



Connecticut Department of

**ENERGY &
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION**

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

DEEP Grant Program Aims to Replace or Remove Inefficient Outdoor Wood Burning Furnaces

Grants part of overall effort to address health and environmental issues raised by use of OWFs

As part of an overall effort to address public health and environmental issues raised by the use of Outdoor Wood Burning Furnaces (OWFs), Connecticut’s Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) today announced a grant program that offers a financial incentive for the removal or replacement of older, less efficient units.

DEEP said that its new “Good Deals for Good Neighbors” program will fund up to \$4,000 of removal costs – and a total of \$7,000 for residents and businesses that remove and replace their current OWF models with newer and more efficient units. This switch can save participants in annual operating costs on their new unit, in addition to the incentive provided through DEEP.

The “Good Deals for Good Neighbors” program is funded with \$345,000 made available through the settlement of an interstate air pollution case against American Electric Power Service Corporation. The company, a Midwestern power generator, was found in violation of provisions of the federal Clean Air Act.

“This grant program is one of several steps we are taking to address health and environmental risks created through the improper operation of OWFs or by running older and less efficient units,” said DEEP Commissioner Robert Klee. “This program will provide grants to help home and business owners save money while making their neighborhoods more livable for neighbors and themselves.”

“The settlement we reached with American Electric Power – the country's largest electric power producer – included a number of provisions aimed at reducing air pollution and improving Connecticut's air quality,” said Attorney General George Jepsen. “It also included funding for the state to use for pollution mitigation efforts. This incentive program is a great and practical use of settlement funds that will directly benefit Connecticut residents and businesses. Newer outdoor

wood-burning furnace models are less polluting and more efficient. I am pleased that this program will result in real reductions in air pollution in our neighborhoods.”

Other steps taken by DEEP concerning OWFs include:

- Actively supporting adoption of strong federal emission standards for wood burning devices by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.
- Worked for passage of **P.A. 14-92**, which ensures that Connecticut’s requirements for the siting of OWFs – which include minimum setback from neighboring properties and mandatory heights for chimneys – will remain in place even if federal rules are adopted. Connecticut law also requires OWF operators to use only clean, dry, wood that has not been chemically treated.
- In cooperation with Department of Public Health, developed training materials and trained local public health officials on wood burning to increase response times to OWF complaints and ensure proper enforcement of the state requirements.
- Exploring the possibility of rules to restrict the use of OWFs on bad air days (days when air quality does not meet federal public health standards), while providing limited exemptions for essential use, especially in the agriculture sector.

Older, less-efficient OWFs emit wood smoke that impacts human health, primarily from breathing fine particulate matter. These fine particles are associated with serious cardiopulmonary health impacts and are a special concern for young children, asthmatics, persons with respiratory or heart disease, diabetics and the elderly. While increased heating costs are leading to increasing popularity of OWFs, some people are being affected by the nearby operation of units that are older, dirtier, improperly operated, or improperly sited. DEEP has received hundreds of complaints about wood smoke, mostly from neighbors of people operating OWFs.

Applications for funding are currently being accepted and will continue to be accepted through October 31, 2014. Connecticut residents who are interested in receiving a grant through the Outdoor Wood-fired Furnace Good Neighbor program should visit the [Good Deals for Good Neighbors](http://www.ct.gov/deep/OWFIP) webpage (www.ct.gov/deep/OWFIP) for specific details.

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