Questions and Answers New Saskatchewan EnerGuide for Houses (SEGH) Program

1. Why is the Province extending the Saskatchewan EnerGuide for Houses program until 2011?

The Province of Saskatchewan is extending the program for the following reasons:

- Homeowners in Saskatchewan have been more responsive to the EnerGuide for Houses program than any other province in Canada. At 43 per cent, Saskatchewan has the highest percentage of homeowners who have completed renovations and the post-retrofit evaluation. The Canadian average is 34 per cent.
- Homeowners will now have more time to participate in the program and make energy efficiency upgrades to their home.
- The Province is committed to providing people with incentives to reduce energy and water consumption and save money on home utility costs.
- This initiative is part of the Province's commitment to energy conservation and a green economy.

2. What are the new effective dates for the program?

The Saskatchewan EnerGuide for Houses program is available from April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2011.

3. How much grant money are homeowners eligible for under the new Saskatchewan EnerGuide for Houses program?

The Province wants to ensure strong incentives are available to reward homeowners who invest in making energy efficiency improvements to their home. Therefore, homeowners will be eligible for a maximum provincial grant of up to \$5,000.

4. What's new on the list of improvements that will now qualify for the grant?

In addition to heating and ventilation system upgrades, insulation, air sealing and draft proofing that were covered under the previous program, new recommendations include: upgrading air conditioning, water heating systems, such as tankless hot water heaters, solar hot water systems, and drain water heat recovery; as well as water conservation recommendations such as low flow or dual flush toilets.

5. How much do you expect the average grant to be?

It is estimated under the new program that the average grant will be about \$2,080 (\$1,040 provincial and \$1,040 federal).

6. What do you expect will be the average saving for homeowners in terms of reduced energy consumption and lower costs?

It is estimated that the average savings for homeowners will be up to \$950 annually depending on the retrofits that they complete.

7. Can you explain the change in how the grant will be calculated?

Previously, the grant was calculated on the difference in the energy efficiency rating from the pre-retrofit evaluation to the post-retrofit evaluation.

Now each recommendation provided as a result of the pre-retrofit evaluation will have an assigned grant amount. For example, if you are installing a new ENERGY STAR® qualified natural gas furnace you may qualify for a grant up to \$1,000 (\$500 provincial & \$500 federal). A homeowner will know up-front how much each improvement will provide in a grant, so they will be better able to decide on priority improvements.

8. Will I still receive an EnerGuide rating on my home?

Yes. In addition to the recommendations that indicate the grant amounts, the energy advisor will provide you with an EnerGuide rating and label for your home, before and after the renovations.

9. How do I qualify for the grant?

Here are the steps in the process:

Step 1

• Book a pre-retrofit evaluation ("D" audit) with a licensed service organization.

Step 2

• A service organization will come to your house and complete the evaluation. The evaluation will tell you how certain renovations or new equipment will reduce your energy and/or water consumption saving you money over the long term. The evaluation also provides information on how much of a grant you will be eligible to receive for each recommended improvement you make.

Step 3

• You have 18 months to complete the recommended improvements. You can complete any or all options outlined in the recommendations.

Step 4

• A post-retrofit evaluation ("E" audit) must be completed, by the service organization, prior to the end of the 18-month period, to verify the improvements you made.

Step 5

 The service organization will submit the file to Natural Resources Canada who calculates the grant amount and then sends this information to SaskEnergy. SaskEnergy administers the grant program on behalf of the province and will issue you a cheque.

10. Who does the pre and post-retrofit evaluations?

At present, there are three licensed service organizations in Saskatchewan who provide this service, the Sun Ridge Group, AmeriSpec, and Energy Wise Solutions.

Sun Ridge Group Regina, Saskatoon and throughout Saskatchewan call toll-free 1-800-667-3700 or book online at <u>www.sunridgegroup.ca</u>

AmeriSpec Regina and south of Davidson - call (306) 565-1703 Saskatoon and north of Davidson - call (306) 652-8779 Battlefords and Lloydminster - call (866) 871-8111 Prince Albert – call (306) 862-2797

Energy Wise Solutions Saskatoon and surrounding area call (306) 291-8075 or 1-877-787-4328

11. What types of dwellings are eligible under the program?

Low-rise residential properties defined as dwellings under Parts 2 and 9 of the National Building Code of Canada. These include single detached and attached homes (i.e. row housing, duplexes and triplexes), small multi-unit residential buildings including some small apartment buildings of three storeys or less built on a maximum footprint of less than 600 square meters, and mobile homes on a permanent foundation

12. Are small commercial businesses eligible to receive a grant?

Small businesses or organizations that use residential-sized equipment in a structure similar to a residential dwelling are also eligible.

13. Do homes of any age qualify?

Saskatchewan EnerGuide for Houses was designed to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions from existing homes. There is no restriction as to the age of an existing house or building but those built before1985 will benefit the most as they have the potential for more significant energy improvements.

14. What is the cost of the pre-retrofit and post-retrofit evaluation?

As of April 1, 2007, the provincial government will subsidize half the cost of the preretrofit evaluation and half the cost of the post-retrofit evaluation. Please contact one of the service organizations for their current costs.

Your initial investment is easily recovered in savings after implementing the home improvements outlined in the pre-retrofit evaluation report. As well, if you make the recommended changes, you may be eligible for a grant that more than covers your evaluation cost.

15. Will the federal government provide a subsidy for the evaluations?

No. The federal government has said it will no longer provide these subsidies. The provincial government is stepping in to help homeowners by paying for half the cost of each evaluation.

