

District of Columbia Department of Energy and Environment

IRA Section 50121 Home Efficiency Rebates Education and Outreach Plan

October 2024

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Introduction

The District of Columbia Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) will manage roughly \$29 million in federally funded Home Efficiency Rebates (HER) to assist affordable housing buildings with energy efficiency upgrades and electrification.¹

DOEE will use HER to expand the existing [Affordable Housing Retrofit Accelerator](#) (AHRA), a program implemented by the DC Sustainable Energy Utility (DCSEU) that provides technical and financial assistance to owners and managers of qualifying multifamily affordable housing buildings to make their buildings more energy efficient. DCSEU will serve as the implementer for the Home Energy Rebates Programs under contract with DOEE.

This Education and Outreach Plan describes how DOEE and DCSEU will conduct education and outreach around the rebates and other home energy financial incentives and assistance.

DOEE will target the following audiences in its education and outreach:

- Multifamily building owners/property managers (entities that own and/or manage a multifamily building where not less than 50% of households are low-income)
- Households in the District, especially those whose income is less than 80% area median income (AMI)
- Non-profit and community-based organizations
- Residential contractors and unions

For additional information on planned engagement, see the Community Benefits Plan.

Multifamily Building Owner/Property Manager Outreach

Planned Activities

- DOEE and DCSEU have a preliminary list of roughly 130 large public housing, covenanted affordable housing, and naturally occurring affordable housing buildings located in the District that are not meeting the [District's Building Energy Performance Standards](#) (BEPS). DOEE and DCSEU have reached out to these building owners and have engaged most of them to participate in AHRA and will continue this engagement to recruit properties, including one-on-one outreach to property owners/managers.
- DOEE has budgeted for a subrecipient to conduct outreach and education around energy efficiency and electrification technologies and benefits.
- DOEE will create and expand upon partnerships with other DC government agencies and non-profit/community organizations to identify eligible candidates for whole building electrification retrofits.
- DOEE and DCSEU will generate educational materials such as webinars/videos, websites, and program guides to ensure that potential participants understand the

¹ Electrification involves replacing home appliances and systems that burn fossil fuels with appliances and systems that are powered by electricity; for example, replacing a gas stove with an induction stove, or a gas-powered furnace with a heat pump for home heating and cooling. Electrification can help reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change.

benefits of electrification and the potential outcomes of the Home Energy Rebates Programs.

Partnerships

DOEE and DCSEU will leverage partnerships with the following District agencies and authorities:

- Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD): DOEE has already worked with DHCD to identify covenanted buildings eligible for assistance under AHRA.
- DC Housing Authority (DCHA): Through ongoing collaboration, DOEE has been supporting DCHA with portfolio-wide energy benchmarking and energy management planning to comply with the District's BEPS. With public housing being categorically eligible for participation, DOEE may work with DCHA to identify candidate buildings for Home Energy Rebates assistance.
- DC Department of Buildings (DOB): DOEE and DCSEU already work closely with DOB to understand permitting issues and requirements for deep energy retrofits and electrification. DOB also conducts inspections of some AHRA projects.
- DC Green Bank (DCGB): DCGB provides financing for clean energy and energy efficiency projects.
- Office of Racial Equity (ORE): DOEE aims to ensure that all parts of the community are served equally. DOEE will consult ORE on an advisory basis around how its plans to implement the Home Energy Rebates Programs promote and align with District-wide efforts and goals around racial equity.

DOEE and DCSEU will continue to foster partnerships and work with community organizations, such as ones that we have previously engaged with (see the Community Benefits Plan). DCSEU has developed relationships with several trade organizations, such as the Apartment and Office Building Association of Metropolitan DC (AOBA), the Housing Association of Nonprofit Developers (HAND), and the Coalition for Nonprofit Housing and Economic Development (CNHED).

Outreach Channels and Educational Materials

Outreach channels include the DOEE and DCSEU websites, which will maintain information on the Home Energy Rebates Programs and AHRA:

- [Inflation Reduction Act Home Energy Rebates Programs](#): The website contains a form for interested parties to sign up for email notifications about the rebates and other DOEE home energy programs, and to provide feedback on the programs.
- [Affordable Housing Retrofit Accelerator \(AHRA\)](#)

The above webpages can be translated into multiple languages.

Flyers and one-pagers may be developed to provide basic program information to potentially eligible building owners and property managers.

DOEE will leverage outreach and engagement under other existing DOEE programs to inform building owners/managers about AHRA. These programs include, but are not limited to, the District's Solar for All program and Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP).

