

The Handyman

Deadline nearing to get energy tax credits

As I wrote last week, you need to plan now to get projects done before the year's end. But you also need to make sure you know what you need to do to qualify for all of the energy tax credits and rebates available.



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Products that are eligible for these expiring tax credits include energy efficient doors and windows, insulation, roofs, furnaces, boilers, central air conditioners, air-source heat pumps,

non-solar water heaters and biomass stoves.

But remember that these tax credits are for products that meet certain energy efficiency guidelines. For more information on the Federal tax credits, visit the U.S. Department of Energy's website at www.energy.gov.

Along with Federal tax credits, local utilities are also offering rebates to facilitate more energy efficient homes. Unfortunately, these programs had limited funds available, and many of these programs have already used the funds available for 2010. However, there are still

some rebate programs that have funds available on a first-come-first-served basis.

For example, if MichCon is your primary heating fuel supplier, or you have all-electric heat powered by Detroit Edison, you can still qualify for rebates for adding insulation, air sealing or new windows that meet energy efficiency guidelines set by the program. DTE Energy also has rebates available for buying qualifying Energy Star appliances, as well as its appliance recycling and Energy Star lighting programs.

The Whole Home Performance program is a new limited time offer available to customers who have both MichCon and Detroit Edison as their gas and electricity providers. DTE Energy has partnered with WellHome, a Masco company, to implement a residential energy savings program offering rebates of up to \$3,500 to the first 100 customers who purchase qualified home improvement measures from WellHome.

For more information on the availability of rebate funds for these programs, visit www.dteenergy.com

Consumers Energy customers can also take advantage of remaining energy

rebates on some programs that currently have funds available, such as rebates on natural gas furnaces. But funds for this program are almost fully subscribed, so it is best to act immediately.

Also, Consumers Energy's appliance rebate program for various energy efficient appliances will run through the end of November, as will its lighting program to provide instant rebates at retailers when you buy energy-saving compact fluorescent light (CFLs) bulbs. For more information on the availability of these rebate programs, you can visit www.consumersenergy.com.

The good news is that if you miss the rebate programs in 2010, both Detroit Edison and Consumers Energy will offer similar rebate programs in 2011.

In addition to its Energy Efficiency/Renewable Energy Tax Credit that goes through Dec. 31, 2011, the State of Michigan also recently began offering an Appliance Rebate Program that offers rebates to consumers who purchase energy efficient natural gas furnaces and water heaters.

Those who install a 95 percent or greater AFUE furnace may qualify for a \$500 rebate through the program. A \$300

rebate will be offered for qualifying water heaters.

Funding will be limited and available on a first-come-first-served basis, and eligible appliances must be Energy Star rated.

For more information, visit www.michrebate.com or call the Michigan Appliance Rebate program directly at (888) 642-4674.

One program that has been around a long time but isn't well known is the Weatherization Assistance Program for qualifying low income homeowners to help improve their home's energy efficiency in the areas of insulation, caulking and even furnace replacement. The program is facilitated by local community action agencies and you can call (888) 75-ACTION or visit www.miaction.org for more information.

If you would like to suggest a question for this column, e-mail askglenn@masterhandyman.com. If you want to talk to Glenn Haege personally, call his "Handyman Show" on WJR-AM (760) at (866) ASK GLENN, (866) 275-4536 between noon and 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. The "Handyman Show" can be heard on more than 130 radio stations nationwide.

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