

October 21, 2003

FEDERAL CLIMATE CHANGE PLAN COULD PUT \$1 MILLION INTO THE POCKETS OF CALEDON AND DUFFERIN HOMEOWNERS

On October 21 the federal government launched a new program to combat global climate change that could put nearly \$1 million into the pockets of Caledon and Dufferin County homeowners.

The program, called *EnerGuide for Houses*, provides grants to homeowners who improve their home's energy efficiency. It is part of the federal government's \$1 billion Kyoto Plan announced in August.

The program is available in the Town of Caledon and across Dufferin County through the Caledon Dufferin Residential Energy Efficiency Project (REEP), a project of the not-for-profit Elora Centre for Environmental Excellence in partnership with the Caledon Countryside Alliance.

"Each and every one of us contributes to global climate change through the energy we use to heat and cool our homes. This program provides a powerful financial incentive to reduce this environmental impact. But the really good news is that improving your home's energy efficiency will also make your home more comfortable and save you money on your monthly utility bill," said Karen Hutchinson, Coordinator of Caledon Dufferin REEP.

Caledon Dufferin REEP's nationally trained and certified energy efficiency advisors visit homes in Caledon and Dufferin County to evaluate energy efficiency using the *EnerGuide for Houses* rating system. Each home is given an efficiency rating between 0 and 100 along with prioritized recommendations to improve that rating such as insulation, draftproofing and new heating systems.

The Elora Centre for Environmental Excellence has been operating REEPs in other communities including Guelph and Waterloo since 1999. More than 5,000 homeowners have participated, mostly to improve home comfort and reduce utility bills. The new federal grant program announced October 21 provides yet another reason to take action. That's because homeowners who implement REEP's recommendations could now receive a cash grant from the federal government for each point that they improve on the 0 to 100 point *EnerGuide* scale.

And the grant money can quickly add up.

The average Canadian home rates at 62 on the *EnerGuide for Houses* scale and has the potential to improve to a rating of 73. Improving a house's energy efficiency by this amount would result in a grant to the homeowner of approximately \$619 from the federal government. The maximum grant amount that any one homeowner can receive is \$3,350.

"Caledon Dufferin REEP plans to visit 1500 homes over the next three years. If each of those homes achieves the typical results for the program they will receive \$619 each from the federal government. That adds up to almost \$1 million in federal grants flowing into this community," said Hutchinson.

On top of this is an estimated half a million per year in savings for residents on their home heating costs — money that Hutchinson says would normally be leaving the community.

"The federal government's Kyoto Plan is not just a free lunch for Caledon and Dufferin County homeowners. It's better than that. It's a lunch we're paid to eat!" said Hutchinson.

To qualify for the federal grant program, homeowners must first have a visit from a REEP energy efficiency advisor who will determine your home's starting point on the 0 to 100 point scale. Then, after you have implemented some or all of the advisor's recommendations, the advisor will return for a free follow-up visit to determine how much your home has improved and what amount of federal grant you qualify for.

The price for the full service is \$175. Visit www.thereep.ca for more information.

For more information:

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