

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PLAN



State of West Virginia
Home Electrification and
Appliance Rebates
Inflation Reduction Act
(50122)

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Introduction

The Inflation Reduction Act was signed into law on August 16, 2022, to support clean energy initiatives and address climate change. Part of the Inflation Reduction Act includes the Home Energy Rebates Program administered by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). DOE distributed \$8.5 billion to State Energy Offices for the Home Energy Rebates Program, of which roughly \$88 million was granted to the State of West Virginia. West Virginia was allocated \$44,017,970 for the Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates Program.

The West Virginia Office of Energy (WVOE) is designing the program to reduce the cost of energy for West Virginians, while simultaneously building a workforce well-versed in household upgrades that reduces home energy bills and makes West Virginians' homes more comfortable. This Education and Outreach plan aligns with the following guiding principles that WVOE has established for the Home Energy Rebates Program:

1. **Reduce Energy Burden and Increase Comfort:** Prioritize affordability and lasting savings for the highest need households.
2. **Participant Experience and Accessibility:** Deliver a program that focuses on customer and contractor satisfaction.
3. **Maximize Program Impact and Integration:** Leverage pre-existing resources where possible and target funds to maximize impact.
4. **Build Contractor Network, Workforce, and Capacity:** Contribute to the growth of West Virginia's workforce and its contractor capacity.

To develop a comprehensive Education and Outreach Plan, WVOE engaged with 21 separate stakeholders, which included local governments, community-based organizations, workforce organizations, contractors, and utilities, to solicit input and refine program design. These interviews, detailed in Appendix A, were pivotal in gathering insights and feedback that directly informed the design and implementation of the program. The state also completed two Public Input Sessions that allowed WVOE to uplift challenges and address roadblocks prior to Blueprint and Application submission.ⁱ For people who were unable to attend the meetings, WVOE uploaded a recording of the first Public Input Session onto its website and YouTube channel. The goal of these engagements has primarily been focused on ensuring the program is easily accessible and readily available for West Virginia's rural communities and target populations. WVOE continues to engage stakeholders across sectors to assist in program design finalization.

Household Outreach

As per program guidance, West Virginia is required to allocate at least 39.4% of the rebate funds to low-income households in the state (those with less than 80% of area median income (AMI)) and at least 10% of the funds allocated to low-income multifamily buildings. The state plans to allocate a majority of its Home Energy Rebates funding to low-income households. WVOE has identified the following additional key target households for regional outreach:

- Single parent households;
- Households with children; and
- Households with a high energy burden, or percentage of household income, that goes toward energy costs.

Planned Activities

Outreach Partnership

WVOE plans to utilize its 16 Community Action Agencies (CAAs), shown in Figure 2, as its primary outreach partners. This partnership is crucial to address feedback from stakeholders that WVOE must

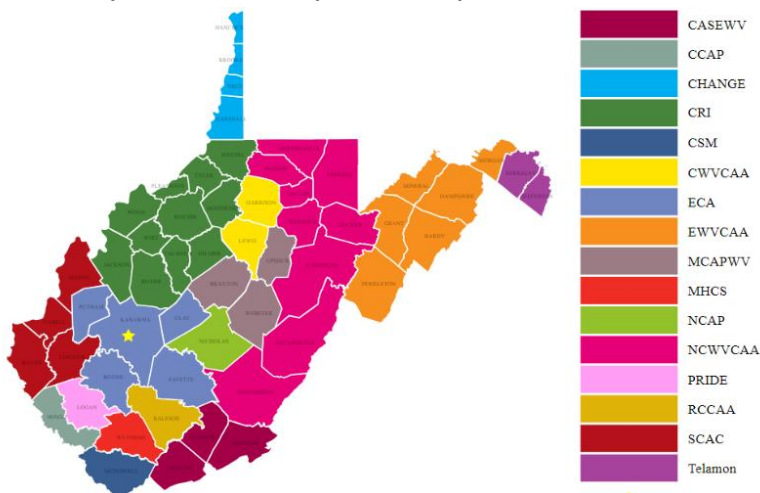


Figure 1: Community Action Agency Map

partner with trusted entities within these communities in order to receive buy-in and participation for this program from all communities, especially rural, low-income households. West Virginia's 16 CAAs possess deep-rooted relationships and established trust within communities statewide. Their extensive expertise and commitment to local engagement will be instrumental in ensuring that the state's marketing and outreach initiatives are both culturally tailored and relevant to target

households.

