

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Department Executive Office of Administration and Finance
Massachusetts Recovery and Reinvestment Office Press Release
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Patrick-Murray Administration Celebrates 10,000 Homes Weatherized Through Recovery Act

Weatherization Assistance Program on track to weatherize 20,000 homes across Massachusetts

GLOUCESTER - Tuesday, August 16, 2011 - The Patrick-Murray Administration today announced a major milestone has been reached, with 10,000 homes now weatherized through the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act's Weatherization Assistance Program, which is creating jobs, growing businesses and saving money and energy for thousands of Massachusetts residents.

"This important milestone means that 10,000 families across the Commonwealth are now saving money on bills, using less energy, and creating a greener future for the next generation," said Governor Deval Patrick. "This is another example of how President Obama's Recovery Act has stimulated local economies and created jobs across Massachusetts."

"Reaching this milestone reflects how the Recovery Act has supported the state's long-term economic growth," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray. "As we work to provide more affordable and sustainable housing solutions for individuals and families in regions across the Commonwealth, this is an innovative and cost-saving program, and we look forward to celebrating the completion of many more weatherized homes."

Secretary of Administration & Finance Jay Gonzalez today joined Congressman John Tierney and local officials at the home of Stephanie East, a single mother of two, whose home will be weatherized by local contractor John Call through Action, Inc., a non-profit community action agency serving the North Shore.

"I'm just so grateful that the Patrick-Murray Administration and Action, Inc. came together to offer this assistance when times became challenging," said East. "I had been dreading another winter in this house with our high heating costs, but now I know we'll be okay."

"Investments like these improve communities, save money and create jobs," said Secretary Gonzalez. "The Weatherization Assistance Program is one of countless Recovery Act programs that lay the foundation for the Commonwealth's long-term economic recovery."

The state's Recovery Act Weatherization Assistance Program includes \$125 million in funding over three years that will result in approximately 20,000 weatherized units upon completion. The average energy savings per Recovery Act-weatherized home is 35 percent, or \$700 per home annually for fuel oil, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

"The Recovery Act's Weatherization Assistance Program is getting the Commonwealth back to work and lowering energy costs for Massachusetts families at a time when retaining and supporting jobs has been critical," said Congressman Tierney. "These federal funds are strengthening our communities and reducing the financial burden on our families."

As of July 31, 2011, 129 private sector weatherization contractors and 21 special purpose electrical and heating contractors are currently working in the state's Recovery Act Weatherization Assistance Program. Nearly 3,000 individuals have received a Recovery Act-funded paycheck in the weatherization program so far.

"Nearly 3,000 individuals in 395 weatherization companies, housing authorities, community action agencies and others have received an Recovery Act-funded paycheck in the weatherization program," said Massachusetts Recovery & Reinvestment Office Director Jeffrey Simon. "The program ensures that contractors like John Call can grow their businesses here in Massachusetts."

"Growing the Massachusetts economy, creating quality jobs, and making the Commonwealth better for the long term have been top priorities for the Patrick-Murray Administration," said Secretary of Housing & Economic Development Greg Bialecki. "The ARRA Weatherization Program has been consistent with these goals by creating jobs and putting people back to work immediately, while helping Massachusetts residents and businesses save money on their energy bills for the long-term."

The Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD), within HED, is the Grantee for the U.S. Department of Energy's Recovery Act Weatherization Assistance Program.

"I am thrilled that the city of Gloucester is part of this event to celebrate the 10,000th home weatherized under this program," said Gloucester Mayor Carolyn Kirk. "The winters can get very cold here in the North Shore but thanks to the Recovery Act and Action Inc., more of our residents will stay warm and save money this winter."

"This program has not only provided badly needed work for private sector but also substantial savings in energy costs for more than 1,000 low and moderate-income families which will have a dramatic effect on their ability to make ends meet during the winter months," said Action Inc. Executive Director Tim Riley. "The energy savings for each housing unit will continue for years, long after the Recovery Act WAP program is over."

ACTION, Inc. was awarded \$8.5 million in Recovery Act WAP funding. Since the beginning of the Recovery Act funding period, ACTION has overseen weatherization improvements to 1,008 homes, working with 25 local contractors. ACTION, Inc. is responsible for conservation projects completed by its own Energy Services division as well as those completed by Lynn Economic Opportunity and North Shore Community Action Program. ACTION, Inc. has also been able to hire four in-house employees in order to complete this additional work.

"The Recovery Act's Weatherization Assistance Program is ensuring that residents of Massachusetts will experience energy efficiency savings and see reductions in their energy costs," said Department of Energy Resources Commissioner Mark Sylvia. "The average savings per Recovery Act weatherized home is 35 percent and that is a significant amount in terms of conserving energy and saving money."

The American Recovery & Reinvestment Act was signed into law in February, 2009 by President Obama. Massachusetts state agencies have received \$7.4 billion in Recovery Act awards since the start of the program. Of that amount, \$7.1 billion has been committed by these state agencies and \$6.6 billion of the committed awards have already been spent to support programs and projects across the Commonwealth, including 193 projects worth \$1.5 billion that are fully completed. The \$6.6 billion spent

is comprised of \$4.3 billion toward direct benefits, such as Unemployment Insurance and Medicaid, and \$2.3 billion to programs and infrastructure projects throughout the state.