

Home Energy Survey Report and Resources

June 2023

In April 2023, the town of Williston mailed out a survey asking Williston residents about their home energy usage, weatherization efforts and their familiarity with and/or interest in energy efficiency programs. We wanted to learn about how you heat and power your home, challenges you've faced and methods you've used to reduce your energy bills.

We deeply appreciate all the time taken to fill out these surveys. In total, 83 people responded. Nearly 30% of respondents noted that energy costs seem higher than they should be, and an additional 30% expressed that energy costs were currently a challenge or could be challenging if the costs were to increase.

When asked to list specific energy efficiency measures they have taken, respondents answered as follows:

- Switched to LEDs (25%)
- Lowered thermostat settings (23%)
- Weatherized their homes (19%)
- Installed a more efficient heating system (10%)
- Installing a programable thermostat (10%)
- Other measures (collectively 12%) such as replacing doors and/or windows, installing on-demand hot water systems, installing a heat pump, and installing energy efficient appliances.

Many people shared tips and advice, a few of which are excerpted here:

Biggest bang for the buck are my solar panels. Used Sun Common. Expensive but without an electric bill for 3 years, they will pay for themselves in a few more years.

Vermont Gas weatherization program for mobile homes did a fantastic job in insulating underneath the house, doors, attic,

windows, etc. which has greatly improved the warmth in the house this past winter and was able to lower the thermostat.

Weatherization cut our heating by 30%. LED bulbs cut our electric bill by 40%.

We had an energy audit from Building Energy and got some insulation and air sealing work done. We also had some windows replaced and doors upgraded.

Solar Panels. GE heat pump hybrid water heater. Mitsubishi heat pump for spring/summer/fall. Weatherization of all attic/crawl space/roof.

Most of what we have done has been 'do it yourself' or w/a local handyperson who can help with the easy stuff.

Most people stated they are familiar with Efficiency Vermont rebates and the Weatherization Assistance Program, whereas there was less familiarity with other programs like the Weatherization Repayment Assistance Program and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) incentives. There seems to be interest in most of the programs listed in the survey, so we have provided links to more information as follows.

For Renters:

- CVOEO Weatherization offers weatherization and applicable appliance upgrades for renters as well as homeowners at no cost to you—see below.
- Check out Efficiency's VT easy low- to no-cost ideas for Energy Savings for Renters at <https://www.encyvermont.com/blog/how-to/the-renter-s-guide-to-energy-savings>

CVOEO Weatherization provides energy audits, heating systems checks, complete weatherization and free lighting and appliance upgrades where applicable. If they encounter asbestos/vermiculite

during the course of their work, remediation is included. For those that are income eligible, this service is completely free. For those that rent, CVOEO Weatherization will still perform these services with permission from your landlord. Landlords that participate in the program are not allowed to raise rents due to any weatherization costs, however landlords may qualify for the service to be completely free as well.

Please note that the waiting list can be quite long, but the sooner you get on, the sooner you receive the services! Learn more about their programs at <https://www.cvoeo.org/get-help/weatherization> and check if you are eligible at <https://www.cvoeo.org/weatherization-eligibility>. Not eligible for CVOEO? Check out the resources below.

Efficiency VT offers a free [virtual home energy consultation](#) to all. This is different from an energy audit as it is done virtually and can result in some simple and affordable next steps along with more elaborate areas to pursue. Please note VT Gas Customers will be directed to receive their consultation through VT Gas. Efficiency VT also has a full list of their available rebates [here](#).

EVT Mobile Home Replacement Program: This program offered by Efficiency Vermont can help you [replace your current mobile home](#) with a Zero Energy Modular home. Any interested homeowner can apply. Additional incentives are available for buyers below 80% of median income.

VGS (formerly Vermont Gas Systems) For Vermont Gas customers, [Residential Energy Services](#) offers rebates for weatherization and installation of high-efficiency heating and hot water equipment. VGS conducts an [energy evaluation](#) of your home as a first step to understand where your home is losing heat and identify ways to help reduce your energy costs and carbon footprint.

Weatherization Repayment Assistance Program (WRAP) provides eligible residential VGS customers the ability to [finance home weatherization upgrades on their utility bill](#). A participant can pay for qualifying weatherization projects like insulation and air sealing, as well as heat pumps and advanced wood heating systems, through a monthly

charge on their gas bill that can be paid back over time (maximum of 15 years). The cost of WRAP will stay with the meter of the home if the dwelling is sold or changes ownership.

VSECU/Efficiency VT Loan Program Vermont State Employees Credit Union offers Home Energy Loans for cold climate heat pumps, weatherization, *and* solar hot water installations. Loans are available at 0% interest rate for household incomes below \$90,000 for a five-year loan. Please note, the minimum loan amount is \$5,000 and contractors must be on Efficiency VT's [approved list of contractors](#). More information about the loan can be found at www.vsecu.com/personal/green-loans/home-energy

Inflation Reduction Act Funds Some of these funds should be available in 2024 and will likely be administered through Efficiency Vermont and the State's Community Action Agencies (CVOEO). Their use in Vermont will include expanding our existing incentives as well as two new programs not yet available:

- **The Home Energy Performance-Based Whole-House Rebates (HOMES) Program**-\$2,000-\$8,000 rebates for eligible households for whole-home energy saving retrofits and weatherization.
- **The High-Efficiency Electric Home Rebate Program**–Point-of-sale rebates for low to moderate income households for heat pumps, heat pump water heaters, electric stove and ovens and electric service upgrades. Up to \$14,000 total with up to \$8,000 for heat pumps, \$1,750 for heat pump water heaters, and \$840 for electric stoves.
- There are also tax rebates available regardless of income. [Here](#) is a list of tax rebates available currently for tax year 2023. Also of note, the IRA incentives will be *in addition* to already existing funding/incentives/rebates.

More information about the IRA roll out in Vermont is available on the Department of Public Service website [here](#). Rewiring America has produced a [handy guide](#) to the Inflation Reduction Act.

The Williston Energy Committee maintains a growing list of resources on their website at

<https://www.willistonvtenergycommittee.org/resources>.

If you have additional questions or need some help navigating these resources, feel free to reach out to the Williston Energy Planner and Energy Committee at energy@willistonvt.org. The Energy Committee will have an information booth at several events this summer including the Isham Farmers Market, Independence Day, EV Fest and others. Stay tuned for announcements on Front Porch Forum and on the [Energy Committee website](#).



WILLISTON WEATHERIZATION PROJECT

