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8/10/2010 4:02:00 PM

Energy help for homes

Residents in Williams benefit from stimulus funding to weatherize homes and reduce energy costs



Ryan Williams/WGCN
 Ryan Korte, with Green Model, checks air pressure inside the Herrera residence.

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Ryan Williams/WGCN
Ryan Korte evaluates the energy efficiency a vent in a Williams Housing Authority apartment.



Ryan Williams
Williams-Grand Canyon News Reporter

WILLIAMS - Keeping homes cool in the summer, warm in the winter and energy efficient requires some effort. **Weatherization** measures like repairing home cracks and leaks go a long way but they aren't cheap.

That's where the Northern Arizona Council on Governments (NACOG) and the Arizona Community Action Association (ACAA) can help.

Bob Baca, NACOG director of **weatherization**, said **weatherization** projects are under way in Apache, Coconino, Yavapai and Navajo counties. NACOG plans to complete 1,100 **weatherization** projects in a three-year period, all funded with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act dollars. He said 18 homes have already been weatherized in Williams to date beginning in March 2009.

"We'll be doing right around 50 projects total in the Williams area," he said. "Hopefully, we'll help these folks out."

In the most recent round of NACOG **weatherization** projects, crews have begun installing safety and energy-efficiency measures in low-income housing located on

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Sixth St. in Williams.

Debbie Fuller with the Williams Housing Authority said residents were encouraged to apply for assistance provided by NACOG.

"I saw that NACOG had this **weatherization** grant funding so we got in touch with them and applied for it and found that it was easier, because it is based on the family's income, for individual families to fill out the applications," she said. "That way, if they really weren't interested in having people in they didn't fill it out. The majority of everybody turned in their applications."

Fuller went on to say that the program is beneficial not only to residents but also to the WHA itself.

"Our capital funds are gone for the year," she said. "We remodeled some bathrooms this year but that's it until the next year."

The WHA receives Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding but that funding has decreased in recent years.

"The money being spent is going up," Fuller said.

Weatherization work will be completed on 21 of 30 of the low-income residences owned by the WHA at a total cost of \$63,000.

Miquelle Scheier, ACAA **weatherization** outreach program manager, said her agency works to connect residents with various agencies providing **weatherization** assistance.

"We provide materials, get the word out and set up opportunities for local agencies," she said. "This **weatherization** assistance program is a community action agency program but it's run by the individual agencies."

On Friday, a crew from Green Model, an efficiency evaluation and green remodeling company hired by NACOG, performed pressure seal evaluations on ducts sealed earlier in the week at the Herrera residence. Crews also install door and window seals, installed CFL bulbs and replaced an aging refrigerator at the residence.

Green Model owner Ryan Korte said he's built houses for approximately 10 years and started Green Model two years ago. He said the residences he has been renovating through the NACOG program are definitely in need of an efficiency overhaul.



Ask The Editor



Lynda Duffy

Williams-Grand Canyon News
Expertise: Editor

Q: *We are looking to buy property in Williams, AZ and want to know where to look online, or in your paper. Where do you post available properties and real estate housing?

A: Please look at the top of our website, where you will see our classified section. If there is property for sale or...

Q: *What is the latest on the railroad museum ?

A: Plans and fundraising efforts continue on behalf of the Arizona State Railroad Museum. Here is the latest news on the...

"For the most part, they're pretty bad," Korte said. "I would say on average for this program, and these houses are worse off than the ones we do in the private sector, we're able to make these residences 30 to 50 percent more efficient between the ducts and the whole house."

Korte said ductwork in a residence is most often the inefficiency prime offender.

"If they are disconnected, you're paying to heat the outside air," he said, adding that air quality is also often compromised. Holes in ductwork can force dirty air from attics and beneath a home into air circulated throughout the residence.

Baca said residents in the low-income sector often spend around 60-70 percent of their income on utilities.

"We figure if we can save them on utilities, that's either more food they can purchase or whatever else they need."

Adriana Herrera said in just a few days she has noticed a difference in her residence.

"We can tell that it's actually cooler inside and everything is running better," she said. "I haven't got my first bill yet but I'm pretty sure it will make a difference."

According to information provided by Scheier, 24,000 homes have been weatherized in Arizona through the Arizona **Weatherization** Program since 1977 with an estimated 436,000 homes still eligible for **weatherization** through the program.

For more information or to find out if you qualify for assistance, visit www.azcaa.org.

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