

MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT HOME ENERGY RETROFIT AND SOLAR POWER INITIATIVES

The McGuinty government is launching a suite of programs and initiatives to help homeowners with energy retrofits and businesses to become more energy efficient.

Homeowner Retrofit Rebates

The province is investing \$88 million over five years to encourage homeowners to make their homes more energy efficient. Homeowners will be eligible to receive up to \$5,000 for energy retrofits recommended under the Ontario Home Energy Audit program. The same amount is available to homeowners under the federal government's ecoENERGY Retrofit Homes program. Retrofits covered under this program include:

- \$500 toward the installation of a solar domestic water system.
- Up to \$500 toward the purchase of an ENERGY STAR qualified high-efficiency gas furnace.
- Up to \$1,500 toward the installation of exterior wall insulation.

Industrial/Commercial/Institutional Solar Thermal Heat

The government is making \$14.4 million available over four years to encourage the industrial/commercial/institutional sector to convert to solar thermal heating. Ontario businesses, industries, schools, universities, municipalities and hospitals would receive 25 per cent of the cost of the installation of a solar thermal heating system from the province to a maximum of \$80,000. The federal government will also provide a contribution of 25 per cent under the ecoENERGY Renewable Heat Program. It is estimated that the program will generate 500 installations over four years.

Temporary Retail Sales Tax (RST) exemption on the purchase of qualifying ENERGY STAR household products

The government is providing a point-of-sale RST exemption for certain ENERGY STAR qualified household products purchased, rented or leased after July 19, 2007 and before July 20, 2008. The exemption will apply to refrigerators, dishwashers, clothes washers, freezers, dehumidifiers, room air conditioners, and qualifying ENERGY STAR light bulbs and decorative light strings. The RST exemption for qualifying ENERGY STAR products is expected to provide

approximately \$36 million to Ontario consumers in 2007-08 and a further \$15 million in 2008-09.

To qualify:

- The product must be listed, at the time of purchase, as ENERGY STAR qualified by the Office of Energy Efficiency, Natural Resources Canada.
- The purchase must be a first-time sale, rental or lease for at least one year, of a new qualifying appliance.
- A purchase order or sales contract must be entered into after July 19, 2007 and before July 20, 2008 and the qualifying appliance must be delivered on or before September 1, 2008.

Installation costs for qualifying built-in appliances and delivery charges for ENERGY STAR products are also eligible for the RST exemption.

Ontario PST rebate on renewable installations

The province is extending the retail sales tax rebate on qualifying renewable equipment to January 1, 2010 to encourage the use of solar and other renewable technologies. The program provides a full rebate on the PST paid for renewable equipment used for the installation of a solar, wind, micro hydro-electric or geothermal system, or enhancement to an existing system.

Pilot Financing for Residential Renewable Energy

The government is providing \$1.3 million over two years to two local distribution companies (LDCs) - Hydro One and Enersource Hydro Mississauga - so they can provide zero-interest loans to 350,000 customers in parts of York Region, Brampton, Caledon and Mississauga who invest in alternative and renewable energy sources. LDCs will promote financing options and facilitate financing through a third party. Provincial funding will eliminate interest rates charged to customers and offset LDC administrative costs to run the program. To take advantage of this program, customers will be able to choose from a variety of renewable energy technologies including:

- Small-scale wind turbines.
- Solar thermal.
- Solar photo voltaic.
- Geothermal systems.

One-Stop Centre for Information on Solar Energy

The government is working with the Clean Air Foundation to establish a one-stop shop where consumers can get all the information they need on solar energy. Consumers will be able to use a toll-free number or the Internet to get information on:

- Solar thermal and photovoltaic technologies, including how they work, cost, payback periods
- Incentives available from various sources including federal and provincial governments, utilities, builders and retailers
- Manufacturers that have been certified by the Canadian Standards Association;
- Installation tips, such as roof orientation and tree coverage
- Financing options available through financial service companies, utilities, energy service providers and retailers
- Promotional solar events
- Relevant websites.

Setting a target for 100,000 solar installations

The McGuinty government also announced a target of installing 100,000 solar systems in the province and the establishment of a taskforce of industry experts and market specialists on how best to achieve this target. In addition to the programs announced today, the McGuinty government has launched other programs to encourage investment in solar technology, including:

- Ontario's net metering program, which provides a credit to customers who generate their own power from renewable sources for any excess electricity they put back on the grid;
- Ontario's Renewable Energy Standard Offer Program for PV solar installations allows Ontarians to sell power they generate on to the grid at 42 cents per kilowatt hour.

Developing a program that rewards Ontarians for purchasing 100 per cent green power

The government is providing \$1 million over the next four years for a program to be developed with Ontario's green energy retailers which will allow consumers of 100 per cent renewable energy to receive rebates for a portion of the extra costs that they pay to buy that power. Ontarians who sign a contract to purchase 100 per cent green power from a recognized green energy retailer will be eligible for a rebate.

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