Clean HEET Program

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Clean Heating Efficiently with Electric Technology (Clean HEET) Program
www.baaqmd.gov/WoodSmokeGrant

The Bay Area Air District (Air District) developed the Clean HEET Program (Program) to reduce the cost of replacing qualifying wood-burning devices with electric heat pumps, reducing wood smoke and improving air quality.

APPLICATIONS

1. ***How do I apply?***

   Applications are accepted online, through the 'Apply Now' link at www.baaqmd.gov/WoodSmokeGrant
   Please see the 'Resources' Section of the webpage for the application guide and additional helpful documents.

2. ***Who can apply?***

   All Bay Area owners of a residential property may apply. The home must have an Assessor Parcel Number (APN) and be located within the Air District boundaries. The applicant must be the legal homeowner.

3. ***Is this program first-come, first-served?***

   Applications are reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis with priority being given to Priority Projects for homeowners that are the most impacted by air pollution.

   The Air District considers the following factors when determining Priority Projects:

   - Location in the AB617 communities of West Oakland, East Oakland, Richmond-San Pablo, and Bayview Hunters Point/Southeast San Francisco
   - Location in disadvantaged and low-income communities identified by California's Climate Investments Priority Populations Mapping tool
   - Projects replacing the oldest, dirtiest wood-burning devices based on the manufacture year of the existing device
   - Close proximity to sensitive receptors, such as schools and hospitals.

   Complete applications are processed in the order they are received except in cases where non-priority projects must be placed on a waitlist if funding is oversubscribed. If necessary, applicants with non-priority projects will be put on a waitlist and will be contacted if additional funding becomes available. Although the Air District may process Priority Projects first, we encourage and welcome Clean HEET applications from all eligible homeowners in the Bay Area jurisdiction.

4. ***Which internet browser should I use to access the application portal?***

   It is recommended that applicants use one of the following internet browsers:

   Google Chrome
   Microsoft Edge
   Mozilla Firefox
   Apple Safari 13 and later

5. ***I don't have internet access; can I still apply for funding?***

   Yes, applicants that do not have access to the internet may request a paper application by calling 415-749-5195 or by mail at:

   ATTN: SID/Clean HEET Program
   375 Beale Street, Suite 600
   San Francisco, CA 94105

Please note, communications via mail may be delayed multiple weeks. Applicants that do not have internet access are encouraged to work with friends/family or use free library computers to access the online application portal for ease of application submittal and project follow-up.

6. ***What is considered a "significant source of heat"?***

   For the purposes of the Clean HEET Program, applicants must use their wood burning devices as a significant source of heat in order to be eligible. We define a significant source of heat as a device that burns at least the equivalent of 0.1 cord, or 12 cubic feet, of firewood (or pellets) per year for the purposes of heating the home (not cooking).

7. ***What is a cord of wood?***

   A cord of wood is a measurement of dry volume used to measure firewood. It is equal to 128 cubic feet (3.62 meters) of stacked wood. This would be a stacked pile of wood of roughly 4 feet (122 cm) high, 8 feet (244 cm) wide, and 4 feet (122 cm) deep or roughly the size of a compact car.

8. ***I'm trying to find a contractor to remove my wood stove or seal my fireplace, but nobody will do the job. How can I find someone qualified to do this work?***

   The Air District requires that Program Participants use contractors licensed by the California Contractor State License Board (CSLB) for the work they are performing.

   Generally, for projects involving removal of an existing stove or fireplace and installation of a heat pump, if the removal of the stove or sealing of the fireplace is part of the installation of the HVAC equipment, a contractor with a *C-20 HVAC* license is authorized by the CSLB to do the removal. Depending on the scope of your project, a contractor with a *B-General* license may also be licensed to do the work. At the time you are interviewing contractors for quotes, make sure you let them know that in addition to the installation of a heat pump, the Clean HEET Program requires you to remove or seal your wood burning device.

   Depending on the specific work that needs to be performed for your project, additional types of licenses may be required, such as a *C-29 Masonry* or *C-10 Electrical* license. Applicants may need to hire more than one licensed contractor.

   For projects involving decommission-only, applicants may contact contractors with *B – General* licenses to remove wood stoves or inserts, and contractors with *C-29 - Masonry* licenses to seal open hearth fireplaces.

   Potential contractors can check in with the CLSB to be sure their license permits them to do the proposed work. Contractors will be required to fill out a *Contractor Certification Form* provided by the Air District, and applicants will be required to submit the completed form along with their reimbursement request.

