seal leaky areas. If health and safety issues are identified, customers can proceed with the air sealing work after those problems have been corrected.
3. **Additional energy efficiency measures.** Zero interest loans and up to \$10,000 in cash back are available to customers who qualify and choose to install additional air sealing measures and eligible improvements, such as insulation, high efficiency heating and cooling equipment, and ENERGY STAR qualified appliances and lighting. The work must be performed by participating contractors. Income-qualified customers may be eligible for increased incentives of 75 percent cash back, up to \$10,000. Restrictions apply.

The zero percent loans are available through a collaborative effort between *New Jersey's Clean Energy Program* and Elizabethtown Gas, New Jersey Natural Gas and South Jersey Gas, who are funding the zero interest loans for customers in their territories. Public Service Electric & Gas (PSE&G) customers who are located within the utility's 25 Urban Enterprise Zones (UEZs) may benefit from financial incentives PSE&G offers for energy-efficient upgrades through its own Residential Whole House Efficiency Program. The UEZs located within PSE&G's territory include Bayonne, Camden, Carteret, East Orange, Elizabeth, Gloucester City, Guttenberg, Hillside, Irvington, Jersey City, Kearny, Mount Holly, New Brunswick, Newark, North Bergen, Orange, Passaic, Paterson, Pemberton Township, Perth Amboy, Plainfield, Roselle, Trenton, Union City and West New York. More information on the PSE&G Residential Whole House Program can be found at: <http://www.pseg.com/wholehouse>. PSE&G customers located within UEZ territories should contact PSE&G first, regarding the Residential Whole House Program. PSE&G customers located in non-UEZ territories are eligible to participate in the *NJ Home Performance with ENERGY STAR* program.

For more information about *Home Performance with ENERGY STAR* or a list of BPI accredited contractors, visit [www.NJCleanEnergy.com](http://www.NJCleanEnergy.com) or call 866-NJSMART (866-657-6278). You may also call your gas company for information about the incentives and initiatives they currently offer.

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**About the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU):**

*The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities is a state agency and regulatory authority mandated to ensure safe, adequate, and proper utility services at reasonable rates for New Jersey customers. Critical services regulated by the NJBPU include natural gas, electricity, water, wastewater, telecommunications and cable television. The Board has general oversight responsibility for monitoring utility service, responding to consumer complaints, and investigating utility accidents. To find out more about the NJBPU, visit our web site at [www.nj.gov/bpu](http://www.nj.gov/bpu).*

**About the New Jersey Clean Energy Program (NJCEP):**

*New Jersey's Clean Energy Program, established on January 22, 2003 in accordance with the Electric Discount and Energy Competition Act (EDECA), provides financial and other incentives to the State's residential customers, businesses and schools that install high-efficiency or renewable energy technologies, thereby reducing energy usage, lowering customers' energy bills and reducing environmental impacts. The program is authorized and overseen by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (BPU), and its website is [www.njcleanenergy.com](http://www.njcleanenergy.com).*