

# ENERGY-SAVING IDEAS

## Weathering Rising Costs With Free Program

(NAPS)—Spiking energy costs are prompting many Americans to find ways to conserve energy.

Escalating energy costs have affected low-income Americans the most, says a recent study by the National Energy Assistance Directors' Association, forcing them to cut staples such as food and medicine.

Fortunately, there is a way that the most vulnerable Americans can mitigate soaring energy costs. Free of charge, the U.S. Department of Energy will help low-income families insulate and weatherize their homes and purchase energy-efficient appliances through a federal effort called the Weatherization Assistance Program. Every county and every Indian tribe is eligible to participate.

By installing energy- and money-saving products—many containing innovations made by American chemistry companies—the federal program on average reduces energy bills by \$358 or more per household annually.

Approximately 100,000 low-income households participate every year, and more should take advantage of the program's benefits. The government's Oak Ridge National Laboratory found that only 16 percent of eligible households have participated in the weatherization program.

Since 1976, the Department of Energy has provided weatherization services to 5.6 million low-income families. In 2006, 25,574 households in New York participated, 11,964 households in California, 9,855 in Pennsylvania, 5,958 in Missouri and 4,173 households in Texas, to name a



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few of the states. Many weatherization clients are senior citizens, single parents or disabled.

According to Cal Dooley, president and CEO of the American Chemistry Council, "Insulation and weatherization materials such as vinyl windows help keep homes warm or cool, depending on the season. Refrigerators and other home appliances are also more energy efficient due to materials based on chemistry innovations."

The extent of the weatherization program varies state to state. But it typically includes a home inspection to assess heat retention, air sealing, insulation to attics and sidewalls, and repair or replacement of heating systems. Some states replace windows and appliances such as refrigerators and stoves if funding permits.

For more information, visit [www.eere.energy.gov/weatherization/](http://www.eere.energy.gov/weatherization/) and [www.americanchemistry.com](http://www.americanchemistry.com).