



Social Housing Energy Savings Program

Participant guide

JUNE 2025

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Purpose of the guide

This participant guide provides a comprehensive overview of the program, equipping you with the information needed to participate, including funding levels, benefits, eligibility requirements, and step-by-step instructions for each program component. Designed to support individuals and organizations involved in the provision and management of the social housing sector, it serves as a valuable resource for all stakeholders. Additionally, the guide answers important questions and provides key contact information, ensuring participants have access to the support they need.

Program overview

Helping housing providers go high efficiency

The Social Housing Energy Savings Program (SH-ESP) is designed to support housing providers to identify and implement energy-efficiency projects that can help reduce energy costs. This program aims to:

- Improve building performance
- Reduce energy consumption and costs
- Upgrade to high-efficiency equipment and systems
- Optimize the lifespan of equipment with quality installation

Why is BC Hydro providing this program?

BC Hydro recognizes that social housing communities play a crucial role in addressing housing needs, promoting social equity, and fostering community well-being. Our social housing program is a commitment to improving the energy efficiency of social housing buildings in B.C. by providing funding and support for energy studies and equipment upgrades.

The program is designed to benefit social housing providers, non-profit housing societies and Indigenous communities providing housing to low-income households.

Program eligibility

Is this program right for you?

The Social Housing Energy Savings Program is available to non-profit organizations, co-operatives and Indigenous housing providers that operate multi-unit residential buildings.

Who can apply

- a. Applicant must be a customer within BC Hydro service territory.
- b. Applicants must be one of the following:
 - Non-profit housing society registered under the *Societies Act*
 - Housing co-op registered under the *Cooperative Association Act*
 - Local/Provincial government housing authority, or registered charity organizations that operate social housing buildings
 - Governing body of an Indigenous community provided the housing is primarily for low-income households
- c. Individual tenants cannot apply to this program.

Building types

- a. Buildings must be existing and habitable year-round.
- b. Eligible buildings include:
 - Multi-unit residential buildings (e.g., high-rises, apartment buildings).
 - Side-by-side duplexes, row homes or townhouses with centralized Heating, Ventilation and Air-conditioning (HVAC) systems.
 - Mixed use residential buildings must have at least 50% of the total floor area as residential living space; areas used for commercial or other non-residential usage are excluded from the program.
 - Single family residential buildings, including single detached, semi-detached
- c. Single detached, semi-detached, row and duplex houses, are not eligible (townhouses that share HVAC systems may be considered eligible).

Eligible projects

- a. Projects that can apply for the program include:
 - Electrical energy efficiency upgrades & retrofits (e.g., lighting, HVAC systems).
 - Retrofits that result in net positive electrical energy savings.
 - All equipment must be new; rebuilt or reconditioned equipment are not eligible.
 - For rebates, all equipment must be within the specified Eligible Measures List (EML). See [appendix A](#) and [appendix B](#).
 - If measures are outside the Eligible Measures List, projects will go through the Custom Incentives pathway.
- b. Where only in-suite lighting and fridge upgrade measures are proposed, a minimum of 10 units or 25% of the total units, whichever one is lower, in the building must be retrofitted.

Ineligible projects

- a. Projects that are not eligible for the program include:
 - Fuel switching projects (e.g., from gas systems to electric)
 - New construction projects

Program offers and benefits

Maximizing energy savings while improving living conditions

The Social Housing Energy Savings Program (SH-ESP) is designed to give access to a broad range of energy savings options and measures to the social housing sector. BC Hydro will provide funding support to help you identify energy savings opportunities through opportunity assessment funding. More detailed exploration of the feasibility of upgrades to a specific system will be supported with feasibility study funding. Equipment upgrades can receive rebates and implementation support, or if the project requires a more customized approach, custom incentives are available. Offers are available for both common area (whole building) and in-suite measures.

Program offers

- Opportunity assessment funding
- Feasibility study funding
- Equipment upgrade funding
 - Rebates
 - Custom incentives
 - Implementation support

Opportunity assessment funding

Opportunity assessment funding supports evaluating energy-saving opportunities at your properties, focusing on potential improvements in HVAC and electrical systems to reduce energy consumption. This funding aims to identify high-level improvements for energy efficiency, helping you make informed decisions about retrofitting systems for energy savings.