West Virginia will also strategically leverage both existing and new partnerships, employing their established community outreach strategies with a track record of success to effectively reach these target audiences.

The planned activities with each partner are listed below:

- **Community-Based Organizations (CBOs):** Engage CBOs that are active within specific regions to conduct stakeholder engagement, promote the program, and connect with community members.
 - Proposed stakeholders:
 - Community Action Agencies

- CASEWV – Community Action of South Eastern WV
- CCAP – Coalfield Community Action Partnership, Inc.
- CHANGE – CHANGE, Inc.
- CRI – Community Resources, Inc.
- CSM – Council of the Southern Mountains
- CWVCAA – Central West Virginia Community Action Association, Inc.
- ECA – EnAct Community Action
- MCAPWV – Mountain Community Action Partnership of West Virginia, Inc.
- MHCS – MountainHeart Community Services, Inc.
- NCAP – Nicholas County Action Partnership, Inc.
- NCWVCAA – North Central West Virginia Community Action Agency, Inc.
- PRIDE – PRIDE Community Services
- RCCAA – Raleigh County Community Action Agency, Inc.
- SCAC – Southwestern Community Action Council, Inc.
- Telamon – Telamon Corporation
- WVCAP – West Virginia Community Action Partnership
- Regional Planning and Development Councils
 - Region 1 Planning & Development Council – McDowell, Mercer, Monroe, Raleigh, Summers, and Wyoming counties
 - Region 2 Planning & Development Council – Cabell, Lincoln, Logan, Mason, Mingo, and Wayne counties
 - Region 3 Planning & Development Council – Boone, Clay, Kanawha, and Putnam counties
 - Region 4 Planning & Development Council – Fayette, Greenbrier, Nicholas, Pocahontas, and Webster counties
 - Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Council – Calhoun, Jackson, Pleasants, Ritchie, Roane, Tyler, Wirt, and Wood counties
 - Region VI Planning & Development Council – Doddridge, Harrison, Marion, Monongalia, Preston, and Taylor counties
 - Region VII Planning & Development Council – Barbour, Braxton, Gilmer, Lewis, Randolph, Tucker, and Upshur counties
 - Region 8 Planning & Development Council – Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Mineral, and Pendleton counties
 - The Eastern Panhandle Regional Development Council – Berkeley, Jefferson, and Morgan counties
 - The Belomar Regional Council – Marshall, Ohio, and Wetzel counties
 - The Brooke Hancock Jefferson Metropolitan Planning Commission – Brooke and Hancock counties
- WV211/United Ways
 - Tygart Valley United Way
 - United Way Alliance of Mid-Ohio Valley

- United Way of Central West Virginia
 - United Way of Greenbrier Valley
 - United Way of Harrison and Doddridge Counties
 - United Way of Monongalia and Preston Counties
 - United Way of Southern West Virginia
 - United Way of the Eastern Panhandle
 - United Way of Upper Ohio Valley
- **State Government Departments:** Partner with various other departments to promote the program, reach single-family households and multifamily households, and connect with media and other marketing outlets.
 - Proposed stakeholders:
 - West Virginia Community Advancement and Development
 - WorkForce West Virginia
 - West Virginia Housing Development Fund
 - West Virginia Economic Development Authority
- **Labor Organizations:** Engage with labor organizations to provide training and information to their members.
 - Proposed stakeholders:
 - Building Performance Association
 - West Virginia Home Builders Association
- **Energy Organizations:** Team with energy efficiency organizations that can assist with promoting the program and connect with community members.
 - Proposed stakeholders
 - Energy Efficient WV
 - Coalfield Development
- **Utilities:** Collaborate with utility companies to disseminate program information through billing inserts, newsletters, social media, and other online platforms.
 - Proposed stakeholders:
 - Appalachian Power
 - Small co-op utilities
- **Vocational Schools and Training Centers:** Partner with vocational schools and training centers to incorporate program information into their curricula and outreach efforts.
 - Proposed stakeholders:
 - Marshall University
 - West Virginia Community and Technical College System
 - WV Department of Education – ACE Program

Outreach Channels

To effectively reach and engage all West Virginians, the program will utilize multiple outreach channels. The state will utilize an array of outreach channels tailored to various market segments to

enhance the effectiveness of initiative, leveraging both digital and traditional methods tailored to regional needs.

