



Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) **Clean Burning Wood and Pellet Stove Rebate Program** **Fiscal Year 2022 Grant Program**

This FOA contains the Terms and Conditions for the Clean Burning Wood and Pellet Rebate Program.

Program Description: To help Maryland homeowners invest in clean energy, MEA provides rebates for clean burning wood and pellet stoves that displace electric, non-natural gas fossil fuel heating systems or old wood stoves.

Type of Program: Non-competitive (first-come, first-served)

Application Deadline: Applications will be accepted throughout the fiscal year (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022), however payment cannot be assured after funds run out.

Regulations: The Rebate Applicant, the clean burning wood or pellet system, and the information provided on this application must adhere to all requirements of the Program Clean Energy Grant Program Regulations. These regulations are found in the Code of Maryland Regulations, Title 14, Subtitle 26, Chapter 04 (COMAR 14.26.04). They can be found online at:

www.dsd.state.md.us/COMAR/SubtitleSearch.aspx?search=14.26.04.

In the event of a conflict between the regulations and this FOA, or other program documents, the regulations take precedence.

Eligible Applicants: Maryland homeowners may apply for rebates for eligible wood and pellet stove systems installed at their primary home of residence within the State of Maryland.¹

Eligible Activities: Rebates are provided for the installation of eligible wood and pellet stove systems by eligible applicants. In order to qualify for a Rebate, installed stoves must meet the following requirements:

- **Eligible wood (stick/log) burning stoves must meet both of the following requirements:**
 - Be EPA-Certified (based on the [EPA Certified Wood Stove Database](#)) 70% to be eligible for the CBWS program
 - Emit no more than 3.0 grams of particulate matter per hour (PM/hr)

¹ As outlined in COMAR 14.26.04.05.

- **Eligible pellet burning stoves must meet both of the following requirements:**
 - Be EPA-Certified (based on the [EPA Certified Wood Stove Database](#))
 - Emit no more than 2.0 grams of particulate matter per hour (PM/hr)

Program Budget: A total of \$1.35M in funding is available in FY22, with the funding shared with the Resident Clean Energy Rebate Program. This program, for solar photovoltaic, solar thermal, and geothermal systems, is covered by a separate Funding Opportunity Announcement. Awards are issued on a first-come, first-served basis to eligible projects.

Current funding availability for the Clean Burning Wood and Pellet Stove Program and the Residential Clean Energy Program is regularly posted on the [Program website](#) on the “Weekly Status Report” Excel spreadsheet.

If the number of eligible applications received exceeds the available budget, in whole or by funding source, MEA will receive and retain applications pending the availability and terms of additional funding, should it become available. Funding, as well as the award amount by technology, is **not** guaranteed for any application.

Minimum Criteria: To be eligible for an award, applications must meet the following minimum criteria:

- All stoves must be new. Any stove(s) that are purchased used, or otherwise obtained secondhand, do not qualify for a Rebate under this Program.
- The home where the eligible stove is installed is located in Maryland.
- The Applicant owns the home.
- The home is the primary residence of the applicant at the time of application.
- The home is not owned by an irrevocable trust.
- The clean-burning wood/pellet stove must displace electric or non-natural gas fossil fuel heating systems or an old wood/pellet stove.
- A property may not receive more than one Rebate per technology. MEA considers wood and pellet stoves to be the same technology. In this way, an applicant may receive a rebate for either a wood stove or a pellet stove for a property, but not both.
- MEA cannot offer Rebates to a property held in an irrevocable trust.
- Applications must be submitted to MEA within twelve (12) months of installation.
- The system must be documented as being paid in full.
- Photographic documentation showing the installed clean energy system must be provided.
- The project installation must not result in an “adverse effect” on a historical property.
- The application is complete, signed, dated, and contains the homeowner applicant’s federal tax identification number;
- In order to be eligible for this Program, installations must show proof of a passed final inspection if a permit is required by the county (or jurisdiction having authority) where the installations have taken place. In order to qualify for a Rebate, installed wood stoves must be EPA certified and emit no more than 3.0 grams of particulate matter per hour (PM/hr).
- In order to qualify for a Rebate, installed pellet stoves must be EPA certified and emit no more than 2.0 grams of particulate matter per hour (PM/hr).

Review Process: Subject to Program funding availability, the application is reviewed for completeness. Complete applications are checked against the minimum criteria and if found to satisfy the criteria, the project is approved, invoiced and paid.

Partial awards: Partial awards are not possible under the Program.

Required Application Documents: In addition to the documents listed below, MEA reserves the right to require additional documentation to demonstrate compliance with any program requirements.

