



METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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May 1, 2008CONTACT: Jeanne Saddler
(202) 962-3250**GREEN, GREENER, GREENEST:*****How to Use Economic Stimulus Checks To Benefit the Environment and Your Wallet***

Washington – Now that the economic stimulus checks are on the way, citizens wanting to save energy and money at the same time can turn those greenbacks into “green purchases” that help the environment and also get more green ---back!

Even if it’s not easy being green, for homeowners, it can be smart.

Instead of spending all of the check on gas, you could start car-pooling and buy a new programmable thermostat and an insulating jacket for the hot water heater that will pay you back year round.

“Even a few dollars spent on making our homes more energy-efficient is money well spent,” said David Robertson, executive director of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG.) “People forced to replace a household appliance that dies just as the stimulus check arrives in the mail, should remember to look for the “Energy Star” appliances certified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to help cut utility bills,” he added.

As the organization that studies ways to slow climate change, improve the region’s air and water quality, and develop clean energy sources, COG suggests the following ways to invest in energy efficiency. Each item is followed by estimates of the added cost of purchasing the product or service and the annual savings that could result. The informal estimates were computed by EPA and COG staff analysts and will vary by home size, climate region and local utility rates. Lifetime savings are for the life of the appliance or energy efficiency product.

- Replace several of the most heavily used light bulbs in your home with compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs. Added cost: \$10 for four. Annual savings: \$21. Lifetime savings: \$105.
- Replace failing refrigerator or dishwasher with Energy Star models. Added cost: \$75 - \$300. Annual savings: \$30 or more. Lifetime savings: \$525.
- Replace manual thermostat with programmable model and program it to lower winter temperatures and higher summer temperatures when the house is unoccupied. Added cost: \$75 - \$185. Annual savings: \$150. Lifetime savings: \$1500.
- Insulate hot water tank with insulating jacket from the hardware store. Added cost \$30. Annual savings: \$15. Lifetime savings: \$225.

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- Better insulate attics, crawl spaces, ducts; tune heating and air conditioning systems or obtain professional home energy audits. Added cost: \$300 - \$1600. Annual savings: variable from \$200 to thousands. Lifetime savings: hundreds to thousands of dollars.

COG is the association of 21 local governments working together for a better metropolitan region.

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