Household Outreach

Planned Activities

- DOEE and DCSEU will generate educational materials such as webinars/videos, websites, and program guides to ensure that potential participants (contractors and customers) understand the benefits of energy efficiency and electrification and the potential outcomes of the Home Energy Rebates Programs.
- Resident and tenant engagement is critical to program success. To that end, DOEE has budgeted funds for one or more grantees to:²
 - Conduct outreach and education around energy efficiency and electrification technologies and benefits, with a focus on low-income and disadvantaged communities, as described in the Community Benefits Plan;
 - Conduct in-person and virtual outreach to and engagement of tenants living in multifamily buildings that are participating in AHRA, as described in the Community Benefits Plan;

Outreach Channels and Educational Materials

Outreach channels include the following DOEE and DCSEU websites:

- [Inflation Reduction Act Home Energy Rebates Programs](#): The website contains a form for interested parties to sign up for email notifications about the rebates and other DOEE home energy programs, and to provide feedback on the programs.
- [Affordable Housing Retrofit Accelerator \(AHRA\)](#)
- [Affordable Home Electrification Program \(AHEP\)](#)
- [Front Door](#): A website that connects homeowners to District government programs.
- [DCSEU Website](#): The DCSEU will update their website in 2024 with a resource library and impact stories from previous customers. The website will also provide educational information on electrification and specific details on the AHRA/HER program.

DOEE and/or DCSEU will share information on AHEP/HEAR at tabling and other clean energy or building related public events that occur throughout the year.

The Consumer Protection Plan contains additional information on how households in AHRA-participating buildings may connect with DOEE and DCSEU.

² The specific education, outreach, and engagement activities that will be conducted under these grants will be known after grant applications are submitted and the grants are awarded by DOEE.

Non-Profit and Community Based Organizations Outreach

Planned Activities

Through one-on-one conversations, DOEE staff will continue to engage local organizations representing the interests of low-income households, underrepresented communities, and affordable housing providers. As part of that outreach, DOEE may provide information and/or marketing materials on residential programs (including the Home Energy Rebates Programs) and solicit feedback on opportunities for program improvement.

Partnerships

DOEE and DCSEU will continue to foster partnerships and work with community organizations, including, but not limited to, ones that we have previously engaged (see the Community Benefits Plan).

Outreach Channels and Educational Materials

DOEE will use educational materials developed for other audiences as described in this plan, such as one-pagers for household outreach. Outreach channels include the websites described in other sections of this plan, email, events, one-on-one meetings with organizations, and regular meetings that DOEE hosts with stakeholder groups and community organizations.

Residential Contractor and Union Outreach

Planned Activities

- DOEE will continue to engage labor unions located in the Washington, DC metropolitan region that work in commercial and multifamily building trades, as described in the Community Benefits Plan.
- To develop the qualified contractor list, the DCSEU will issue a rolling Request for Qualifications (RFQ) on its website to recruit contractors. The DCSEU will work closely with its existing network of contractor contacts and the Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD) to promote the RFQ with local contractors.
- DCSEU will educate qualified contractors on the requirements of the Home Energy Rebates Programs via a short training and/or a written guide.
- In partnership with DSLBD, DCSEU will participate in the annual [Greenovation Conference](#) to educate and recruit contractors in the region.

Partnerships

DOEE and DCSEU will leverage partnerships with the following District agencies:

- Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD): DOEE and DCSEU will continue working with DSLBD to promote training and other opportunities under the Home Energy Rebates Programs.

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- Department of Employment Services (DOES): DOEE may consult DOES as needed on workforce development policies and programs.

DOEE and DCSEU will continue to foster partnerships with local labor unions. See the Community Benefits Plan for more information.

Outreach Channels and Educational Materials

- The DCSEU will use email marketing and events throughout the year, such as the Greenovation Conference, to highlight its rolling request for qualifications (RFQ) and any project opportunities.
- On its website, the DCSEU will post the rolling RFQ and information on contractor training opportunities.
- The DCSEU will develop guides and/or other print educational materials to help deliver the program requirements training.
- The DCSEU will work closely with DOEE to develop program guides and materials to drive contractor interest and participation in the Home Energy Rebates Programs, as well as to solicit guidance on expectations from contractors.

Timeline

	Fiscal Year 2025				Fiscal Year 2026				Fiscal Year 2027			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Program launch	█											
DOEE issues education/outreach grant	█											
DOEE issues tenant engagement grant	█											
Education/outreach on electrification technologies, including demonstration events, tabling, and community meetings		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
Update and post videos and webinars about program participation	█	█	█	█								
Conduct program participation surveys		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Develop and update educational materials, including flyers, website, and one-pagers	█				█				█			
Revise and issue annual request for qualifications to recruit contractors	█				█				█			
Develop and update program guides and materials for contractor training	█				█				█			
Conduct outreach to contractors for recruitment	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█

Note: The fiscal year (FY) runs from October 1 to September 30. FY2025 starts October 1, 2024.

Budget

Proposed Activity	Estimated Timeframe	Estimated Cost
Grant to conduct education/outreach on energy efficiency and electrification technologies and benefits	Fall 2024 - Summer 2026	\$90,773.20
Grant to conduct engagement of tenants living in a sample of AHRA-participating multifamily buildings	Fall 2024 - Summer 2026	\$181,441.50
DCSEU marketing, education, and outreach to building owners, including education and outreach to contractors for disadvantaged community delivery	Fall 2024 - Summer 2029	\$282,784.00

DOEE staff will also be conducting education, outreach, and engagement activities on an ongoing basis.