- Applications that are submitted in paper shall include the following documents:
 - signed and dated paper application;
 - documentation showing final inspection for all permits required by the Authority Having Jurisdiction;
 - documentation showing the installed system has been paid for in full;
 - photographic documentation showing the installed system; and,
 - documentation showing property ownership and primary residency.

Additional information is provided in the Program Specific Section.

Note: If documentation showing property ownership and primary residency is not provided, as a courtesy MEA may try to look up this information using the Maryland State Department of Assessment and Taxation (SDAT) Real Property Database (<https://sdat.dat.maryland.gov/RealProperty/Pages/default.aspx>) to enable the application review to proceed. If the SDAT information does not show property ownership and primary residency information that matches the information on the application, the application will not be able to be processed until necessary documentation is provided.

Submission Instructions: The Program application can be downloaded and printed out from <https://energy.maryland.gov/residential/Pages/incentives/woodstoves.aspx>. After completing and signing the document, the complete application (to include all supporting documents) can be mailed to MEA at the following address:

Maryland Energy Administration
Attn: Clean Burning Wood and Pellet Stove Program
1800 Washington Blvd. Suite 755
Baltimore, MD 21230

MEA is also able to provide an option to allow submission of an application electronically through Virtru, an [encrypted email option used by the State of Maryland](#). If you are interested in pursuing this method of submission, please send an email indicating your interest in doing so to cerp.mea@maryland.gov. **Please do not attach your application to this initial email.** Please indicate your first and last name, your zip code, as well as your email address, in the body of the email. Someone from MEA will then contact you with more information about how to submit your application securely via Virtru.

Once MEA has received an application, the applicant can track the application receipt and status by checking the [Weekly Status Report](#) on the Program website, which is normally updated once per week.

Program Specific Requirements:

1. Property Requirements

To be eligible for a Residential Clean Energy Rebate, the property on which the clean energy system has been installed must meet the following requirements:

A. Second homes, recreational vehicles, and recreational properties do not qualify for Residential Clean Energy Rebates. Examples of a “recreational property” include recreational vehicles (RVs) and boats.

B. Residential Clean Energy Rebate may be issued for a property which is leased by the Rebate Applicant only if the homeowner is an eligible co-applicant.

C. A property held in an irrevocable trust is not eligible. If a property is held in a revocable trust, the applicant must have the right to remove the property from the trust for a project to be eligible.

D. Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) - A rebate will not be awarded for a project that is deemed to have an adverse effect on the historic character of a historical property or district, as determined by the Maryland Historical Trust. Questions on this subject can be directed to MEA’s historic preservation specialist (410-537-4083 or fred.shoken@maryland.gov).

2. Application Requirements

A. **Application Timeframe** - A Residential Clean Energy Rebate Application shall be submitted only after the clean energy system has been installed, paid in full, and has passed all final inspections required by the County or local permitting authority. Applications received for incomplete systems, or for systems without the required permit documentation, will not be considered. *Note: For pellet and wood-burning stoves, please coordinate permitting and inspections responsibilities with your selected installer to ensure the required permits are obtained and the required inspections occur.*

B. **Application Deadline** - A Residential Clean Energy Rebate Application must be submitted to MEA no more than twelve (12) months from the date that the clean energy system is installed, paid in full, and has passed all final inspections required by the County or local permitting authority. This date is considered the Project End Date. With good cause and at its sole discretion, MEA may extend this date on a case-by-case basis.

C. **Supporting Documentation** - The following supporting documents must be included with the Rebate Application and meet the specified requirements:

(1) Final Inspection Documentation - Documentation of passed final inspections for all permits required by the County or local permitting authority must be provided. Acceptable documentation includes photos or copies of final inspection stickers, copies of inspection reports, copies of certificates of use and occupancy, and printouts from online permit inquiry systems provided by County or local permitting authorities. The Applicant is responsible for contacting the County or local permitting office for the jurisdiction in which you reside to obtain permitting requirements.

(2) Payment Documentation - Documentation that the clean energy system has been paid in full by the applicant must be provided. Acceptable documentation is in the form of \$0.00 balance itemized invoices from installation contractors and/or vendors. If a \$0.00 balance itemized invoice is not available, MEA will accept receipts or letters from installation contractors and vendors indicating a \$0.00 balance, with itemized proposals. If this documentation is not available, alternative documentation will be considered by MEA on a case-by-case basis.

(3) Photo Documentation of the Clean Energy System - Photo documentation of the completed Clean energy system must be provided.

