



# New Jersey Board of Public Utilities

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **NEW JERSEY'S CLEAN ENERGY PROGRAM™ HELPS RESIDENTS STAY COOL AND SAVE ENERGY THIS SUMMER**

(NEWARK, NJ) – In an effort to help New Jersey residents save money as energy prices climb nationwide, the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) and *New Jersey's Clean Energy Program™* today announced they will be offering rebates for energy efficiency upgrades to central air conditioning systems this summer.

Since 2002, New Jersey has consistently had lower residential natural gas prices than the surrounding states of New York, Pennsylvania and Delaware. Despite New Jersey's proactive local efforts, the natural gas market has seen near historic high levels in recent months and residents will see additional rate increases.

June 1<sup>st</sup> marked the beginning of the energy year, with new basic electric rates going into effect and creating an average 10 percent increase for residential customers.

From now through the end of the year, consumers may receive a rebate of \$100 to \$150, when they install a central air conditioning system. In order to qualify, systems must meet the New Jersey *COOLAdvantage Program's* high efficiency installation requirements and system efficiency levels. New for 2008, the program also will offer a \$100 rebate for ductless, mini-split air conditioning systems. These systems allow residents to cool only a portion of a home where central air conditioning is needed, resulting in more efficient and cost-effective cooling.

"New Jersey's *Clean Energy Program* is rewarding customers who purchase energy efficient cooling equipment," said NJBPU President Jeanne M. Fox. "These rebates are one of our many program offerings that help residents become a part of Governor Corzine's goal of reducing the State's overall energy use 20 percent by 2020."

ENERGY STAR-qualified central air conditioners have a higher seasonal efficiency rating (SEER) than standard models, which makes them about 14 percent more efficient. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), an ENERGY STAR-qualified central air conditioning system can save an average of \$532 in operating costs and reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 13,092 pounds over the lifetime of the system.

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Those hardest hit by increases in electricity rates are low-income families. To make the cost savings of energy efficiency available to all New Jersey residents, the NJBPU offers the *Comfort Partners Program*. Under this program, income-eligible households qualify to have a contractor assess the energy saving opportunities in their homes and cost saving measures will be installed at no cost. The program also provides personalized customer energy education and counseling.

Simple ways to save even more energy at home this summer include the following:

- **Block out the heat.** Keep blinds or curtains closed during the day, especially on south-facing windows.
- **Keep air conditioners in the shade.** Plant trees or shrubs to shade air conditioning units, but be careful not to block its airflow. A unit operating in the shade uses as much as 10 percent less electricity than the same one operating in the sun.
- **Use a programmable thermostat.** A home doesn't need to be chilled all day to be comfortable, so save energy and money by installing an ENERGY STAR-qualified programmable thermostat to regulate cooling and heating systems. Save three percent on energy costs for each degree you set your thermostat higher than 72 degrees on your room or central air conditioner.
- **Replace an old room air conditioner.** ENERGY STAR qualified room air conditioners use at least 10 percent less energy than conventional models and save an average of \$75 in energy costs over the lifetime of the unit. Receive a \$20 rebate on the purchase of room air conditioners – from now until August 31, 2008.
- **Use ceiling fans.** Using ENERGY STAR-qualified ceiling fans can help cool your home without greatly increasing electricity use. Ceiling fans improve airflow and create pleasant breezes.
- **Light homes with a cooler bulb.** ENERGY STAR-qualified lighting produces 75 percent less heat, uses 75 percent less energy and lasts up to 10 times longer than a standard incandescent bulb. One ENERGY STAR-qualified compact fluorescent light bulb (CFL) saves \$65 and reduces carbon dioxide emissions by almost 700 pounds over its lifetime.
- **Use an ENERGY STAR-qualified dehumidifier and receive a \$25 REBATE.** ENERGY STAR-qualified dehumidifiers use 10-20 percent less energy than similarly sized units but remove the same amount of moisture. They have more efficient refrigeration coils, compressors and fans than conventional models. A 40-pint ENERGY STAR-qualified dehumidifier can save consumers \$28 per year. Over the life of the unit, that's more than \$300 in savings. From May 14 through December 31, 2008, you can get a \$25 rebate on the purchase of dehumidifiers that have earned the ENERGY STAR label.

- **Test your home.** *Home Performance with ENERGY STAR* can help reduce energy use and costs by up to 30 percent. By taking a whole-house approach to energy efficiency, contractors accredited by the Building Performance Institute (BPI) will look for opportunities to improve a home's insulation, heating and cooling systems, windows, appliances and lighting to increase energy efficiency, comfort, health and safety. Low-interest financing – or up to 50 percent cash back – is available for eligible measures.

For more information about incentives and programs offered through *New Jersey's Clean Energy Program*, visit [www.njcleanenergy.com](http://www.njcleanenergy.com) <<http://www.njcleanenergy.com>> or call 1-866-NJSMART (1-866-657-6278).

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#### About the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU)

The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities is a state agency and regulatory authority mandated to ensure safe, adequate, and proper utility services at reasonable rates for New Jersey customers. Critical services regulated by the NJBPU include natural gas, electricity, water, wastewater, telecommunications and cable television. The Board has general oversight responsibility for monitoring utility service, responding to consumer complaints, and investigating utility accidents. To find out more about the NJBPU, visit our web site at [www.nj.gov/bpu](http://www.nj.gov/bpu). <<http://www.bpu.state.nj.us/>>.

#### About the New Jersey Clean Energy Program

New Jersey's Clean Energy Program, established on January 22, 2003, in accordance with the Electric Discount and Energy Competition Act (EDECA), provides financial and other incentives to the State's residential customers, businesses and schools that install high-efficiency or renewable energy technologies, thereby reducing energy usage, lowering customers' energy bills and reducing environmental impacts. The program is authorized and overseen by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU), and its website is [www.njcleanenergy.com](http://www.njcleanenergy.com) <<http://www.njcleanenergy.com>>.