- **Web:** West Virginia has already dedicated a page on its website solely to the rebate program. WVOE will continue to update and expand its website as the program launches. These pages will serve as a resource for residents and applicants to learn about the program, find qualified contractors, and initiate participation.
- **Direct mail:** West Virginia may utilize and fund partnerships to send multilingual information packets with frequently asked questions and other program information directly to target households. The state may also leverage partnerships with statewide utility companies to insert leaflets about the state rebate program in customers' current utility bills.
- **Email:** West Virginia will offer an online sign-up form on its website to provide regular program updates to households and contractors. WVOE may also leverage partnerships with utilities and other organizations to reach their existing audiences by including rebate information in customer newsletters and other communication channels.
- **Face-to-face:** West Virginia will engage in community events, like local festivals and fairs, to disseminate program information directly to target audiences, fostering personal connections between WVOE and community members. At these events, the state will distribute WVOE-branded marketing materials, including pens, tote bags, and literature about the Home Energy Rebates Program. These face-to-face interactions are expected to be instrumental in enhancing program success and increasing participation by providing personalized education and distributing comprehensive program information.
- **Social media:** WVOE will use key media platforms such as Linked-In, Facebook, and X to post updates and content aimed at increasing program participation.
- **State broadcasting agencies:** Press releases and provided information will be tailored to the demographics of the audience of individual broadcast networks. This method is expected to maximize program interest. Further, the state plans to pitch key program milestones to news and media reporters, such as program launch dates and timelines for residents to claim their rebates.
- **Other media organizations:** The state will identify preferred information outreach channels in each CAA region and utilize these methods to maximize marketing efforts based upon language and other key demographic data.

Education Materials

Creating comprehensive and accessible educational materials is critical to ensure that all stakeholders have the information they need to participate in the program. These materials will be available in multiple formats and languages based on discussions with each CAA about the needs of its respective communities.

- **Website:** Develop a comprehensive, user-friendly website with region-specific information about the program, FAQs, application portals, success stories, and resources. Ensure the website is mobile-friendly and accessible to people with disabilities.

- **Videos:** Produce videos and tutorials that can be shared on various platforms and post periodic videos updating stakeholders on milestones achieved, success stories, and testimonials from consumers.
- **Fact Sheets and Brochures:** Will detail eligibility criteria, rebate application instructions, estimated energy savings, and the positive environmental impacts of the program upgrades (see example materials in Appendix B).
- **Training Sessions:** Conduct regular virtual training webinars, in-person training sessions, and workshops for contractors about the program, installation standards, and quality assurance protocols.

Contractor Outreach

Planned Activities

Outreach Partnerships

One of West Virginia's primary goals of the Home Energy Rebates Program is to build the contractor network, workforce, and capacity. West Virginia Office of Energy has applied for the Training for Residential Energy Contractors (TREC) Program makes so it can train, test, and certify residential energy efficiency and electrification contractors; however, the state is still waiting to see if it has been granted the funding. In the meantime, WVOE is leveraging new and old relationships to assist its office in engaging with contractors and stakeholders about the Home Energy Rebates Program to meet this goal.