Funding

Up to \$6,000 per site for opportunity assessment conducted by a consultant.

Feasibility study funding

Feasibility study funding supports comprehensive evaluations of various systems within buildings, including for both common area and in-suite measures. These evaluations cover mechanical and electrical systems and may also include structural reviews to support proposed measures. The goal is to guide retrofit projects by providing detailed analyses that identify the retrofit measures assess viability and strategies for improving energy efficiency. This is aimed at helping you make informed decisions about energy efficiency improvements and focus on retrofit opportunities likely to be implemented within the specified time.

Funding

- Up to 100% with a maximum of \$35,000 per site for comprehensive evaluations.
- Funding amount will be determined based on the scale and complexity of the study needed.

Equipment upgrade funding

The equipment upgrade funding offers support for comprehensive energy upgrades in buildings, including improvements such as heat pumps, windows, water heating systems, and energy-efficient lighting. There are two pathways available for equipment upgrade funding—rebates (for prescriptive measures) and custom incentives.

Rebates: Participants can choose from a list of eligible measures with available rebates for both HVAC/mechanical and lighting measures. Refer to the tables in Appendix A & B for Eligible Measures List (EML).

Custom incentives: For projects requiring a customized approach where measures are not listed in the EML, applications can be submitted through a custom incentive pathway. Measures can include lighting re-design with or without network lighting control and envelope measures. Incentives will be determined based on the measure type and the corresponding energy savings (kWh) potential.

Funding

- Covers up to 75% of eligible retrofit project costs, with a maximum of \$600,000 per site.
- Custom incentives are determined based on reduction in electrical energy consumption, measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh) per year, over the lifetime of the measures installed, up to a maximum of 20 years, and at the rates summarized below:

Custom measure	Incentive per kWh
Lighting redesign and/or advanced lighting controls	2.8 cents
HVAC and other measures (common area and in-suite)	4.8 to 15.0 cents*

*Evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Implementation support: This covers costs associated with consultant services for assisting with project implementation. It aims to ensure that projects are effectively managed and implemented, providing comprehensive support throughout the project lifecycle. Implementation support funding is available only in-tandem with a rebate or custom incentive application.

Funding

Up to \$11,000 per site to assist with various aspects of project management and execution.

Eligible activities

- Project definition and management: Establishing the project scope, defining requirements, managing project schedules, scope, and budget to ensure efficient project execution.
- System design: Providing expert guidance and leadership during the initial design phase when specialized technical knowledge is required.
- Managing procurement & tendering: Developing scope of work, preparing technical specifications, managing procurement activities for hiring contractors and equipment selections.
- Installation and performance verification: Overseeing commissioning, testing, and system performance assessments.

