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IOWA WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM NOTICE 15-02

TO: Executive Directors and Weatherization Coordinators
FROM: Gwen Howe, Bureau of Weatherization
DATE: June 30, 2015
RE: Program Changes

Effective Date: **Immediately**

Freezers:

Because of changes in Energy Star requirements, freezers meeting that standard have become difficult to purchase. This issue was brought up several months ago when the Energy Star standards were changed, but manufacturers have not produced very many freezers to meet the requirements. So the Iowa Weatherization Program is changing the Energy Star requirement for freezer replacements.

As always, freezers and refrigerators must be entered into the BART program to determine which unit will work for individual clients.

Standards Changes:

6011 Refrigeration & Freezer Removal/Replacement second paragraph will be changed to read:

Refrigerator replacement model(s) must be rated as ENERGY STAR®. The ENERGY STAR® rating is not required for freezer replacement models unless charged to a utility contract. All replacement refrigerators must meet the UL-250 standard.

General Appendix Changes:

2.20 Freezer Replacement last paragraph changed to read:

Replacement freezers must be Energy Star rated only if charged to a utility contract.

Policies and Procedures Changes:

5.41 Energy Efficiency Assessment for Single-Family Dwellings

Freezer Replacements will be changed to read:

Freezer replacements are not allowed by DOE. Therefore, freezer replacements must be charged to the HEAP Contract or to a utility contract that covers the measure. All freezers located in intentionally or unintentionally conditioned areas must be metered and those readings are to be entered into WAMS. If the freezer will not be replaced, the reading and "no action taken" is to be entered into WAMS. Since there is not a look-up table available, freezers that cannot be metered are not eligible for replacement. Freezers may be installed when they are determined to be a cost-effective replacement choice by the BART Program. Replacement freezers must be Energy Star rated only if charged to a utility contract.

Fuel Switching:

Because of new DOE guidance on fuel switching DCAA is making immediate changes in the requirements for submission of fuel switching requests.

Standards Changes:

1022 Fuel Switching will be changed to read:

Situations may arise when an agency should consider changing fuels for the heating system or water heater that uses a different fuel source. This is referred to as fuel switching. Due to the complaints the agency and program may receive from a fuel vendor who has lost business due to fuel switching, consideration must be given to this decision. The reasons for considering fuel switching are:

- When it is more cost effective to replace the existing appliance with one that uses a different fuel.
- When it is necessary for health and safety reasons; usually when a gas water heater is back drafting or has spillage and the only solution is to install an electric water heater. This may only be done if all other options, such as moving the existing water heater or installing a power-vented water heater, have been considered and will not work. These situations must be reviewed and approved by DCAA.
- Client requests for fuel switching will only be allowed if cost effective.

Client Approval

If fuel switching is being considered, the agency must obtain client written approval before installing an appliance that uses a different fuel. The reason for this is to prevent the fuel vendor, who had supplied the fuel that is being replaced, from complaining the program is “taking his/her business away.” If a vendor complains, the client request is documented.

If a client requests the replacement appliance using a different fuel, the fuel switch may only be done if it is cost effective as demonstrated by either the NEAT/MHEA audits or the Fuel Switching Calculation form.

Fuel Switching

When determining whether it is cost-effective to switch fuels, all costs associated with the installation of a new system using a different type of fuel must be considered. For example, if ductwork would have to be added for a new furnace, the cost of adding the ductwork needs to be included in the cost-effectiveness determination. Also, the cost of hooking up the house to a natural gas pipeline needs to be considered. Program funds cannot be used to pay the cost of LP tanks or running gas lines to the house. These costs must be covered by the client or another source of funds. The cost analysis must include estimates of both installation and operation costs. Cost effectiveness of fuel switching must be shown by one of the following methods.

