



FEATURE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Santa comes early for these senior homeowners

In September, Carol Scribner of Hines began hinting to her husband, Elliott, that she wanted a new refrigerator for Christmas.

“Our old refrigerator was 30 years old,” Scribner said. “The light was out, some of the shelves were broken and it was running all the time. I was just sure it was going to conk out on us someday soon.”

Scribner had been surfing the Web to find a refrigerator that Santa could manage. The “outrageous” price tag for a new refrigerator was more than the retired couple on a fixed income could afford.

“We watch our pennies as closely as possible,” Scribner said. “There is not much left for extras.”

She stumbled on some information during her on-line search for a refrigerator about the State Energy Efficient Appliance Rebate program funded by federal stimulus money. After making some phone calls, she found that Oregon’s program, managed by the Oregon Department of Energy, provides reimbursement of up to 70 percent of ENERGY STAR appliances for qualified low-income homeowners.

“It’s not often that low-income folks like us get a break like that,” Scribner said.

Oregon Department of Energy’s Rebecca Sweetland, who manages the Appliance Rebate program, said that Oregon decided to target low-income homeowners for the program because they generally did not qualify for other incentive programs.

Oregon’s Residential Energy Tax Credit program has been available for several decades and is aimed at Oregonians who purchase premium-efficiency appliances and pay taxes. Low-income residents don’t participate in the Residential Energy Tax Credit program as they don’t have the extra cash for the more expensive premium-efficiency appliances and they can’t use a tax credit as they don’t earn enough to have a tax liability.

Scribner was “tickled” to find out about the reimbursement. They qualified as low-income and homeowners and got their reimbursement voucher. Now all they needed was to find the right ENERGY

STAR-rated refrigerator.

Carol Scribner “shopped til she dropped” on the Internet for a good deal. She got an ENERGY STAR-rated refrigerator on sale and got a 70 percent reimbursement from the Appliance Rebate program. Her final out-of-pocket expense was \$206.

The Scribners even picked up their new appliance to save the delivery charge to Hines that the store had quoted.

One of the program requirements is that the old appliance be recycled. Homeowners must show proof with their reimbursement voucher. This was difficult for the Hines couple as there are no appliance recyclers in Harney County. After some phone calls, the Scribners found a metal recycler who would charge them \$10 to recycle their old refrigerator and provide them with a receipt. It was all they needed.

“I love my new refrigerator,” said Scribner. She already has seen a decrease in her electric use on her Oregon Trail Electric bill.

“It’s just a blessing,” she said. And a nice early Christmas present that Santa could afford.

More details on how to apply for the Appliance Rebate program follow.

How to apply for the ENERGY STAR Appliance Rebate Program

The U.S. Department of Energy awarded the Oregon Department of Energy with \$3.6 million of federal stimulus funds from the State Energy Efficient Appliance Rebate program. On January 1, 2010, the Department began to provide eligible low-income Oregon homeowners with a 70 percent reimbursement (up to \$2,000) for ENERGY STAR heat pumps and furnaces purchases on or after January 1, 2010.

Effective July 1, 2010, the Oregon appliance rebate program expanded to include eligible low-income homeowners who purchase ENERGY STAR water heaters, refrigerators, dishwashers and clothes washers. Purchases must be dated on or after July 1, 2010.

Eligible Oregonians are those who own their home and earn less than 60 percent of the state’s median income levels (see below). The Department is partnering with the [Oregon Department of Housing and Community Services](#) which provides additional assistance benefits for those in crisis situations.

Available vouchers will be distributed on a “first-come, first-served” basis until funds are depleted or February 17, 2012, whichever comes first.

Interested Oregon homeowners can contact OHCS at 1-800-453-5511 (option 2, selection 4) to learn about the program and apply for a reimbursement voucher. After purchase and installation of eligible ENERGY STAR appliances, qualified homeowners may redeem vouchers for 70 percent of the purchase price, up to a specified maximum. The old appliance being replaced must be legally recycled (not re-sold or re-used) in order to receive rebate funds.

For more information, see www.ohcs.state.or, call 1-800-453-5511 (option 2, selection 4) or e-mail appliancerebate@hcs.state.or.us.

Rebate maximum amounts for ENERGY STAR:

- Furnaces – 70% up to \$2,000
- Heat pumps – 70% up to \$2,000
- Refrigerators – 70% up to \$700
- Electric heat pump water heaters – 70% up to \$1,400
- Gas tankless water heaters – 70% up to \$1,200
- Gas storage water heaters – 70% up to \$1,400
- Dishwashers - 70% up to \$400
- Clothes washers – 70% up to \$800

Income Guidelines for Oregon

Size of family unit	Annual income 60% of median	Monthly income 60% of median
1	\$22,321	\$1,860.08
2	\$29,189	\$2,432.42
3	\$36,057	\$3,004.75
4	\$42,925	\$3,577.08
5	\$49,793	\$4,149.42
6	\$56,660	\$4,721.67
7	\$57,949	\$4,829.08
8	\$59,237	\$4,936.42
9	\$60,524	\$5,043.67
10	\$61,812	\$5,151.00
11	\$63,100	\$5,258.33
12	\$64,388	\$5,365.67
Each additional member	\$1,288	\$107.33

*For October 2010-October 2011

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