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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
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Sept. 28, 2018

Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

### **New program makes saving energy more affordable**

VICTORIA – Starting Sept. 28, 2018, British Columbians can apply for new incentives to help them spend less on a retrofitted home or business project.

EfficiencyBC, along with partner programs, will provide up to \$14,000 for a home and \$200,000 for a commercial business to switch to high-efficiency heating equipment and to make building envelope improvements. It is a new program launching in partnership with the federal government, BC Hydro, FortisBC, BC Housing and many local governments.

“This new program makes life more affordable by providing you with the financial incentives you need to make energy-saving improvements,” said Michelle Mungall, B.C.'s Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources. “EfficiencyBC will help us lower greenhouse gas emissions while creating opportunities for people, including lasting good jobs through energy retrofits.”

The new EfficiencyBC program will dedicate \$24 million to helping people save energy and reduce their environmental footprint. Financial incentives through the program can take multiple forms, including replacing a fossil fuel (i.e. oil, propane or natural gas) heating system with an electric air-source heat pump, upgrading to a high-efficiency natural gas furnace or installing improved windows and doors that minimize heat loss.

For example:

- People who apply for an incentive can receive \$2,000 for replacing a fossil fuel (oil, propane or natural gas) heating system with an electric air-source heat pump.
- Homeowners planning to upgrade their windows and doors to better insulated, more energy-efficient models may access up to \$1,000 in incentives.
- Homeowners can also apply for up to \$700 in incentives for highest efficiency natural gas furnaces.
- Commercial owners can receive up to \$20,000 to complete energy studies that identify cost-effective improvements to their building.

“It's exactly programs like EfficiencyBC that will transform the challenge of climate change into an economic opportunity for our province,” said Andrew Weaver, B.C. Green Party leader. “This program will help British Columbians save money by transitioning their homes and businesses to low-carbon solutions, while also creating more opportunities for the construction industry and building trades. The expertise B.C. businesses and tradespeople will gain through this program will drive innovation and ensure local industry is on the cutting edge of low-carbon construction.”

In addition to financial incentives, EfficiencyBC offers homeowners a free home energy

coaching service and guidance on home energy upgrades. For commercial buildings, the program will also help pay for energy studies that identify opportunities for energy savings. The program is fully integrated with existing incentive programs.

The funding is also aimed at fostering improved standards in buildings, improving the quality of energy-efficiency installations and increasing market share of low-carbon, energy-efficient building technologies.

The EfficiencyBC program is jointly funded by the Province and the Government of Canada under the Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund. British Columbia and Canada are each contributing \$12 million.

“British Columbians have told us repeatedly that they want cleaner and more affordable options,” said George Heyman, B.C.'s Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy. “Energy-saving renovations hit both these targets, while increasing value and comfort of homes and businesses, and helping B.C. reduce its carbon pollution. That’s a combination that’s hard to beat, and that’s why we’re helping make this choice easier.”

Program details, including specifics on how to apply for funding, are available at the new EfficiencyBC website. The website functions as a hub for B.C. homeowners and businesses to access tailored information on EfficiencyBC incentives and related utility and local government incentives, as well as decision-assistance tools and project coaching services. Visit: [www.encyencybc.ca](http://www.encyencybc.ca)

#### **Quotes:**

##### **Catherine McKenna, federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change —**

“British Columbia is taking serious steps to fight climate change, including a plan that prices pollution. That’s why the Government of Canada is helping the Province invest in practical solutions. Improving energy efficiency helps cut energy costs for homeowners and businesses, while creating good middle class jobs and reducing pollution. Energy efficiency is one part of a serious plan to fight climate change and grow the economy.”

##### **Roger Dall’Antonia, CEO and president, FortisBC —**

“FortisBC is committed to helping British Columbia achieve its climate goals by providing British Columbians with practical and affordable solutions for their energy needs. Our energy conservation programs help home and building owners reduce their energy bills, while improving building performance and comfort.”

##### **Chris O’Riley, BC Hydro president and chief operating officer —**

“We’re pleased to support the new EfficiencyBC program. The program builds on our home renovation rebates by providing more options to help our customers improve energy efficiency in their homes and businesses to make their electricity bills more affordable.”

#### **Quick Facts:**

- The program is available to households and businesses around the province and includes low-income targeted offers.

- Every dollar spent on energy-efficiency programs generates between four and eight dollars of gross domestic product.
- Energy efficiency in Canada improved by 25% between 1990 and 2014. This improvement helped avoid more than 85 million tonnes of carbon pollution and saved Canadians more than \$38 billion.
- Program partners currently include the Government of Canada, BC Hydro, FortisBC, BC Housing, City of Vancouver, City of North Vancouver, City of Campbell River, City of Kamloops, City of Victoria, City of Saanich, Capital Regional District and Comox Valley Regional District, with more partners coming soon.
- The Government of Canada's contribution comes from its \$2-billion Low Carbon Economy Fund, which invests in projects that reduce emissions and provides Canadians with good middle-class jobs. The fund is a key component of the Pan Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change (PCF), a made-in-Canada plan developed by the federal government, provinces and territories to meet Canada's emissions reduction targets and grow the economy. The fund includes \$1.4 billion dedicated to direct investment in provinces and territories.

**Learn More:**

For program details, visit: [www.efficiencybc.ca](http://www.efficiencybc.ca)

A backgrounder follows.