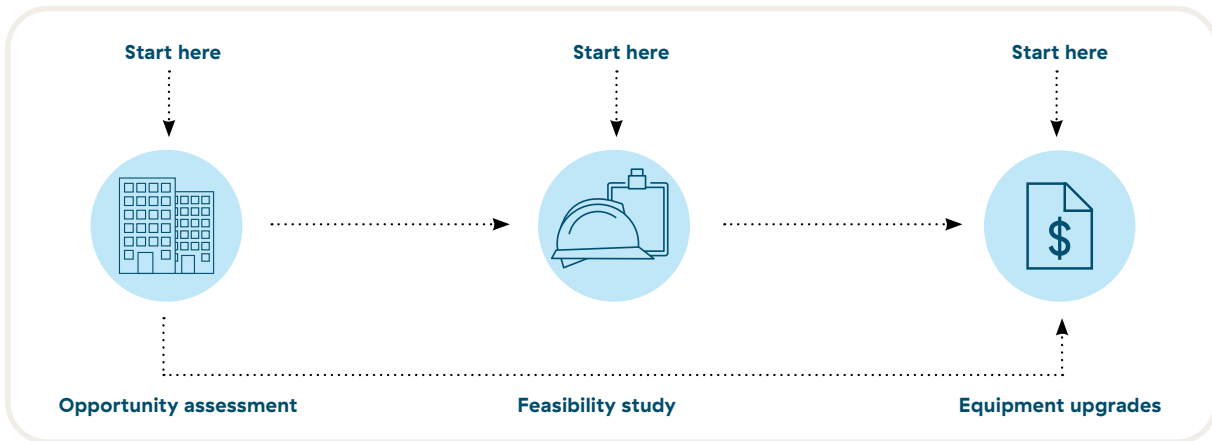
Exclusions

- Lighting projects and in-suite fridge projects are not eligible for implementation support funding.
- Projects costing below \$25,000 are not eligible for implementation support.

How does the program work?

Flexible starting points

You can select the offer that best meets your needs and begin your application at any of the three stages listed below:



Progression options

- ☐ Opportunity assessment → feasibility study → equipment upgrades
- ☐ Opportunity assessment → equipment upgrades
- ☐ Feasibility study → equipment upgrades
- ☐ Equipment upgrades

Note: All custom projects, except for custom lighting projects, must complete a Feasibility Study prior to applying for Equipment Upgrade Funding.

Funding availability

Funding will be provided on a first come, first served basis, subject to availability of funds.

Key account manager support

Engage with your BC Hydro Key Account Manager to determine the best starting point and receive guidance throughout the process.

Opportunity assessment funding

Provides support to evaluate opportunities to help make informed decisions about retrofitting for improved efficiency.

How it works?

a. Select a consultant:

- ☐ Select a consultant who is a registered member of the **BC Hydro Alliance of Energy Professionals** or work with an internal staff member at BCNPHA/BC Housing with appropriate designation.
- ☐ You can select other consultants to work with, but they must be registered with the BC Hydro Alliance.

b. Site visit and quote

- ☐ The consultant will visit your site/building(s), identify the assessment scope, and provide a quote.

c. Apply online:

- Submit your application through the **Conservation & Energy Management Hub (CEM Hub)** application portal.

d. Application review:

- Once received, BC Hydro will review your application.
- You will receive an approval notification to commence the assessment.

e. Assessment execution:

- Once the approval notification has been issued, the consultant can proceed with the assessment.
- Assessment results should be documented in the Opportunity Assessment Workbook (OA Workbook) and OA Report.

f. Submit documentation:

- Return to your online application in CEM Hub and submit the required documentation i.e. OA Workbook and OA Report within 90 days of receiving the approval notification.

g. Payment issuance:

- Payment will be processed once the OA Workbook and OA Report have been reviewed and approved; payment can be issued directly to the consultant if required.

Key requirements

a. Assessment requirements:

- You will have to submit an outline of the scope of work and the invoice for performing the assessment from your consultant.
- A completed OA workbook and OA Report; can be completed by an internal staff member at BCNPHA/BC Housing with appropriate designation or by an energy consultant.

b. Completion timeframe:

- The completed OA Workbook and OA Report should be submitted within 90 days from the date of receiving the approval notification.

Feasibility study funding

Provides support for exploring options and assessing costs, viability and the risks associated with retrofit measures.

How it works?

a. Select a consultant:

- Select a consultant who is a registered member of the **BC Hydro Alliance of Energy Professionals**.
- You can select other consultants to work with, but they must be registered with the BC Hydro Alliance.

b. Complete the Feasibility Study Proposal template:

- Work with your consultant to determine the scope of the study and prepare a proposal for the study. The Feasibility Study Proposal must be submitted in the template provided by BC Hydro. It is recommended to focus on scopes that are likely to get implemented within a few years.

c. Apply online:

- Submit your application through the **CEM Hub** application portal.
- You will need to upload the completed Feasibility Study Proposal template prepared by the consultant.
- If you'd like the payment to be made directly to the consultant, you will have to indicate it during the application.

d. Application review:

- Once received, BC Hydro will review your application and the feasibility study proposal.
- You will receive an agreement to commence the study after BC Hydro's review is complete. Work on the study cannot begin until after the study agreement has been executed.

e. Submit documentation:

- Complete and submit your Program Workbook and Feasibility Study Report (FS Report) signed and stamped by the consultant within 6 months of receiving the feasibility study agreement.
- FS Report and Program Workbook will be reviewed once received; changes or updates may be requested if required.
- Once the FS and/or Program Workbook has been approved, customers will need to submit the invoices related to the work completed.

f. Payment/reimbursement:

- Payment will be processed once both FS Report and Program Workbook has been reviewed and approved; payment can be issued directly to the consultant if required.

