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<http://www.beyondtoxics.org/resources/press-kit/>



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Low-income families qualify for free ductless heat pumps with IRA and local incentives, study finds

Beyond Toxics conducted a pilot study to inform community members of local and federal incentives and loan programs for upgrading electric energy appliances

Eugene, OR. – Environmental Justice nonprofit Beyond Toxics published a study describing the results of a pilot project to connect low- and middle-income residents with new, low cost energy efficient appliances through the Bethel Clean Energy Project.

Through the project, a cohort of 15 Bethel neighborhood households completed a series of three workshops to learn about clean energy options. Beyond Toxics and Eugene Water and Electric Board provided information on what funding is available to support home upgrades through local and federal incentives, including the Inflation Reduction Act.

Beyond Toxics found that most low- and middle-income households would qualify for free or reduced-cost ductless heat pumps and heat pump water heaters, in addition to home weatherization. These strategies will increase energy efficiency in their Bethel-area homes. These technologies also protect residents from breathing air pollutants such as wildfire smoke and industrial pollutants from manufacturers like the now-shuttered J.H. Baxter wood preservation plant, located directly across from this neighborhood.

“I wasn’t very familiar with clean energy to begin with, and I wasn’t thinking about it as a renter,” said a **mother who participated in the BCEP cohort**. “Solar energy sounds good but a heat pump is a much more effective way to tackle energy costs and efficiency.”

“Because of this program, many families realized they’re eligible for 100% of the rebates available,” said **Ajorie Arberry-Baribeault, West Eugene Community Organizer for Beyond Toxics**. “Cohort members are now seriously considering making the switch to electric appliances.”

“We’re excited to bring some hope to these families that have faced so many challenges because of the pollution harming the neighborhood in which they live,” said **Lisa Arkin**,

Executive Director of Beyond Toxics. “We hope this project encourages families to adopt non-fossil fuels energy options and take advantage of the IRA rebates available to them.”

Beyond Toxics plans to continue to assist these communities with accessing funds from the IRA and State of Oregon as they become available. Incentive programs like the Inflation Reduction Act will provide families with both the financial assistance they need to perform energy efficiency upgrades in their homes as well as reduce greenhouse gas emissions from outdated or gas appliances.

Beyond Toxics believes supporting these communities to upgrade their heating and cooling systems will lead to better health and wellness for these communities as well as reducing negative impacts on the climate.

Beyond Toxics can provide reporters with interviews and contact information for BCEP participants.

Read the full report online at BeyondToxics.org

Find more information on the project [here](#).

Beyond Toxics provides leadership to build a community-driven environmental justice movement for a thriving and just Oregon. We envision a society where everyone has equitable access to healthy food and clean air and water, and underserved communities are included in decision making processes that affect them. Together, we move beyond the damaging environmental practices of the past and collectively work to support and maintain ecological resilience and balance.