Heating Systems:

The NEAT audit will calculate savings for switching fossil fuel to fossil fuel. Therefore, any switching from oil to gas or LP to natural gas, etc., now requires a copy of the NEAT audit heating system input and all recommended measures be submitted with the Fuel Switching Request Form. The Fuel Switching Calculation Form is not required in these cases.

The NEAT audit will NOT calculate savings for switching fossil fuel to electric or vice versa. Therefore, the Fuel Switching Calculation Form must be submitted with the Fuel Switching Request Form. Agencies must use the current fuel costs from the NEAT audit in the calculation to determine cost effectiveness. If a utility company offers a special rate for using their fuel (lower electric rate for all electric house), the agency may use the lower rate only if it is documented by the utility and submitted with the request for approval. A copy of the clients' fuel usage documentation must also accompany the request to demonstrate that accurate BTU calculations were made.

The MHEA audit will calculate switching all fuel types. Therefore, agencies must submit a copy of the MHEA audit heating system input and all recommended measures with the Fuel Switching Request Form. The Fuel Switching Calculation Form is not required in these cases.

Water Heaters:

Both the NEAT and MHEA audits will calculate fuel switching savings for water heaters. Therefore agencies must submit a copy of the NEAT/MHEA audit input and all recommended measures with the Fuel Switching Request Form. The Fuel Switching Calculation Form is not required in these cases.

State Approval

The agency must receive approval from DCAA before making any fuel switch in regard to heating systems and water heaters. This is done through the use of the Fuel Switching Request Form, Fuel Switching Request Calculations Worksheet or the NEAT/MHEA Audit (whichever is applicable), and client fuel usage documentation, as appropriate. Forms are available on the State of Iowa Weatherization website www.weatherization.iowa.gov in the Members Only section as well as in the *Weatherization General Appendix*. Once the fuel switch is approved by DCAA, copies of the forms are to be maintained in the house file.

Policies and Procedures Changes:

5.31 Heating System Repair and Replacement paragraph 4 will be changed to read:

If justified, an existing heating system may be replaced with a heating system that uses a different fuel source. This requires the client's approval and approval from the DCAA. (See [Section 1022 of the Work Standards](#) for instructions on fuel switching approval.)

5.73 Fuel Switching will be changed to read:

Situations may arise when the agency should consider changing fuels for the heating system or water heater. This is referred to as fuel switching. Any fuel switching being considered, must be explained to the client and the agency must obtain the client's written approval before making the switch. For more information regarding fuel switching and documentation requirements, refer to Section 1022 of the *Work Standards*.

Electricians and Lead Renovators:

Because of the problems many agencies are having obtaining licensed electricians who also have the Lead Renovator Certificate and the fact that very little of the work completed by electricians disturbs lead paint, DCAA is changing the policy. Currently DCAA requires all weatherization contractors (including HVAC, Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing) have a Certified Lead Renovator on staff (usually the on-site supervisor). All other contractor employees working on Weatherization Program homes must be certified renovators, pass the 4 or 8 hour renovator course, or receive on-the-job training in lead-safe work practices by the on-site Certified Renovator.

The change will involve electrical contractors only. These changes include the following:

1. Electrical contractors will not be required to have a Lead Renovator on staff IF they are a sub-contractor for either a weatherization or HVAC contractor and that contractor is willing to serve as the "renovator of record" if needed. In this case, the weatherization or HVAC contractor must be willing to submit the bid on behalf of the electrical contractor, even if there isn't any work other than electrical.
2. Electrical contractors who are listed as sub-contractors by weatherization or HVAC contractors are required to have a Lead Renovator on staff if the contractors are not willing to serve as "renovator of record".
3. Electrical contractors, who are contracting directly with an agency, will not be required to have a Lead Renovator on staff IF the agency is willing to have the agency crew, auditor or inspector serve as "renovator of record" if needed.
4. Electrical contractors, who are contracting directly with an agency, will be required to have a Lead Renovator on staff if the agency is NOT willing to have staff serve as the renovator if needed.

If you have any questions, please contact me.