



CORPORATE SERVICES DIVISION

Environment

TO: Chair and Members of the Community and Corporate Services Committee
SUBJECT: EnerGuide for Houses Program

Report Number: CORPSERV14/05 Report Date: July 6, 2005
Author(s): Lynn Robichaud Date to Committee: August 3, 2005
Telephone: 905-335-7600 Ext. 7931 Date to Council: August 8, 2005
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APPROVALS: Department Head General Manager City Manager

To be completed by the Clerks Department

Committee Disposition & Comments table with 7 columns for status options

Council Disposition & Comments table with 7 columns for status options

1.0 RECOMMENDATION:

THAT council approve a change in the administration of the 2005 funding approved to support the EnerGuide for Houses program, making the home audit subsidy available directly to Burlington residents in 2005.

2.0 PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to recommend a change in the administration of the approved 2005 funding that supports the EnerGuide for Houses program for Burlington residents through the Halton Residential Energy Efficiency Project (Halton REEP). Staff recommend that the

approved funding be made available directly to Burlington residents instead of through a single delivery agent, the Halton REEP.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND AND RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:**

In 2004 council approved a \$25 subsidy for Burlington homeowners for home energy audits through the Residential Energy Efficiency Project (REEP) delivered by the Elora Centre for Environmental Excellence (ECEE), a non-profit organization. The subsidy was targeted to support 255 home audits through the Halton REEP. The regular price for a REEP audit is \$175 but with the subsidy, the cost is \$150 for Burlington residents.

Due to the success of the program, council adopted the following directions in December 2004 (refer to report CC-212-04):

*THAT Council support in principle funding for the Residential Energy Efficiency Project (REEP) in 2005 to be administered by the Elora Centre for Environmental Excellence in Burlington; and,*

*THAT the funding be subject to 2005 current budget approval and be in an amount not to exceed \$7,500 based on a subsidy of \$25 per audit and a target of 300 homes; and,*

*THAT the source for funding be considered by Council in the 2005 current budget within the Corporate Services – Environment cost centre.*

On April 11, 2005, council approved the 2005 current operating budget including \$7,500 to support 300 home audits through the Halton REEP. As of May 2005, the Halton REEP reached their 2004 target of 255 home audits. At the time this report was written, it was estimated that approximately 35 home audits would be completed by the Halton REEP as part of the 2005 target of 300 home audits. Therefore, approximately \$6,625 remains in the 2005 current operating budget to subsidize 265 home audits.

Recently staff have been contacted by two delivery agents, licensed by the federal government to service the Burlington area, raising concerns that the city is supporting one group over others. Currently, only those residents obtaining an EnerGuide audit through the Halton REEP qualify for the \$25 subsidy. A copy of a letter received by staff from one of the delivery agents can be found in Appendix A.

### **4.0 DISCUSSION:**

On June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2005, staff met with representatives of the delivery agents to discuss their concern that the subsidy should be universally available to residents regardless which agent they choose to complete a home audit. Some agents also raised the issue that the city's support of the REEP audit provided the perception to residents that the city guaranteed quality control.

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The purpose of supporting the REEP project in the past was to increase the affordability of an audit for Burlington homeowners, help raise the profile of the EnerGuide for Houses program in Burlington and reduce greenhouse gas emissions through energy efficient home measures.

Given the overall purpose of supporting home energy audits and the change in circumstances where other delivery agents have also expressed interest in working with the city to deliver the EnerGuide for Houses program to Burlington residents, staff are recommending the following changes to the 2005 approved funding:

- The subsidy be made available directly to Burlington residents for home audits instead of through the Halton REEP;
- Burlington residents would be required to apply directly to the city following their home audit;
- The audit must be completed by an EnerGuide for Houses home auditor licensed by the federal government;
- The city's subsidy is not valid with any other subsidy program other than the federal government's subsidy;
- Residents must provide city staff with a copy of the first page of their audit report, an invoice for the audit, and their tax assessment roll number;
- Residents must apply for the subsidy within 30 days of obtaining the home audit; and,
- Residents must apply to the city for the subsidy by December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2005.

#### **5.0 FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

Funding to subsidize the Residential Energy Efficiency Project for Burlington residents in the amount of \$7,500 has been approved through the 2005 current budget process. This report recommends a change in the administration of the program where the \$25 subsidy for a home audit be provided directly to Burlington residents.

Staff will work with finance staff to ensure that a streamlined process is set up to respond to individual residents applying for a \$25 subsidy.

#### **6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS:**

Supporting the federal EnerGuide for Houses program helps the city to meet its commitment to reduce community greenhouse gas emissions.

#### **7.0 COMMUNICATION MATTERS:**

Staff will continue to work with Corporate Communications to promote the federal EnerGuide for Houses program through the usual media outlets, including the web site, COBNet, the Environmental Corner and City Talk, as well as the EnerGuide delivery agents.

#### **8.0 CONCLUSION:**

Supporting the EnerGuide for Houses program universally will continue to meet the city's objectives of making the program accessible for residents, raising its profile, and reducing

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greenhouse gas emissions. Once funding for the subsidy has ended, staff will continue to promote the EnerGuide for Houses program to the community.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Robichaud  
Sr. Environmental Co-ordinator

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**Appendices:**

A – Letter from Trina Stewart, Building Insight (hard copy only)
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**Staff / Others Consulted:**

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**Notifications:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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