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## BACKGROUND

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### EfficiencyBC: program overview

EfficiencyBC is an integrated offer of financial incentives, information and support to help households and businesses save energy and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by switching to high-efficiency heating equipment and making building-envelope improvements.

#### Residential Renovation Program:

- New incentives for homeowners to upgrade their windows and doors, and switch to high-efficiency electric heat pumps for space heating and water heating. For example: \$2,000 for an air-source heat pump for space heating (and up to \$4,000 in some partnering municipalities) and up to \$1,000 for windows/doors.
- The enhanced utility Home Renovation Rebate program offers for other high-efficiency space and water heating equipment, and insulation. For example: a total of \$700 for a high-efficiency natural gas furnace and up to \$1,200 each for basement insulation, external wall cavity insulation and external wall sheathing insulation.
- A New Home Energy Improvement bonus of up to \$2,000 for homeowners who undertake multiple upgrades and complete energy assessments on their home.
- A \$300 rebate for hiring an EnerGuide Home Energy Advisor to do a personalized energy assessment of a home (\$450 in some partnering municipalities).
- Free energy coaching services by phone and email to help people make decisions about their renovation projects.

#### Commercial Renovation Program:

- This program is for commercial buildings, multi-unit residential buildings and non-profit housing.
- Whole building, performance-based offer of \$40-70 per tonne of GHG reductions (up to \$200,000) integrated with partner utility and BC Housing offers.
- Eligible upgrades include fuel switching to high-efficiency electric space and water heating equipment, installing high-efficiency gas-fired space and water heating equipment, as well as improvements to mechanical systems and building envelopes.
- Up to \$20,000 for energy studies to identify cost-effective improvements.

#### Saving money

The renovation incentives launched as part of the EfficiencyBC program complement and enhance programs currently offered. These include BC Hydro and FortisBC's Home Renovation Rebate Program, FortisBC's Commercial Custom Design Program, BC Hydro's Custom Rebate Program, and FortisBC and BC Hydro's Social Housing Retrofit Support Program.

The following are examples of how people can save money when taking advantage of the

EfficiencyBC program:

**Example 1:**

- City of Vancouver resident, home heated with natural gas, natural gas water heater
- Undertakes a pre- and post-upgrade energy assessment (\$300 from EfficiencyBC, \$150 from City of Vancouver)
- Converts to electric air source heat pump (\$2,000 from EfficiencyBC, \$2,000 from City of Vancouver)
- Installs condensing tankless natural gas water heater (\$500 from FortisBC)
- Adds attic insulation of R30 x 1000ft<sup>2</sup> (\$600 from BC Hydro)
- Home Energy Improvement Bonus, improving EnerGuide score by 60% (\$1,200)
- **Total rebate: \$6,750**

**Example 2:**

- Kelowna resident, home heated with baseboard electricity from FortisBC, natural gas water heater
- Installs a single-head ductless heat pump (\$1,200 from FortisBC)
- Converts to electric air source heat pump water heater (\$1,000 from EfficiencyBC)
- Two-upgrade bonus (\$300)
- **Total rebate: \$2,500**

**Example 3:**

- Saanich resident, home heated with oil
- Undertakes a pre- and post-upgrade energy assessment (\$300)
- Converts to electric air source heat pump (\$2,000 from EfficiencyBC, \$350 from District of Saanich)
- Adds basement insulation of R10 x 722ft<sup>2</sup> (\$650 from BC Hydro)
- Installs 10 eligible windows or doors (\$500 from the BC Hydro)
- Home Energy Improvement Bonus, improving EnerGuide score by 55% (\$1,100)
- **Total rebate: \$4,900**

**Example 4:**

- Fort Nelson resident, home heated with natural gas
- Undertakes a pre- and post-upgrade energy assessment (\$300)
- Installs ENERGYSTAR Most Efficient natural gas furnace (\$700 from FortisBC and EfficiencyBC)
- Installs 12 eligible windows or doors (\$600 from EfficiencyBC)
- Adds exterior wall cavity insulation of R12 x 741ft<sup>2</sup> (\$800 from FortisBC)
- Home Energy Improvement Bonus, improving EnerGuide score by 30% (\$600)
- **Total rebate: \$3,100**

**EfficiencyBC - website**

The EfficiencyBC website is B.C.'s new online hub for homeowners and businesses to access incentives, information and support to reduce energy use and GHG emissions in homes and buildings.

The EfficiencyBC site allows users to search for all available incentives based on their location and heating type, including not only provincial and utility rebates but also municipal offers, federal tax breaks and other offers in the market (e.g. financing and mortgage-related discounts). EfficiencyBC streamlines the process by combining many of these offers into one application.

Additionally, the EfficiencyBC website provides information to help homeowners and businesses make decisions on how to save energy, offering a free coaching service by phone or email. Energy coaches are trained energy-efficiency specialists who provide building-science based information about options and opportunities to improve energy efficiency. They are available to answer questions at all stages of an energy improvement project.

### **Federal and provincial context**

EfficiencyBC is jointly funded by British Columbia and the Government of Canada's Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund (LCELF).

The LCELF was developed as a \$2-billion fund to invest in projects that generate clean growth and reduce GHGs. The fund is a key component of the Pan Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change (PCF), a plan developed by the federal government and the provinces and territories to meet Canada's emissions reduction targets and grow the economy.

EfficiencyBC will support progress towards the Province's legislated GHG reduction targets, as well as a commitment to develop retrofit programs.

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