- **Building Performance Association (BPA):** BPA has already drafted the West Virginia Home Performance Workforce Development and Training Program proposal for WVOE that focuses on investing in a framework for training and education that will equip our industry with a high-quality, skilled workforce. This training proposal was submitted as WVOE is implementing two of the country's most historic federal investments; the Infrastructure, Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) (also known as Bipartisan Infrastructure Law) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), which includes the Home Energy Rebates Program. BPA will help WVOE retain, grow, and transform the market for the home performance industry within the state through advocacy, education, professional development, and networking.
- **WorkForce West Virginia:** As the state's leading resource for employment and workforce development, WorkForce West Virginia is dedicated to connecting individuals with meaningful career opportunities and supporting businesses in building strong and skilled workforces. WVOE will partner with WorkForce West Virginia to utilize its well-developed networks of contractors. Additionally, WorkForce West Virginia and WVOE, two state agencies, will work together to grow the contract network in the state by training and certifying new members in the field and preparing them for careers in the energy sector.
- **Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP):** West Virginia's Weatherization Assistance Program created a robust network of contractors located across the state that already works to

support that program. By partnering with both the agency administering WAP at a state level (West Virginia Community and Development Office) as well as the CAAs, the Home Energy Rebates Program can target outreach to these contractors, opening the door to new opportunities for growth.

- **Utility Contractor Networks:** Appalachian Power has developed a large network of contractors throughout the state. WVOE will work in partnership with Appalachian Power to leverage the relationships and trust established with their contractor networks to channel outreach and information about opportunities offered by the Home Energy Rebates Program.

Outreach Channels

The state will conduct outreach to home energy improvement contractors through a wide variety of channels.

- **Outreach and Engagement Channels:** Utilize contractor channels operated by various organizations throughout the state, including the following:
 - WorkForce West Virginia
 - Building Performance Association
 - Coalfield Development
 - Energy Efficient West Virginia
 - Marshall University
- **Contractor Networks:** Leverage contractor networks to assist in connecting contractors and providing outreach, including the following:
 - A contractor network operated by the WV Home Builders Association
 - A contractor network operated by the CAAs, who perform Weatherization Assistance Program upgrades
 - A contractor network operated by the Building Performance Association
 - A contractor network operated by the WorkForce West Virginia
 - A contractor network operated by the Appalachian Power
- **Communications by Retailers and Materials Suppliers:** Work with retailers and suppliers that have direct interactions with contractors, including mechanical supply warehouses and insulation and air sealing product warehouses and manufacturers, to provide outreach.

Educational Materials

In order to join the contractor network, the West Virginia Office of Energy will require all contractors to complete training that will ensure and measure contractors' knowledge, skill, and abilities to operate an effective program.

Once the contractors are in the contractor network, WVOE will continue to develop educational materials to ensure both quality and consistency throughout the program's implementation. Educational materials and outreach will always offer clear channels to communicate questions or concerns that contractors may have directly to the state and the program administrators. The

educational materials will continue to be developed and refined as the program launches and continues.

The following educational materials are a vital part of providing contractors with the knowledge they need throughout the program.

- **WVOE Home Energy Rebates Program Website:** Develop an online, user-friendly resource for WVOE's contractor outreach that includes information about participation requirements and a program timeline.
- **Fact Sheets:** Create written information that outlines items such as rebate offerings.
- **Ongoing Contractor Training and Support Sessions:** Hold regular sessions that focus on program guidelines and distribute these materials via WVOE's Home Energy Rebates Program website.
- **In-Person Meetings:** Provide regular opportunities to learn about the program in-person.
- **Online Webinars:** Offer regular online opportunities to learn about the program.
- **E-Newsletters & Emails:** Administer this communication to ensure contractor alignment with any programmatic updates.

Timeline

Education and outreach will be a constant throughout the program design, initiation, and implementation. Below is a table outlining the possible timeline for stakeholder engagement and program education and outreach.

Tasks	2024		2025				2026				2027
	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1-4
Initial internal stakeholder engagement and development of educational materials											
Host two Public Input Sessions											
Begin community outreach efforts and develop training programs for contractors											
Implement household outreach activities, conduct initial contractor training sessions, and begin retailer/distributor engagement											

Intensify outreach before program launch and build out website											
Continue and expand household outreach, host additional workshops and seminars, and engage more contractors											
Maintain outreach efforts, evaluate program impact, and refine strategies based on feedback											
Host one-year evaluation since program launched and implement improvements											
Maintain and expand outreach activities, with regular evaluations and adjustments to improve effectiveness											

Budget

Task	Cost
Research and Stakeholder Engagement	\$241,667.16
Develop Visual and Educational Assets	\$300,000.00
Total Project Cost	\$541,667.16

Appendix

Appendix A: Stakeholder Engagement List

WVOE met with over 20 key stakeholders across the state to gain an informed perspective from West Virginia's ecosystem. These meetings fostered healthy relationships for program design and a foundation for program implementation. Through this and continued engagement, WVOE intends to administer the Home Energy Rebates Program in alignment with the best interests of all relevant organizations.

