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Stimulus money helps weatherize low income homes in Arizona

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Stimulus money helps weatherize low income homes in Arizona

1:39





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TUCSON, AZ (KOLD) - A program that's funded by federal stimulus money is helping to weatherize homes in Arizona.

The Pima County weatherization assistance program is gathering local contractors and technicians to help low income home owners and renters "seal up" their houses.

The reason?

"It puts more money in people's pockets," Housing Specialist Jesus Duran said.

It also helps lower utility costs by improving the insulative value of the home, Duran added. Which in turn, lowers electricity consumption.

Duran said weatherizing homes can cut an electric bill from \$130 to \$45. Low income houses spend up to 30 percent of their income on utility bills. Other households spend about 5 to 6 percent, the county estimates.

For someone like Joyce Kotzamanis, that means a lot. Crews were busy working on her home Wednesday.

They sealed up leaky ducts, removed an old furnace and installed a new air conditioning unit.

Kotzamanis is grateful for the work, which cost about \$13,000.

"It's a God send," she said. "I hope more people learn about the program."

Arizona will receive over \$57 million from the federal government for weatherization projects through March 2012. Officials expect over 6,400 homes in Arizona to be completed during that time.

Since 1977, 24,000 homes have received weatherization assistance in Arizona.

Experts estimate more than 436,000 homes in the state remain eligible for assistance.

DO YOU QUALIFY?

Find out by checking out the Pima County Community Action Agency Weatherization Assistance Program at 520-243-6787.

Or the Arizona Community Action Association's page on their website that lists energy programs:
<http://www.azcaa.org/find-help/programs>.



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