16. Why do I need to have an SEGH evaluation done? Why can't I just make my upgrades and send in the receipts?

The Province feels that there are many benefits to be gained from the evaluations. An EnerGuide for Houses advisor provides you with a detailed report on how to economically improve your home's air tightness, comfort and energy use. The report also provides a rating for your house. This rating provides a starting point to determine the amount of energy you currently use and the best changes you can make to reduce your costs and improve your home's EnerGuide rating.

17. What happens if I had my pre-retrofit evaluation done a few months ago? Am I now eligible for up to a \$5,000 grant, or just the \$2,000 grant?

The Province continues to offer a grant to any homeowner who completes their preretrofit evaluation and then completes their renovations and post-retrofit within 18 months of the pre-retrofit evaluation. If your post-evaluation is completed after March 31, 2007 your grant will be calculated under the new program grant guidelines.

18. What happens if I had a pre-retrofit evaluation completed before May 12, 2006, when the federal program was cancelled? How much grant money am I eligible for?

As long as you completed your renovations and had a post-retrofit evaluation done before March 31, 2007, you will qualify for the federal grant (up to \$3,200) and the provincial grant of up to \$2,000.

19. What if I didn't have my post-retrofit evaluation done by March 31, 2007?

If you have not completed your post-retrofit evaluation by March 31, 2007, you must complete your post-retrofit evaluation within 18 months of the pre-retrofit evaluation in order to qualify for the provincial grant only. If the post-retrofit evaluation is completed after March 31, 2007 the grant will be calculated based on the new grant criteria.

20. I had my pre-retrofit evaluation done more than 18 months ago? Do I still qualify for a grant?

You do not qualify unless you had your post-retrofit completed by March 31, 2007. If you are interested in making changes please contact a service organization and they can re-evaluate your home and provide recommendations that include the new incentives for items such as cooling system upgrades and water conservation.

21. My furnace has suddenly been declared "non-operational" and I have to replace it immediately, but have not completed a pre-retrofit evaluation. Will I still be eligible to apply for a grant for the furnace replacement?

You may be eligible for a grant (assuming you meet the eligibility criteria) provided the initial evaluation is booked within **3 calendar days** of the installation date of the new heating system.

All other upgrades such as insulation, draft proofing and the installation of new windows or doors do not qualify if the changes were made prior to having the pre-retrofit evaluation completed.

Call a service organization to book an appointment. They will advise you of the information they require regarding the old heating system.

22. My air conditioning system stopped working. Can I replace it now and have my pre-retrofit evaluation completed later?

If your window or central air conditioning system breaks, a pre-retrofit evaluation <u>must</u> be performed BEFORE replacing your cooling equipment. If your air conditioner is replaced before your pre-retrofit evaluation it will not qualify for a grant.

23. Can I do the work myself and still be eligible for a grant?

Yes, provided you receive a pre-retrofit evaluation before you begin your upgrades and a post-retrofit evaluation after you upgrades are completed. It is important to keep invoices for materials purchased as you may be asked to submit copies. You are responsible for obtaining necessary permits that meet all municipal and provincial requirements.

24. What if I received a grant previously but would like to make additional upgrades in my home?

If you received a grant, prior to March 31, 2007, under the EnerGuide for Houses program you can access the program for a second round of eligible improvements. Contact an EnerGuide for Houses service organization for more information and to ensure you meet program guidelines.

25. Is there help available to pay for renovations made before I apply for the grant?

SaskEnergy Network Members offer financing for the purchase and installation of heating, ventilation, cooling and domestic water systems. Contact your local Network Member for information on applicable financing rates. A list of Network Members is available on the SaskEnergy website <u>www.saskenergy.com</u>, on the Network Member page.

26. I don't heat with natural gas. Can I still qualify?

Yes, you will still qualify. It doesn't matter what fuel you use to heat your home, you can have an EnerGuide for Houses evaluation. A service advisor will complete the preretrofit evaluation and provide recommendations specific to your home.

27. What about homes on reserve and owned by the First Nation?

Yes, they are eligible for the SEGH program. The Band is considered the landlord, and the Band is eligible to have the SEGH pre and post evaluations completed and apply for the retrofit grants. First Nations customers who own homes are eligible to apply as well.

28. What if my home is in a rural or northern area?

The Province wants people all across the province to be able to take advantage of the program. Sun Ridge and AmeriSpec provide the service to homeowners in all areas, however mileage charges may apply. If you have friends or family in your immediate area that are interested in having an evaluation booked, the service organizations will try and schedule them at the same time so travel costs can be shared making it more economical for all.

29. I own rental properties, are these eligble?

Yes. Single family homes and multiple-unit low-rise residential buildings held by rental property owners are eligible provided they meet the eligibility criteria. Owners of multiple residential buildings are eligible to receive a maximum of \$500,000 over the four year period of the program (April 1, 2007 – March 31, 2011).

Federal ecoENERGY Retrofit Incentive Program

30. How does Saskatchewan's new program compare with the ecoENERGY Retrofit -Homes Initiative that the federal government implemented April 1?

Our programs are complementary. Homeowners that participate in the new Saskatchewan EnerGuide for Houses program also qualify for the ecoENERGY Retrofit – Homes grants. More information on the ecoENERGY Retrofit – Homes program can be found at <u>www.ecoaction.gc.ca</u>.

31. Do you share program administration with the federal government?

Yes, we share program administration with Natural Resources Canada. This allows us to minimize our costs and ensures that homeowners receive consistent information and that the grants are issued as quickly as possible.