   You can find contractors with this license using the CSLB tool located here:
   https://www.cslb.ca.gov/onlineservices/checklicenseII/checklicense.aspx

PROJECT OPTIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

9. ***I already completed or started work on my project. Can I apply for funding?***

   No, applicants who have had any work related to their project done before the Air District issues a *Notice to Proceed* are not eligible for funding. Work includes, but is not limited to, placing a deposit or work order for equipment or with a contractor, purchasing or ordering equipment, or beginning physical work.

10. ***What types of projects are eligible for funding?***

    Funding is available for the two following project categories:

    - **Replacement with an Electric Heat Pump**

      Replace an existing wood stove, wood-burning fireplace insert, pellet stove, pellet-burning fireplace insert, or open-hearth fireplace with an electric heat pump. Existing devices must be indoors, operational, older than 2020 or 2015 (depending on device type), and must burn wood or pellets for heating purposes. They must be used as a significant source of heat in the home. Outdoor wood-burning devices and stoves that are used for cooking (or any purpose other than heating) are ineligible for funding.

Replacement devices must be permanently installed ducted or ductless electric heat pump systems.

- **Decommission-Only**

  Removal and disposal of a wood-burning device without installing a replacement device. Only uncertified wood stoves, uncertified wood-burning fireplace inserts, and open-hearth fireplaces qualify for decommission-only funding. Existing devices must be used as a significant source of heat in the home. Outdoor wood-burning devices and stoves that are used for cooking (or any purpose other than heating) are ineligible for funding.

11. ***What are electric heat pumps?***

    Electric heat pumps are an energy-efficient alternative to furnaces and air conditioners. They use electricity to move heat between the inside and outside of a home. In the wintertime, a heat pump uses efficient heat exchange technology to move warm air from the outside to the inside of your home, and in the summertime it moves warm air from the inside to the outside of your home. To learn more about electric heat pumps, please visit https://www.energystar.gov/products/ask-the-experts/how-does-heat-pump-work.

12. ***If I just want to seal my chimney, can I apply?***

    Yes, funding is available to permanently seal or remove wood-burning fireplaces that are used as a significant heat source for the home. Fireplace sealing must involve: 1) installing a chimney cap or permanent weather-proof seal to the flue, and 2) sealing the fireplace opening with materials such as tile, drywall, or another permanent alternative. Temporary methods, such as a balloon insert in the chimney or fireplace plug, do not meet the requirements.

13. ***I have an outdoor fireplace or fire pit / a gas furnace / wall heater, can I apply?***

    No, funding is only available for projects that replace or decommission existing operational, indoor wood or pellet-burning devices that are used for heat.

14. ***Can I replace my wood-burning device with a gas or electric insert or an EPA certified wood stove?***

    No, funding is only available for projects that replace eligible devices with an electric heat pump or decommission eligible devices.

15. ***My wood stove was manufactured during or after 2020. Can I apply?***

    No, funding is only available to replace wood stoves manufactured prior to 2020.

16. ***My pellet stove was manufactured during or after 2015. Can I apply?***

    No, funding is only available to replace pellet stoves manufactured prior to 2015.

17. ***I have more than one woodburning device in my home. Can I apply to replace more than one device?***

    Yes, applicants may request funding to replace up to two eligible devices per residential dwelling.

18. ***I have two houses on one property with one Assessor Parcel Number (APN), and each home has a wood burning device. Can I apply to replace my devices and receive awards for new heat pumps at both properties?***

    Yes, the Clean HEET Program allows for the replacement of up to two devices per residential dwelling.

FUNDING AND ELIGIBLE COSTS

19. How much funding am I eligible for?

Individual awards range from $10,000 - $15,000 for one stove/insert/fireplace and $13,000 - $18,000 for two stoves/inserts/fireplaces. In addition, plus-up funding for residents that participate in a qualifying low-income assistance program could receive up to an additional $10,000. The amount of funding available will vary for each project, depending on the manufacture date of the existing wood-burning device, quantity of devices being replaced, and whether the applicant meets the low-income qualifications to receive plus-up funding. Please see the *Program Requirements and Terms and Conditions* Grant Funding section for a detailed breakdown of award amounts.

