

https://theworldlink.com/news/local/coos-county-residents-eligible-for-discounted-heating-system-upgrades-through-energize-south-coast/article_d5f52f38-260e-11ec-bbb1-67c882a9ee47.html

Coos County residents eligible for discounted heating system upgrades through Energize South Coast

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An installer puts in a new heat pump as part of the Energize South Coast program. After offering discounted heating systems last year, Energize South Coast has returned to offer the program to Coos County citizens again.

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This fall, Coos County residents and small businesses have a renewed opportunity to learn about and purchase discounted ductless heat pump systems through Energize South Coast, a community-based energy efficiency campaign. In 2020, the program resulted in more than 50 ductless heat pumps installed in Coos County homes.

For homeowners and small businesses to be eligible for the program discount, the first step is to attend a free virtual workshop. Three remaining workshops are scheduled for October 14 and 27 and November 11. Participants will hear from installation professionals about ductless technology, learn about utility incentives, and have an opportunity to ask questions.

Chloe Eberlein of North Bend took part in the 2020 Energize program to upgrade from baseboard heat in her 960 square foot home.

“The baseboard heat was terrible, it was inefficient and so expensive,” she said. “I installed one ductless unit in my living room area,

and I didn't think it would be possible, but it actually distributes heating and cooling evenly throughout my house.”

Ductless heat pumps are highly efficient zonal heating and cooling systems that use 25-50 percent less energy than traditional electric heating systems and result in lower utility bills.

They have at least one head unit indoors, usually placed high on the wall, a compressor located outside and a refrigerant line connecting them. These systems are often easily installed within a day because there is no ductwork needed. They are known for being very quiet, for maintaining steady temperature control and for requiring minimal maintenance.

Eberlein says, “I’m telling everyone I know that they should take advantage of this program. It saves money on the installation, and it saves money down the road with lower energy bills.”

Energize South Coast is a limited-time group purchase program that reduces the regular price of a ductless heating system, simplifies the installation process for customers, and provides guidance on utility incentives.

Free, one-hour online workshops are set through November, and are open to Coos County residents, property owners and businesses. After attending a workshop, participants immediately receive the group purchase community discount of \$450-\$900 off the cost of the installation.

In addition to a discounted purchase price, area utilities are offering incentives and rebates.

Pacific Power customers may qualify for \$500-\$2,500 in cash incentives through the Energy Trust of Oregon, if upgrading from another electric heat source (except existing heat pumps); the standard incentive is \$500, with additional incentives for income-qualified customers (\$1,000), single-family rentals (\$1,000), multi-family homes (\$800), manufactured homes (\$2,500), and there is a regional promotion for site-built homes (\$2000). Other area electric utilities are also offering incentives and rebates, including Central Lincoln PUD, City of Bandon Electric and Coos-Curry Electric Cooperative.

With support from a grant from Meyer Memorial Trust, the nonprofits Rogue Climate and Spark Northwest have joined with additional partners, including the Coquille Indian Housing Authority, NeighborWorks Umpqua, Coos Bay Surfriders and Sol Coast Companies to promote the discount on ductless heat pumps to local residents and businesses.

Anne Cook, executive director of the Coquille Indian Housing Authority, is working to help members of the Coquille Indian Tribe to access the cost savings, saying, “The energize program aligns well with our goals to ensure that Tribal families have affordable, efficient heating and cooling in the long term.”

Program organizers are also directing outreach to manufactured homeowners and local landlords, distributing flyers in manufactured home parks and getting information to property owners through the Rental Owners Association of Southwest Oregon.

Local landlord Ron Kutch took part in the program in 2020, upgrading two rental properties—a duplex in Coos Bay and an apartment in North Bend.

“We should all be doing what we can to help save energy, but I also wanted to do what I can to keep my tenants comfortable,” said Kutch. “When I called them to inquire about how the new ductless system is working out for them, my tenant said she is ‘finally warm,’ and that their electric bill is a fraction of what it used to be.”

For information and to register for a workshop, visit <http://energizesouthcoast.org/>, or call 541-632-4432.