



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL KOOTENAY

Media Release

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For immediate release

New program aims to help homes and residents be more energy efficient

Nelson, BC: The Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) is pleased to announce the launch of the Regional Energy Efficiency Program (REEP). This program will make it easier for homeowners and tenants to make their homes more energy efficient, and will support the RDCK in achieving its climate action goals.

“The Regional Energy Efficiency Program arose from the RDCK’s commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve the quality of life for residents in all RDCK electoral areas and nine member municipalities,” said Karen Hamling, Chair of the RDCK Board of Directors. “Thanks to this innovative program, which will operate over a two-year period, we will be able to reduce carbon emissions in new and existing buildings, improve operational efficiency of buildings, and make it more affordable for residents to be more energy efficient.”

The goal of the program is to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions through retrofits to upgraded insulation, doors and windows, and heating and ventilation equipment, thus reducing energy consumption in both new and existing homes. REEP will be offered through two main components—a New Build/New Home program that will provide workshops and training for builders and building officials, and the Home Retrofit program, which will provide incentives for residents to conduct energy assessments and access rebates and benefits offered by utility companies.

Over the last two years, RDCK staff have developed and sought funding for a regional residential energy efficiency program, in addition to supporting the RDCK’s priorities for climate action. REEP builds on previous experience gained through the FortisBC’s Kootenay Energy Diet and Nelson Hydro’s Eco-Save program.

The Home Retrofit program is designed to reduce 309 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) per year (equivalent to the GHG emissions of 66 passenger vehicles driven for one year), and the New Home program will encourage a standard of construction, outlined in the BC Step Code, that will produce 1.03 tonnes of CO₂e per year (equivalent to the emissions of 440 liters of gasoline) less per home than a home built to the prescriptive path of the BC Building Code.

“In addition to significant environmental considerations, REEP offers both social and economic benefits,” said Sangita Sudan, General Manager of Development Services. “It is often people least able to afford high utility bills who live in the least energy efficient housing. By improving the quality of housing in the RDCK we are improving the quality of life for residents, as a more efficient home becomes a more comfortable home. As well, REEP will be an economic generator for our region—first by contracting to two local organizations, Nelson Hydro and Community Energy Association, and second by investing in the green building sector which will hire local energy advisors and builders.”

REEP is a partnership with all RDCK member municipalities, local utilities—BC Hydro, FortisBC and Nelson Hydro—Community Energy Association (CEA), and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). A grant from the FCM’s Municipalities for Climate Innovation Program (MCIP) provides 71% of the funding for REEP.

Community Energy Association (CEA) and Nelson Hydro are REEP’s primary partners. They share the role of delivering the REEP by providing the following services:

- Nelson Hydro will develop the Home Retrofit program to offer certified energy assessments, retrofit incentives and rebates and with the goal to penetrate 3% of the existing housing stock or 774 homes.
- CEA will develop the New Home program to offer education, training and workshops to builders and officials with the goal of 80% penetration. This supports the transition of building practice in our area to the new BC Energy Step Code, a component of the BC Building Code. More information: www.energystepcode.ca

Over the winter, CEA and Nelson Hydro will continue to develop the program. Look for workshops and more information in your community to come in spring 2019.

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