

# Vermont Energy Workforce Development Funding and Initiatives September 2023

## **Office of Economic Opportunity's (OEO) Weatherization Program - Weatherization Training Center (WxTC)**

**Funding: \$1.7M** from U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)

### **Purpose:**

To support weatherization and other construction trades in recruiting, training, and placing workers in careers. The WxTC will serve as a hub to coordinate existing training programs and develop new training programs for Vermont. A specific goal of the WxTC is to diversify the workforce and bring underrepresented individuals into the weatherization field. If a viable business model is identified for the WxTC, a request for proposals will be issued in 2024 to solicit an entity to establish and run the WxTC.

## **State Energy Program (SEP) Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) - Workforce Development Training**

**Funding: \$875,000** from U.S. DOE, BIL

### **Purpose:**

The PSD has budgeted a portion of the SEP BIL award from DOE to provide workforce development in order to grow the weatherization workforce in Vermont. May include Building Performance Institute (BPI) Training and could be expanded to include more general building science and include new construction.

## **Vermont Energy Code Administration Project**

**Funding: \$693,000** from U.S. DOE, BIL to Energy Futures Group

### **Purpose:**

A portion of the \$1,000,000 grant from DOE has been budgeted for "Energy Professionals (HERS Raters) Workforce Development and Support" and "Education, Training and Support". Most of this activity will be carried out by a full-time energy code circuit rider who will provide outreach, field support and training on energy codes to design, building, supply, finance and housing communities.

## **Efficiency Vermont ARPA Workforce Development Training Grant**

**Funding: \$1M** from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

### **Purpose:**

To provide funding for entities and programs that increase the number of people working in or supporting the weatherization field in Vermont. Programs must directly serve an eligible population, defined as:

- Low income (defined as less than 80% AMI); or
- Individuals who, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, are unemployed or are employed part time but want and are available for full-time work; or

- Moderate income (defined as income between 80%-120% AMI), or
- Workers whose entry to the weatherization workforce represents greater opportunity for economic advancement.

Selected entities to provide programs include Vermont Adult Learning (VAL), ReSource, and VT Fuel Dealers Association.

**Efficiency Vermont ongoing Building Energy Code Support**

**Funding:** \$105,500 for 2024-2026 DRP – DSS budget

**Purpose:** This funding for RBES and CBES is to provide technical support and training regarding the development and implementation of state energy codes and standards. VEIC may also provide technical support and training regarding any local or other energy ordinances, codes, or standards. The anticipated support includes, but is not limited to:

- Direct technical assistance, including a telephone assistance hotline;
- Development, production, and delivery of educational materials;
- Development and delivery of workshops and professional training; and
- Technical support for the development or amendments of energy codes and standards.

**Efficiency Vermont ongoing support for Workforce Development Training Center**

**Funding:** TBD, potentially ~\$50,000 per year for 2024-2026

**Purpose:** Provide supplemental support to the VT Weatherization Training Center, alongside the VT Office of Economic Opportunity, following completion of the feasibility study and business plan (see item one on this list). Note that this is a funding placeholder and is ultimately dependent on the specific business plan recommendations and identified needs, which will not be finalized until late 2023/early 2024.

**Efficiency Vermont – Weatherization Training & Building Science Certifications**

**Funding:** ~\$70,000 from TEPF funds

**Purpose:** This funding is allocated to subsidize coursework, field training, and exam fees for Building Performance Institute certifications. Some or all of it could be redirected to the VT Weatherization Training Center once it is up and running.

**Efficiency Vermont - Workforce Development FTE position**

**Funding:** TBD

**Purpose:** A full time position will be hired in 2024 to assist with Talent Pipeline Management in the energy efficiency trade workforce. This position will work collaboratively with Vermont partner organizations on helping to build and implement long term strategies to recruit and retain more skilled workers in the weatherization and heating electrification fields. The specific funding to support this position is currently being determined, in parallel with the scope and job description.

### **EAN Climate Workforce Network Action Team**

**Purpose:**

Create and implement a plan to reduce the gaps in the climate workforce to support implementation of the Climate Action Plan.

### **State-Based Home Energy Efficiency Contractor Training Grant Program**

**Funding: \$1,048,680** from U.S. DOE, Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)

**Purpose:**

Formula grants to states to develop and implement a state workforce energy program that prepares workers to deliver energy efficiency, electrification, and clean energy improvements, including those covered under the IRA Home Energy Performance-Based, Whole House Rebate Program (HOMES) and the Home Electrification and Appliance Rebate Program (HEAR). Applications are due January 31, 2024.