Here are some examples of projects, with the maximum eligible award amount denoted in the 'Total Grant' column:

Example Replacement Projects (existing devices)	**First Device**				**Second Device**	**Plus-Up Funding**	**Total Grant**
	Wood-burning stove or insert 2014 and earlier	Wood-burning stove or insert 2015-2019	Open-hearth fireplace any manufacture year	Pellet-burning stove or insert 2014 and earlier	Same options as first device	For residents that participate in a qualifying low-income assistance program	Sum of all options
	$15,000	**$10,000**	**$12,000**	**$15,000**	**+$3,000**	**+$10,000**	
2012 wood stove	✓						$15,000
2016 wood-burning insert		✓					$10,000
Open-hearth fireplace			✓				$12,000
One 1992 Pellet-burning fireplace insert				✓			$15,000
Two 2002 wood stoves	✓				✓		$18,000
One open-hearth fireplace and one 2019 wood stove			✓		✓		$15,000
two 2000 wood-burning inserts, plus-up eligible	✓				✓	✓	$28,000
Two 2009 pellet stoves, plus-up eligible				✓	✓	✓	$28,000

Example Decommission-only Projects (existing devices)	First Device	Second Device	Total Grant
	Wood-burning stove or insert 1988 and earlier, or Open-hearth fireplace	Same options as first device	Sum of all options
	$1,500	**+$1,500**	
1983 wood stove	✓		$1,500
Open-hearth fireplace	✓		$1,500
Two 1972 wood stoves	✓	✓	$3,000
Open-hearth fireplace and one 1978 fireplace insert	✓	✓	$3,000

Note: The estimated amounts are the maximum possible amount. If the actual final cost of a project is less than the grant amount awarded, the Air District will reduce the award and pay only the actual eligible costs incurred.

20. Why are the funding amounts different for different types or ages of devices?

The grant amounts are based on the amount of air pollution that the devices emit. The air district is able to offer higher grant amounts for existing devices that are older, dirtier, and more polluting. The lower grant amounts are for devices that burn cleaner since fewer pollutants are eliminated when these devices are removed.

21. What part of my project does funding cover? What are eligible costs?

Eligible costs include costs that are essential, direct, and can be confirmed with supporting documentation. Eligible costs include the following:

- Capital cost of the approved heating device, including shipping costs and sales tax
- Expenses directly related to the installation of the approved replacement device, including parts, materials, and labor
- Costs directly related to the removal, decommissioning and disposal of the existing woodburning or pellet-burning device, including parts, materials, and labor
- Costs to obtain required permits for the approved project

Costs that are not directly related to the project that are beyond the project scope (e.g., remodeling work), related to non-approved replacement devices, for work done by the homeowner or anyone that is not a California Licensed Contractor, or that do not have supporting documentation, are not eligible for reimbursement.

22. One of the non-homeowner residents at my property is enrolled in a low-income assistance program. Am I eligible for additional Plus-up funding?

No, the homeowner must be the participant in one of the qualifying low-income assistance programs to receive plus-up funding. This requirement cannot be met by another member of the household or tenants.

COMPLETING YOUR PROJECT AND REQUESTING REIMBURSEMENT

23. Can I do the project myself?

No, all project work must be completed by a contractor(s) licensed by the California Contractors State License Board and cannot be performed by the homeowner. At a minimum, all projects require a contractor with a *C-20 Warm-Air Heating, Ventilating, and Air-Conditioning Contractor* or *B (General Building)* license for heat pump installation.

Depending on the specific work that needs to be performed, additional types of licenses may be required, such as a *C-29 Masonry* or *C-10 Electrical* license. A list of all license classifications is available here. Applicants may need to hire more than one licensed contractor.

The destruction and disposal of the existing wood burning devices must also be performed by a licensed contractor.

Contractors will be required to fill out a *Contractor Certification Form* provided by the Air District, and applicants will be required to submit the completed form along with their reimbursement request.

Any project work done by the homeowner, even if they are a licensed contractor, will not be eligible for reimbursement.

24. Is there a list of approved contractors?

Using a licensed contractor is required under this program. The Air District does not make recommendations for specific vendors or contractors.

Participants should ensure that the business they wish to hire has a valid contractor's license number with the California Contractor's State License Board. At a minimum, all projects require a contractor with a *C-20 Warm-Air Heating, Ventilating, and Air-Conditioning Contractor license* or *B (General Building) license* for heat pump installation. The type of license required to do the work will depend on the type of work being performed.

Using licensed contractors ensures that the work is done safely and correctly and helps homeowners avoid financial risk and other problems that may arise.