Key Requirements

a. Study requirements:

- A completed Feasibility Study Proposal with the scope of the study and cost estimates (based on BC Hydro provided template).
- A Feasibility Study Report signed and stamped by the consultant once completed.
- A completed Program Workbook.
- A completed energy calculation spreadsheet and/or lighting calculator.

b. Completion timeframe:

- Study must be completed, and both the FS Report and Program Workbook should be submitted within 6 months from the date of signing the study agreement.
- Extension requests should be properly justified and requested in writing for consideration in advance of the existing completion due date; extension request should be sent to socialhousing@bchydro.com.

Feasibility study types

There are 3 scope types of feasibility study:

Scope	Funding range	Funding levels and criteria
HVAC/mechanical	\$8,000—\$30,000	<p>Level 1: \$8,000—\$15,000; for projects with multiple common energy conservation measures (ECM) without structural considerations.</p> <p>Level 2: \$15,000—\$22,000; for projects with the following elements: integrated project development, evaluating multiple interactive ECMs, buildings with higher complexity systems (e.g. centralized heating and cooling system, HVAC system for multi-purpose spaces), or complex measures (e.g. heat recovery).</p> <p>Level 3: \$22,000—\$30,000; for projects that in addition to factors listed under level 2, involve multiple buildings per site with high energy intensity (e.g. long-term care facilities, facilities with commercial laundry/kitchen).</p>
Electrical	\$1,000—\$2,500	Level 1: \$1,000—\$2,500; for lighting only projects.
Structural	\$3,000—\$5,000	Level 1: \$3,000—\$5,000; for projects requiring structural analysis for roof-mounted, wall-mounted or parkade installations; funding may vary based on number of structural locations to be assessed.

Note: A site is defined as a single building or collection of buildings that share HVAC system.

Equipment upgrade funding

Provides support for implementing equipment upgrades.

How it works?

a. Select a consultant:

- Select a consultant who is a registered member of the **BC Hydro Alliance of Energy Professionals**.
- You can select other consultants to work with, but they must be registered with the BC Hydro Alliance.
- To be eligible for implementation support funding you must use a professional engineer for that scope of work.

b. Apply online:

- Submit your application through the **CEM Hub** application portal.
- You will need to upload the program workbook prepared by the consultant; OA Workbook, FS Report and product specification sheets are optional and may be requested when applicable.
- For projects with custom incentives, energy calculations must be provided for lighting/HVAC systems; for custom lighting projects, a completed lighting calculator must be submitted.
- If you are applying for implementation support funding, you will need to indicate it when you apply for rebates/incentives and fill out the appropriate tab in the Program Workbook.

c. Application review:

- Once your application is reviewed and approved, and subject to budget availability, an agreement will be created and executed.
- Customers may pre-order equipment after receiving a pre-approval notification from BC Hydro.
- Pre-approval notification does not guarantee funding; customers must not implement measures before receiving the signed agreement.

d. Project completion:

- Projects must be completed within 18 months from the date of agreement execution.

e. Submit documentation & update application:

- Update your online application and upload the required documentation (e.g., invoices, as-built Program Workbook, schedules outlined in your agreement) as proof of project implementation within 90 days of project completion.
- A Post Implementation Review (PIR) will be completed to confirm the retrofits/measures implemented.

f. Onsite inspection:

- Within 60 days of submitting all required documentation, an onsite inspection may be conducted to verify that the agreed measures were installed as proposed.

g. Incentive payment:

- Equipment upgrade funding will be paid out 50% up-front and 50% upon completion of the project once required documentation has been submitted; for up-front payment, you will have to provide documentation that demonstrates the project has started (e.g. a project charter, equipment quotes).
- You will receive the implementation support funding on completion of the project and approval of all the required project documentation.