The following table displays a list of stakeholder interviews completed to-date by WVOE regarding the design and implementation of the Home Energy Rebates Program.

Stakeholder Title	Stakeholder Group	Meeting Date
West Virginia Community Advancement and Development (WVCAD)	Government	7/22
Public Service Commission	Government	8/5
West Virginia Department of Economic Development	Government	8/8
West Virginia Department of Commerce	Government	8/14
West Virginia Regional Development Councils	Government	8/19
WorkForce West Virginia	Government	8/23
Marshall University	University	7/23
West Virginia University Center for Excellence in Disabilities	University	7/29
Catholic Charities and Housing	Homeowner Association	8/15
West Virginia Housing Development Fund	Community Group/ Homeowner Association	10/18
New River Gorge Regional Development Authority	Community-based Organization	8/9
Wyoming County Economic Development Authority	Community-based Organization	8/12
West Virginia Community Action Agencies	Community-based Organization	8/20
WV 211 / United Ways	Community-based Organization	8/29
Ben Newhouse	Community-based Organization	10/8
WV Home Builders Association	Community-based Organization	10/22
West Virginia Building Performance Association (BPA)	Workforce Organization	8/16
Coalfield Development	Workforce Organization	10/8

Appalachian Power	Utility	8/13
Energy Efficient West Virginia	Efficiency Advocacy group	9/6
Local Hardware and Supply Stores	Retailers	10/25

Appendix B: WVOE Marketing Materials

A key goal of WVOE is to reach and inform all communities across West Virginia about the Home Energy Rebates Program. In order to do this, WVOE created an informational fact sheet and brochure to circulate via stakeholders and engagement partners.

Fact Sheet (Front)

HOME ENERGY REBATES FACT SHEET

Program Overview:

The **Home Energy Rebates**, part of the Inflation Reduction Act, consist of two programs:

The **Home Efficiency Rebates (HER)** provide \$2,000 to \$8,000 to reduce upfront cost for households that take whole-home measures to increase energy efficiency. Larger rebates go to lower-income households. Total investment = \$4.3 billion.

The **Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates (HEAR)** provide up to \$14,000 per home for point-of-sale discounts on high-efficiency home appliances and equipment. All rebates go to low- and middle-income households (less than 150 percent of area median income), with larger rebates to those with lower incomes. Total investment = \$4.5 billion.

Benefits:

- Saves households money
- Dedicates billions of dollars to support low- and moderate-income households
- Makes homes more comfortable
- Reduces indoor and outdoor air pollution

Getting Rebates to Consumers

WVOE and DOE want to get rebates in consumers' hands as soon as possible. WVOE and DOE are taking action on all fronts to help states launch their rebates programs, including:

- Releasing technical assistance documents to help states apply for funding
- Providing guidance documents to help states design and implement their programs
- Providing staff support to help states complete their funding applications
- Expediting funding application reviews

Fact Sheet (Back)

Resources:

- West Virginia Office of Energy www.energywv.org
- Energy Star www.energystar.gov
- Current Available Tax Credits <https://shorturl.at/NVWx1>
- Federal Tax Credits for Energy Efficiency www.energystar.gov/about/federal-tax-credits
- Home Energy Rebates Website www.energy.gov/scep/home-energy-rebates-programs
- Frequently Asked Questions <https://shorturl.at/jkAj>
- Application Guidance for States <https://shorturl.at/rOeuF>
- Program Design and Implementation Guidance for States: <https://shorturl.at/sITyi>
- Consumer Portal: www.energy.gov/save

Stay Connected

We want to hear from you! Scan the QR code below to take our survey.