25. Do we need a licensed contractor for all work related to the project?

A licensed contractor is required for all reimbursable project work related to the approved project such as the installation of the heat pump, scrappage and disposal of the wood-burning device, and decommissioning of a fireplace if applicable.

At a minimum, all projects require a contractor with a *C-20 Warm-Air Heating, Ventilating, and Air-Conditioning Contractor* or *B (General Building) license* for heat pump installation.

Depending on the specific work that needs to be performed, additional types of licenses may be required, such as a *C-29 Masonry,* or *C-10 Electrical* license. A list of all license classifications is available here. Applicants may need to hire more than one licensed contractor. The type of license required to do the work will depend on the type of work being performed.

A licensed contractor is not required for adjacent non-project work, that will not be reimbursed by this program, such as painting, tiling, or gardening.

26. How do I know if I need a permit for my project?

Permit requirements vary based on the City or County where the home resides. Ask your licensed contractor or City/County officials to determine if a permit is required for your project.

27. What is a "Notification of Funding" (NOF)?

A *Notification of Funding* (NOF) is a document issued when an application has been reviewed and approved by the Air District. The funding amount in the NOF is the maximum amount for which the selected project is conditionally approved. The actual funding amount must not exceed the total actual eligible project cost. The Program Participant must enter the program portal and accept the offer outlined in the NOF prior to receiving an NTP.

28. What is a "Notice to Proceed" (NTP)?

A *Notice to Proceed* (NTP) is a document issued once the Program Participant has accepted their funding offer in the online portal. The NTP contains instructions on completing the project as described in the application, and the awarded funding amount.

Applicants who have had any work related to their project completed before the Air District issues the NTP are not eligible for funding.

29. I received my Notice to Proceed, but I won't be completing my project. What happens to my award?

If you have received a *Notice to Proceed* but have decided not to move forward with your project, please notify the Air District as soon as possible so that we can reallocate those funds to another Bay Area homeowner on the waitlist.

30. I am working on my project, but I cannot complete it within 4 months. Do I really lose the reimbursement if I don't finish by the deadline? I am worried about the deadline given that contractors can take a long time.

Applicants who have been issued a *Notice to Proceed* must work to complete their project and submit a reimbursement request within 4 months. If you believe your project will be delayed, please contact the Air District by email or phone as soon as possible.

31. What is a Contractor Certification Form, and who needs to fill one out?

A *Contractor Certification Form* is a document that certifies that a licensed contractor in the State of California performed work for your project and properly disposed of the existing device at a recycling facility. This form must be completed by the contractor and submitted with the reimbursement package. The *Contractor Certification Form* can be downloaded from the program website at www.baaqmd.gov/WoodSmokeGrant.

32. How do I show proof that my old wood-burning device has been decommissioned and destroyed?

- "Decommissioned" for the purposes of this Program, means permanently rendered inoperable. This involves destroying wood stoves and wood-burning inserts, or rendering a fireplace associated with a wood-burning insert permanently incapable of burning wood.
- Wood stoves and/or fireplace inserts will need to be removed and then scrapped at a licensed recycling facility. To provide evidence that this has been done properly, the participating contractor must fill out a *Contractor Certification Form* attesting to the decommissioning and disposal of each device.
- For wood-burning fireplace inserts, the fireplace will also need to be made permanently inoperable by either completely removing the fireplace structure or permanently sealing it (e.g., closing it off with drywall or filling it with masonry). Temporary methods, such as a balloon insert in the chimney or a fireplace plug, will not satisfy the requirements for this program. The participating contractor must fill out a *Contractor Certification Form* attesting to the decommissioning of the fireplace.

33. Is there a list of approved dismantlers?

No; however, the device must be disposed of at a licensed dismantler/recycling facility by a licensed contractor, and the contractor must fill out a *Contractor Certification Form* attesting to the disposal of the device.

34. What counts as acceptable proof of payment?

Acceptable proof of payment is an invoice showing zero balance.

35. Who fills out the W-9?

The W-9 must be filled out by the Applicant.

36. Can you write the check out to someone that is not the legal homeowner?

No, the check will only be made out to the legal homeowner.

37. How much pollution am I reducing by removing my wood burning device?

Woodsmoke contains a complex mix of harmful chemicals including gases and tiny particles that can easily penetrate the lungs and small passageways of the respiratory system, which leads to a higher risk of respiratory and heart disease. By removing a wood-burning device, you can prevent up to 300 pounds of these chemicals from being emitted into the air every year. Removing one wood-burning device can remove as much particulate matter as removing 8 diesel school buses.