Key requirements

a. Equipment upgrade funding requirements:

- A completed Program Workbook.
- Proof of project implementation (e.g., invoices, schedules outlined in your agreement).
- Energy calculations if implementing projects (HVAC) with custom incentives.
- A lighting calculator if implementing lighting projects with custom incentives.
- Proof of engagement outlining the activities performed by the consultant during implementation.

b. Completion timeframe:

- Projects must be completed within 18 months from the date of signing the funding agreement.
- Extension requests should be properly justified and requested in writing for consideration in advance of the existing completion due date; extension request should be sent to socialhousing@bchydro.com.

Glossary

1. **Non-profit housing:** Rental housing that is owned and operated by community-based, non-profit societies or local governments and regional districts.
2. **Co-operatives housing:** Housing where residents pay a nominal membership fee and jointly own the units and common areas as members of the housing co-operative).
3. **Indigenous housing:** Housing built and operated for Indigenous communities.
4. **Single detached dwelling:** Single dwellings that are completely isolated on all sides, including single dwellings linked to other dwellings below ground.
5. **Duplex:** Building with two dwelling units with each unit having its own entrance, often sharing a common wall, and typically situated side-by-side on a single property.
6. **Townhouse:** Shares one or more walls with adjacent properties but has its own entrance. It may be connected to adjacent properties on one side (end unit), both sides (middle unit), or back-to-back.
7. **Semi-detached dwelling:** One of two dwellings attached side by side (or back-to-back) to each other, but not to any other dwelling or structure (except its own garage or shed). A semi-detached dwelling has no dwellings either above or below it, and the two units together have open space on all sides.
8. **Row house:** One of three or more dwellings joined side by side (or occasionally side to back), such as a townhouse or garden home, but not having any other dwellings either above or below.
9. **Modular Housing:** A home that is built off-site, as opposed to on-site. These homes are often called factory-built, system-built or prefab (short for prefabricated) homes.
10. **MURB:** A multi-unit residential building (MURB) contains multiple units. Low-rise, high-rise apartment and stacked townhome buildings, three stories or higher with common area lighting and central mechanical systems are considered MURBs. A unit is a dwelling unit or non-residential unit located within an eligible MURB. A dwelling unit is a building or part of a building operated as a housekeeping unit; is used or intended to be used by one or more people; and usually contains cooking, eating, living, sleeping and sanitary facilities.
11. **Group Homes:** Group homes are non-licensed communal living arrangements where individuals with specific needs share personal care resources. These homes aim to enhance independence and foster responsibility in areas like household management, vocational activities, and social interactions. Typically operated by non-profit organizations, group homes can vary from single-family houses to apartment complexes, usually housing four to six residents.

Explore further

If you would like more information about participating in the Social Housing Energy Savings Program, contact your BC Hydro Key Account Manager.

For projects involving electricity savings only: bchydro.com/business (for BC Hydro commercial electricity customers and municipal electricity customers of New Westminster).

