



National Association for State Community Services Programs

Weatherization Assistance Program

The U.S. Department of Energy’s (DOE) Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) was created in 1976 to assist low-income families who lacked resources to invest in energy efficiency. Borne out of the oil-crisis of the 1970s, WAP has become the nation’s largest whole-house home energy upgrade program. The Program operates in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Native American tribes, and U.S. Territories. Funds are used to improve the energy efficiency of low-income homes using the most advanced technologies and testing protocols available in the housing industry.

American Families

Since the inception of the Program, WAP has allowed over 7.4 million families to live in cleaner, safer, more energy efficient homes. These low-income families face a high energy burden, paying an average of 16.3 percent of income on utilities – more than four times what higher income households pay (3.5 percent). In many areas of the country this energy burden can climb to upwards of 50 percent. By reducing energy costs through weatherization, low-income families can spend more on other essentials like food and medicine.

- Over 7.4 million families served since 1976
- On average, WAP eligible households pay 16.3% of income on utilities – more than 4 times what non-eligible households pay (3.5%)
- Reducing energy costs means families have more money to spend on food, medicine, and other essentials

American Workers

There are approximately 8,500 jobs in the weatherization network, with many more supported in related businesses, such as material manufacturers and suppliers. Workers are highly trained and receive on-going instruction to further develop their skills. WAP is at the core of an expanding residential energy efficiency retrofit market and its training centers, training curricula, diagnostics, and installation techniques play an integral role in deploying cutting-edge technology to advance the wider home performance industry. WAP managers, trainers, and technical experts were key players in developing the Guidelines for Home Energy Professionals, a collaborative, industry-wide effort to establish work quality specifications, job task analyses, training program accreditation, and nationwide certifications for home energy efficiency retrofit workers.

- 8,500 living wage jobs are supported by Weatherization
- Workers are highly trained and make up the largest energy efficiency retrofit workforce in the nation
- These workers form a foundation of skilled individuals to support the growth of a private home energy retrofit industry

American Businesses

WAP supports the home performance industry, American manufacturers, and small businesses. The program supports thousands of local businesses, providing a platform for innovation in the energy retrofit industry and a market for local businesses providing workers, materials, or technical assistance. In 2011, more than 89 percent of the materials used in home retrofits were made right here in America. WAP has been a pioneer in deploying technology and facilitating greater industry adoption of more efficient and effective practices and tools. Through these tools, WAP continues to define residential energy upgrade work as a distinct and professional industry and as a desirable and sensible product for consumers.

- Thousands of local, American businesses are supported by the activities of the Weatherization Assistance Program
- The WAP provides a marketplace for innovation in the energy upgrade industry and supports the growth of American businesses