<https://forms.gle/FCQmWY1hV5yTLu7>

Get more updates on Home Energy Rebates here:

WVOE:

<https://shorturl.at/2m8bh>

DOE:

<https://shorturl.at/1h0To>

Brochure (Back Panels)

RESOURCES

DOE HER and HEAR
www.energy.gov/scep/home-energy-rebates-programs

Energy Star
www.energystar.gov

Frequently Asked Questions
https://shorturl.at/vWAT1


Program Status by State
www.energy.gov/save/rebates

Current Available Tax Credits
https://shorturl.at/d2wGV

Federal Tax Credits for Energy Efficiency
www.energystar.gov/about/federal-tax-credits

West Virginia Weatherization Assistance Program
wvcad.org/sustainability/weatherization-assistance-program

West Virginia Office of Energy
Leaders in the Nation's Energy Production, We're Guiding You in New Energy Initiatives



Visit
https://www.energywv.org/home-energy-rebate-programs
today to see if you are eligible to apply.

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WEST VIRGINIA
OFFICE OF
ENERGY


Home Energy Rebates



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

www.energywv.org

Brochure (Interior Panels)



HER provides \$2,000-\$8,000

HEAR provides up to \$14,000 per home

YOU could save money by enrolling in the program now!

The WVOE is excited to announce the Department of Energy funded the Home Energy Rebate programs that consist of two rebate programs: The Home Efficiency Rebates (HER) and The Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates (HEAR).

What do the Rebate Programs do?

Home Efficiency Rebates program (HER)
Provides funding to reduce initial cost of energy efficiency upgrades in single-family and multi-family homes.



Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates program (HEAR)
Provides funding for high efficiency home appliances and equipment in single-family and multi-family homes.

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

These historic funding streams will bring approximately \$88 million to West Virginia Residents to install energy efficient technologies and perform upgrades to existing structures that will help cut down on costs!

SAVE MONEY ON...
Gas Upgrades
Heat Pump Upgrades
Ventilation
Insulation
Weatherization
Cooktop, Range, or Oven
and much more!

WEST VIRGINIA
OFFICE OF
ENERGY

Appendix C: WVOE Public Survey

Throughout August and September, WVOE utilized a public survey as an additional method of soliciting feedback from West Virginia Residents about the Home Energy Rebates Program. To garner sufficient responses, WVOE promoted the survey by informing stakeholder organizations during one-on-one engagement sessions. WVOE also included a QR code link to the survey on the fact sheet as well as the Public Input Session flyers and meeting invitations. WVOE has considered responses provided by residents and incorporated feedback within program design and implementation decisions where appropriate.

The following table contains a complete list of survey questions and, where applicable, potential options that could be provided by respondents.

WVOE Public Survey Content	
Question	Response Options
Full name	Free response
Organization and Title (if applicable)	Free response
Email Address	Free response
Zip Code	Free response
Do you have any general feedback or comments for WVOE regarding the West Virginia Home Energy Rebates Programs (for example, eligibility, customer journey, stakeholder engagement, braiding, program timeline, etc.)?	Free response
Do you have any questions for WVOE regarding the West Virginia Home Energy Rebates Programs?	Free response
Which of the following best describes you? (Pick all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential contractor that operates in West Virginia • West Virginia homeowner • West Virginia renter • West Virginia multifamily building owner • Utility, municipality, or cooperative that operates in West Virginia • Non-profit organization that operates in West Virginia • Appliance retailer that operates in West Virginia • Other (TEXT)
On a scale of 1-10, how interested are you in participating in West Virginia's Home Energy Rebate Programs? (10 being very interested)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scale 1-10 • 1- Not interested • 10- Very Interested
Which Program most appeals to you?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Energy Rebates (HER) • Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates (HEAR) • Both • Neither of them
Would you like to be added to WVOE's stakeholder listing for this program to receive program updates? If yes, please ensure your email address is correct on question three.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No

ⁱ The recording of the August 26th 2024 Public Input Session can be found here:
https://youtu.be/_qul9jneVQE?si=115iar_zJ6ihe3c