BC Hydro program information

Email: socialhousing@bchydro.com

Web: bchydro.com/socialhousingprogram

Appendix

A. Eligible equipment measures list & rebates

Eligible measure	Units	Rebate amount	Performance requirement
Central air source heat pump water heater, NEEA Tier 2 or 3	per suite served	\$3,500	NEEA commercial/multifamily heat pump water heater qualified product list with Tier 2 or 3
In-suite all-in-one air source HP water heater with supplemental electricity	per unit	\$3,500	NEEA Residential heat pump water heater qualified products list
High efficiency glazing (windows)	per square feet or rough opening	\$20 or up to a maximum of \$600 per rough opening	Existing glazing must be single glazed or double glazed with non thermally broken frames. Have U-Factor 1.53 W/m ² ·K or less, as indicated by the product label. Upgrade scope must cover the whole building.
Cold climate packaged terminal heat pump or single packaged vertical heat pump	per unit	\$4,000	AHRI 310/380 or AHRI 390 certified—AHRI certification directory. COP @ -15°C ≥ 1.5 (AHRI certification not required for through-wall packaged terminal heat pump)
Cold climate air source HP (mini-split)	per unit	\$5,000	AHRI 1230 certified—AHRI certification directory. HSPF (Region IV) ≥10, SEER ≥16 or, HSPF2 (Region IV) ≥ 8.5, SEER2 ≥ 15.2 ○ COP @-15°C (maximum capacity) ≥ 1.5
Cold climate air source HP (multi-split)	per head	\$3,500	AHRI 1230 certified—AHRI certification directory. HSPF (Region IV) ≥10, SEER ≥16 or, HSPF2 (Region IV) ≥ 8.5, SEER2 ≥ 15.2 ○ COP @-15°C (maximum capacity) ≥ 1.5
Central cold climate air source HP (multi-split or VRF)	per ton HP capacity	\$6,500	AHRI 1230 certified—AHRI certification directory ○ compliant with NECB 2020 Table 5.2.12.1-I performance requirements, COP @-15°C (maximum capacity) ≥ 1.45 ○ Outdoor unit located in common area serving multiple suites.

Eligible measure	Units	Rebate amount	Performance requirement
Rooftop HP MUA with supplemental electric heating	per ton HP capacity	\$5,000	AHRI 340/360 certified—AHRI certification directory ○ compliant with NECB 2020 Table 5.2.12.1–A performance requirements
Low ambient rooftop HP MUA with electric preheat	per ton HP capacity	\$6,000	AHRI 340/360 certified—AHRI certification directory ○ compliant with NECB 2020 Table 5.2.12.1–A performance requirements ○ HP operational down to –12°C with electric preheat
Variable speed drive for motors, <20 HP	per motor horsepower	\$ 450	Variable speed drive must be retrofitted to an existing motor that has not been previously integrated with a variable speed drive.
Variable speed drive for motors, ≥20 HP	per motor horsepower	\$170	Motor must be running a minimum of 2,000 hours per year. ○ Variable speed drive must control the motor's frequency in response to a variable load. ○ Variable speed drives used for soft start only are not eligible. ○ Must be certified for use in Canada.
Parkade CO – HVAC controls	per unit	\$550	Must be integrated with parkade exhaust fan(s) resulting in reduced runtimes. Replacement of existing sensor or additional sensor(s) are not eligible
Fridge 15 to 30 ft ³ – 3 to 5+ people	per unit	\$750	ENERGY STAR® certified. Existing fridge cannot be an Energy Star fridge.
Fridge 15 ft ³ or less – 1 to 2 people	per unit	\$400	
In-suite lighting (studio and 1 bedroom)	per suite upgraded	\$200	Hardwired lighting fixtures only
In-suite lighting (2&3 bedroom)	per suite upgraded	\$400	Screw-in base “A” shape lamp in not eligible
Common area lighting	per luminaire	See lighting offer table for detailed list of incentives.	Design Light Consortium (DLC) list when it is applicable.

*See lighting offer table for detailed list of incentives.

B. Eligible lighting components & rebates

Eligible measure	Rebate per unit up to	Performance products list
LED area luminaire or retrofit kit	\$332	DesignLight Consortium (DLC) list.
LED parking luminaire or retrofit kit	\$187	
LED canopy luminaire or retrofit kit	\$332	
LED exterior signage	\$20	
LED troffer/surface luminaire	\$136	
LED wall pack luminaire or retrofit kit	\$187	
LED high/low-bay luminaire or retrofit kit	\$306	
LED linear ambient luminaire	\$136	
LED hardwired downlight	\$68	
LED hardwired sconce	\$68	
T-LED lamp	\$15	n/a
LED PAR reflector lamp	\$20	
LED BR reflector lamp	\$18	
OS/DH fixture-integrated controls	\$30	
OS/DH stand-alone controls	\$68	