

Home Energy Navigator Program Launched to Help Guide RDN Residents Through Home Energy Upgrade Process

The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) has launched the Home Energy Navigator program. Designed to streamline home energy upgrades in duplexes, townhomes and single-family homes, the program's emphasis is on changing from fossil fuel to electric heating/cooling systems and providing unbiased advice to homeowners to help them reach their home upgrade goals within their budget. This free program, open to all RDN municipal and electoral area residents, will make it easier to go through the home upgrade process and determine which government and utility rebates are available.

Through the program, independent experts will answer questions, provide support and give local, objective advice and guidance to residents. For example, they will provide:

- Advice on home upgrades that can meet a resident's goals and budget.
- Guidance without any pressure to proceed with upgrades.
- Recommendations if other upgrades should be completed before installing a heat pump.
- Assistance in reviewing and comparing contractor quotes to help residents make informed choices.
- Advice as to which rebates and other financial programs are available for the proposed upgrades.
- Guidance on required documents and rebate application deadlines.

"We've heard from residents that they're interested in upgrading their home but are unsure about how to do so. In addition to the expert advice available, the program will reduce confusion and save time for residents through access to a virtual home energy consultation, ongoing customized support, online resources, webinars, and workshops," said Vanessa Craig, RDN Chair. "These services will help make home energy upgrades more accessible to RDN residents who need extra assistance navigating this complex process."

Buildings (commercial, institutional and residential) account for 19 per cent of community greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the RDN. Residential buildings account for 70 per cent of those emissions. The RDN's Climate Action Technical Advisory Committee recommended providing additional support to residents for home energy upgrades which, in turn, will help the region get closer to lowering its GHG emissions to 80 percent below 2007 levels by 2050.

The Home Energy Navigator Program is being administered by City Green Solutions, a non-profit, on behalf of the RDN. The program, already in place at the City of Vancouver and the Capital Regional District, will begin as a pilot program in the RDN and support approximately 50 homes across the region. The program, funded in part from the Provincial Local Government Climate Action Program, will expand if deemed successful based on program outcomes and as ongoing funding allows. For more information and to register, visit homeenergynav.ca/rdn or call toll-free 1-866-381-9995.

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