



Proceedings from the Meeting to Discuss the Enbridge Program for Low Income Families

April 14, 2011



An Overview of Enbridge Programs:

Enbridge Service Area



Enbridge Emergency Relief:

- Winter Warmth program
 - Enbridge initiated with United Way
 - Enbridge ratepayer funds helped 700 households in Enbridge franchise last winter
 - Conservation program applications available through Winter Warmth
 - Enhanced TAPS program
 - Weatherization program

Enbridge Assistance

- Winter hardship program
 - May refer customer to social agencies including United Way, Government Social Services/Ontario Works, Ontario Disability Support Program, Salvation Army, Share the Warmth, St. Vincent de Paul, Winter Warmth
- Golden Age Service

Enhanced TAPS Program

- For low income customers a customization of the pre-existing TAPS program to include a free programmable thermostat, in addition to regular TAPS measures: low-flow showerheads, kitchen/bathroom faucet aerators, and CFL's
- Typical energy savings:
 - Up to \$42 in natural gas bill plus programmable thermostat savings
 - T-stat savings typically are 6% in the colder months if temperature is lowered 3 degrees while sleeping or away from home
 - Up to \$20 in electricity costs
 - \$120 per year on water and sewer bill
- A TAPS treatment can remove over 2 tonnes of CO2 over 10 years, which is on average, 13 large mature trees removes each year.
- Program delivered by contractors across the franchise through neighbourhood blitzes in identified low income areas.
- Enhanced TAPS application forms are also available through local neighbourhood community groups. To qualify, applicants must meet at least one of the following criteria:
 - Receiving Ontario Works (OW) benefits
 - Receiving Ontario Disability Support (ODSP) benefits (requires income verification)
 - Guaranteed Income Supplement
 - Allowance for Seniors
 - Allowance for Survivors
 - National Child Benefit Supplement
 - Reside in low-rise social housing paying natural gas bill

Home Weatherization Retrofit

- Delivery of home energy audits (including blower-door test) to identify eligible homes for implementation of cost-effective building envelope upgrades to increase air tightness.
- Measures include:
 - Caulking and weather stripping around doors and door frames, around window casings, around headers and baseboards and attic hatches
 - Insulation into wood framed wall cavities and crawl spaces, attics, and basement walls
- Second audit completed after measures implemented
- Average utility cost of measures: about \$3600 per home
- Application process through delivery partners
- Income qualifiers are the same as Enhanced TAPS' Income level at or below 125% of LICO
 - Receiving Ontario Works (OW) benefits
 - Receiving Ontario Disability Support (ODSP) benefits
 - Guaranteed Income Supplement
 - Allowance for Seniors
 - Allowance for Survivors
 - National Child Benefit Supplement
 - Reside in low-rise social housing paying natural gas bill
- Home generally needs to be 25 years old or older
- Program offered in GTA, York, Durham, Peel, Ottawa area, Niagara Region and Peterborough area

Typical energy savings:

- 1,490 m³ of gas
- 189 kwh of electricity
- Typical annual natural gas bill savings: about \$430

Questions and Answers for Clarification

Question	Answer
Do you work with landlords?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, social housing projects where tenants pay the utilities • Trying to develop a method to support tenants and have properties retrofitted
Who is paying for the program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enbridge – we have a target to reduce gas consumption
Does a tenant have to commit to living in that unit for x number of years?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No • Some repairs may have to be done to the unit before we can do the energy retrofit
Who pays for this program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes there are tax dollars but the program is a ‘shared savings’ initiative that helps people save money
Is there a cap on what can be spent?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is not. On average \$3,600 is spent but we have spent as much as \$7,000 on very inefficient properties
Will you put some information in the bills to advertize the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, because it is not cost effective
Have you had problems getting landlords to co-operate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, because they see the benefit of getting the properties improved and providing the benefit to the tenant
What is the process?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once the tenant has been assessed as qualifying for the project, we speak with the landlord and get the paperwork started. The energy audit of the property does not start until the landlord agrees.
Is it available for rooming houses/shared accommodation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The qualification is based on whether the tenant(s) are paying for their utilities. • Houses must be over 25 years old
How do we reach all the low-income renters?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enbridge is monitoring how best to do this. • Working with the city’s Housing Department, Landlord Tenant Association, township clerks. • Peterborough Green Up is making every effort to reach out
Is the program limited to people using gas?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are hoping there will be another program to cover the other utilities such as electricity • The vision is to have supports for other utilities.
Can we supply the Housing Resource Centre with material to promote the program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absolutely
Can renters apply for different properties, for example if they move?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no limit – if they move more than once, as long as they are paying the utilities, they can apply for the project again.
Are people who are working but low income eligible?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes – it is meant to reach the people who are working but struggling.
How long does it take to get the application from Peterborough Green Up?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will respond as soon as possible and tell the applicant when we’ll be doing the audit of the house.
What is the target for the program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 35 households at least

Suggestions to Promote the Program

- United Way of Peterborough & District can create a record for FourInfo.com and 211
- Promote it to the Network of Children’s Mental Health providers (planning table meets monthly)
- New Canadians Centre has a variety of events where information can be shared
- Educate the Food Banks – have information put into the food boxes
- Educate the social service workers re Ontario Works, ODSP – can OW insert information into the cheques?
- Provide the information to “Out of the Cold” program
- Place public service announcements on Trent radio
- Get information into the weekly column that Peterborough Green Up has in the Peterborough Examiner
- Contact the Trent Student Union and Fleming College re Second Career Program
- Peterborough Green Up has the Green Expo at the Evinrude Centre – have material on display there
- Enbridge is a sponsor for the Little Lake Music Festival – can the partnership with Peterborough Green Up be promoted there?
- Provide information to the Housing Resource Centre for circulation to clients
- Send material to the churches, Peterborough Chaplaincy, Peterborough Poverty Reduction Network

General Impressions About the Program/Information

- Good information – for those with hearing loss, need better acoustics
- Good open forum
- Hopeful that we’re being positive to get information to people who need it and thus they will benefit
- Remarkable that this program exists and that Enbridge is involved
- Congratulations to Enbridge and to Peterborough Green Up
- Need to respond to the need for people with sight and hearing losses
- I’m hopeful after hearing about this and if other energy providers come on board it will be great
- Housing Resource Centre can help reach more of our clients
- Success of programs like this depends on how effective community-based networks/organizations can work with a program like this
- This could be a significant program for socially-disadvantaged people
- This program brings social and environmental sectors together

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