

NEWS RELEASE

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City's energy rebate program extended to meet strong response

Council adds additional funding for City of Nanaimo homeowners

Summary

At their 2023-MAR-20 meeting, Council invested an additional \$60,000 on top of the \$200,000 already committed since 2020 in response to an unprecedented level of Nanaimo homeowners' participation in the CleanBC Better Homes Program. Through the CleanBC program, Nanaimo homeowners who apply for a home energy renovation rebate could receive up to \$15,000 from the Province and up to \$1,400 from the City of Nanaimo.

Rebates are available for a variety of home energy renovations including installing a heat pump, door and window replacement, insulation, ventilation equipment, and electrical and hot water heating equipment upgrades. Municipal top-up rebates for Nanaimo homeowners include a \$350 top-up for residents who switch to an electric air-source heat-pump or heat pump water heater, and an additional \$500 top-up to support an electrical upgrade needed to support the heat pump. To access these rebates, homeowners need to only apply to the Province through CleanBC Better Homes website (betterhomesbc.ca).

Nanaimo's participation rate in the CleanBC Better Homes Program has been steadily increasing since the program launched in April 2020, with 331 rebates issued in 2022, up from 249 in 2021. Existing low-rise residential buildings make up approximately 18 per cent of the City's total emissions or about 89,070 tonnes of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Staff estimate that GHG reductions from these home retrofits in Nanaimo are approximately 660 tonnes of CO₂e in 2022, over 98 per cent of which result from oil and natural gas to electric heat pump upgrades. By supporting residents in switching to low carbon and energy efficient home heating systems, such as heat pumps, the City can make significant strides towards meeting our community emissions reduction targets. An electric heat pump also allows cooling in the summer months for homeowners.

Home energy assessment rebates are no longer part of the CleanBC rebate program, however, the City separately offers up to \$350 to homeowners who choose to complete a home energy assessment. Homeowners need to apply directly to the City of Nanaimo for home energy assessment rebates through an online form on the City's website.

Strategic Link: This program supports Council's goal of Environmental Responsibility by taking a leadership role and focusing on our environmental impact and climate change contributions.

Key Points

- Council invested an additional \$60,000 in response to an unprecedented level of Nanaimo homeowners participation in the CleanBC Better Homes Program.
- Staff estimate that greenhouse gas reductions from home energy retrofits that received rebates from the CleanBC program are approximately 660 tonnes of CO₂e in 2022, over 98% of which result from oil and natural gas to electric heat pump upgrades.
- The City of Nanaimo has been coordinating with the Province of BC to deliver a streamlined CleanBC Better Homes Rebate Program to support home energy retrofits and reduce emissions of existing residential

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buildings since April 2020. Nanaimo homeowners' participation has increased steadily since the program was originally launched.

Quotes

"I am very pleased with the response from homeowners to the CleanBC Better Homes Program. The City is helping homeowners to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and save money while working toward our community-wide environmental goals. By partnering with the Provincial rebate program we can help homeowners afford the home energy changes necessary to reduce their home energy bills while also reducing their emissions. The additional funding will allow this popular rebate program to keep up with the demand."

Leonard Krog
Mayor
City of Nanaimo

Quick Facts

- In April 2019, Nanaimo City Council declared a Climate Emergency and set a target to reduce community greenhouse gas emissions from 2010 levels by 50 to 58% by 2030 and 94% to 107% by 2050.
- A total of 612 rebates were issued, including 349 to homeowners and 263 to contractors for energy efficiency upgrades between April 2020 and December 2022.
- Electric heat pumps produce 97 per cent less greenhouse gas emissions than a high-efficiency natural gas furnace, can provide heating and cooling without a secondary air conditioner and are up to 300 per cent more efficient than electric baseboards.

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