(4) Property Ownership and Primary Residence Documentation- For this Program, property ownership and primary residence are determined initially using the State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) Real Property database. To enable this review, applicants can provide a [screenshot or copy of the SDAT Real Property Data](#) information indicating that the Rebate Applicant is a listed property owner and primarily resides at the property.^{2,3}

(i) If the property is the Rebate Applicant's primary residence, but the SDAT Real Property Data form incorrectly indicates that the property is not the Applicant's primary residence, a copy of the Rebate Applicant's Maryland driver's license/photo ID or Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) change of address card listing the installation property as the Applicant's residence may be provided to document primary residency at the property. For security reasons, MEA requests that Rebate Applicants redact social security numbers and driver's license numbers before submission of copies of photo identification to MEA.

(ii) If a Rebate Applicant is the property owner, but the Real Property Data form does not list the Rebate Applicant as a property owner, a copy of the Rebate Applicant's Maryland driver's license/photo ID or MVA change of address card may be provided along with alternative property ownership documentation. Alternative property ownership documentation will be determined by MEA on a case-by-case basis (and may include title, deed or sales agreement documentation). For security reasons, MEA requests that Rebate Applicants redact social security numbers and driver's license numbers before submission of copies of photo identification to MEA.

(iii) Active Duty Military Service - If a Rebate Applicant is a member of the military with active duty status who owns a residential property in the State of Maryland that serves as his or her primary residence, but whose permanent residence is located within another state, he or she must provide a copy of the Real Property Data form indicating ownership of the property (or alternative ownership documentation determined by MEA on a case-by-case basis if the Real Property Data form does not list the Rebate Applicant as a property owner), a copy of his or her military ID, a copy of his or her driver's license, and a copy of a utility bill for

² <https://sdat.dat.maryland.gov/RealProperty/Pages/default.aspx>

³ The SDAT Real Property Data form is not the same as a Real Property Tax bill.

the property. If a spouse or other property resident is listed on the utility bill, alternative documentation will be determined by MEA on a case-by-case basis. For security reasons, MEA requests that Rebate Applicants redact social security numbers and driver's license numbers before submission of copies of photo identification to MEA.

3. System Installers

A. Maryland Authorized Business - Any contractor utilized to perform a system installation must be incorporated or registered to do business in the State of Maryland, possess all licenses and certifications required by all applicable Federal, State, and local laws and regulations, and be in good standing with the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation.

B. MEA strongly encourages the applicant to use a contractor who is National Fireplace Institute (NFI) certified.

C. Any self-installation must still be permitted and inspected as required by the Authority Having Jurisdiction (e.g., the County, the City).

4. **MISSING INFORMATION POLICY**

- If required information or attachments are missing from a Rebate application, or the application or attachments present information which requires further clarification, MEA will notify the Rebate Applicant in writing (via email or letter).
- If a response from the Rebate Applicant or his or her Installation Contractor is not received within fourteen (14) calendar days of the date on the MEA correspondence, MEA will send a final warning letter through the U.S. Mail to the Rebate Applicant requesting the missing information.
- If no response from the Rebate Applicant or Installation Contractor is received within fourteen (14) calendar days of the date on the final warning letter, the application for a Residential Clean Energy Rebate will be cancelled. Rebate Applicants whose applications are cancelled for lack of response may reapply as long as the new application is submitted within twelve (12) months of the Project End Date.

5. Use of Personal Information

In accordance with Section 4-501(c) (3) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, MEA is required to advise Applicants of the following:

A. The information being requested by the Application is necessary to document the completion of the project and to ensure installation of a qualifying system.

B. Failure to provide all required information will result in cancellation of your Rebate application.

- C. Upon submission for payment, some of this information will be provided to other agencies of the State to process the payment of the Rebate.
- D. Your name, project information (e.g. technology, system capacity) and the status of your Rebate request may be publicly accessible on our website.
- E. Unless otherwise provided by law or court order, portions of the information provided by you may be subject to disclosure upon request for inspection under Maryland's Public Information Act.
- F. As set forth in Section 4-502 of the General Provisions Article, you have the right to inspect, amend, or correct your personal record as maintained by the Rebate Program.

6. Tax Status of Residential Clean Energy Rebates

MEA does not provide tax information or tax advice. Questions should be directed to a qualified tax professional.

7. Disclaimer

Any statement made by an individual who is not an employee of MEA regarding Rebate eligibility requirements, Rebate amounts, or any other information pertaining to the Clean Burning Wood and Pellet Stove Program is not endorsed by MEA and should not be taken as fact. Only MEA may authorize a Clean Energy Rebate after reviewing the Application Package.

If you believe that an individual has made false claims about the Rebate Program, or any other Rebate programs provided by MEA, please notify MEA by calling (410) 537-4000 or sending an email to DLInfo_MEA@maryland.gov.

Questions can be directed to [Garry.aime@maryland.gov and 443-306-8149].