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You can heat your home for less this winter!

Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® helps New Yorkers use less energy and save on heating costs

Albany, NY – January 23, 2008: Average home heating costs are on the rise throughout New York State and with the recent low temperatures, New Yorkers could be in for a shock then they receive their next heating bill. New Yorkers can still save money on those bills this winter by taking advantage of energy efficiency programs offered by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA).

NYSERDA's Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® Program helps homeowners find contractors who can deliver advanced and integrated energy efficient home improvements that save money and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Homes of any style or size can be improved to reduce energy use and costs by up to 40 percent, an average of \$750 on energy bills every year.

“Home heating prices, particularly oil, have already hit an all-time high this year,” said Paul D. Tonko, President and CEO of NYSERDA. “It’s a difficult situation for many New Yorkers, but there are options. Home Performance with ENERGY STAR is one of many NYSERDA programs that New Yorkers can use to save energy, reduce costs and help protect the environment.”

Since 2001, more than \$131 million has been invested by NYSERDA, as well as New Yorkers, to improve the energy efficiency of over 17,600 homes through Home Performance with

ENERGY STAR. The program has helped New Yorkers reduce household energy usage by nearly 17.1 million kWh in electricity and more than 673 billion BTUs of oil and gas.

Trained and accredited by the Building Performance Institute (BPI), contractors participating in Home Performance with ENERGY STAR take a comprehensive approach to home energy usage that looks at the whole house, not just one room or single problem area. The contractor will perform a comprehensive home assessment to measure a home's overall energy performance, especially its insulation and air infiltration levels and the efficiency of heating and cooling equipment, appliances, and lighting. Contractors also test ovens, water heaters and other equipment to make sure dangerous combustion gases like carbon monoxide are not leaking into the home.

When the assessment is complete, the contractor will identify what improvements can be made, the cost of making those improvements, and what kinds of financial incentives, such as low-interest financing, are available to homeowners who decide to have the improvements made. Income-qualified applicants may be eligible to receive additional incentives through the Assisted Home Performance with ENERGY STAR Program.

“When it comes time to making home improvements, some people are nervous about finding a qualified contractor,” Tonko said. “That’s why Home Performance with ENERGY STAR requires contractors go through specialized training and accreditation. These contractors are different from traditional contractors because they are trained to assess and improve homes in the context of a system of interacting parts as opposed to focusing on a particular system.”

New Yorkers can also use the following simple tips to reduce wasted energy this heating season:

- Use an ENERGY STAR qualified programmable thermostat for energy-saving climate control
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with ENERGY STAR qualified models that use up to 75 percent less energy and last up to 10 times longer
- Move carpet, furniture or other objects away from heating vents and radiators to ensure proper air circulation and heating system balance
- Make sure storm windows are down and secure, and lock windows to be sure they are sealed
- Install efficient showerheads and faucet aerators to save water and reduce water-heating costs

For more information about Home Performance with ENERGY STAR and a list of participating contractors in your area, visit www.GetEnergySmart.org or call toll-free 1-877-NY-SMART (1-877-697-6278).

The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) uses innovation and technology to solve some of New York's most difficult energy and environmental problems in ways that improve the State's economy.

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