

LOW-INCOME COMMUNITY WEATHERIZATION

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PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Community weatherization is wholesale door-to-door weatherization. Every unweatherized home in a selected community is weatherized to meet the "Big Six" standards. In addition, minor home repairs not exceeding \$200 are provided as part of the service.

Every residential utility customer living full time in the selected community is eligible to receive weatherization and home repair services. There is no cost to the resident for the service. Communities are selected on the basis of average community-wide income levels. To qualify, a community must have an average income level equal or lower than the qualifying level for the company's regular low-income weatherization program. The regular program is offered to qualified residential customers throughout the service territory. The basic qualifying income level is 150% of the Federal poverty level.

Independent weatherization contractors perform the weatherization and minor home repair services. The contractors are selected by the local utility office through competitive bidding under standard bid procedures. Every home weatherized under the low-income community weatherization program is inspected by a utility company inspector.

COMMUNITY ELIGIBILITY

The utility service area was surveyed to identify characteristics of qualifying communities. Four characteristics were identified:

1. Predominantly Low-income Population. U.S. Census data is used to identify communities where 70% of the residents would qualify for the regular company program.
2. Geographically Isolated.
3. Minimal participation in the regular company program.
4. Small community - less than 1000 residential utility customers.

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HOUSEHOLD ELIGIBILITY

Every residential account in a qualified community is eligible to receive Big Six weatherization measures, plus minor home repairs not exceeding \$200. Renters, mobile homes and multi-family dwellings are included. Residences where the income level exceeds 150% of the Federal poverty level are also included.

For those customers with an outstanding Zero Interest Program loan, the portion of the loan with Big Six items will be converted to free weatherization by forgiving the balance of the loan and refunding the payments already made. No compensation will be given to customers who received a "Cashback Program" rebate, or weatherized their home without participating in a utility weatherization financing program.

Other eligibility factors:

1. Customer must be a full time resident of the community. Vacation homes are not included.
2. The source of space heat must be served by Pacific Gas and Electric Company.
3. Renters must get written approval from their landlord before work can begin on the residence.

SELECTION OF CONTRACTORS

Licensed weatherization contractors are chosen on a standard competitive bid process, administered by the local utility office. In order to submit a bid, each contractor must attend a pre-bid conference for each community where they intend to submit a bid.

The selected contractor's installation crew and foreman are given a refresher course on installation standards. The standards for the low-income community weatherization are the same as the standards for the regular program.

Payment to contractors is made monthly. Payment can only be made for those units completed, invoiced, and passing inspection.

EVALUATION

Selected household energy use for several housing types - single family, multi-family, renters, mobile homes - will be monitored to assess before/after energy use. Cost analysis reports are provided on a regular basis to utility regulators. Onsite visits by regulatory agency staff are encouraged.