



PRESS RELEASE

In Response to Provincial Cutbacks to the CleanBC Energy Savings Program

JULY 24, 2026, Xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh)/Vancouver, BC – The Province updated CleanBC's Energy Savings Program (ESP) on July 6, resulting in substantial cuts that reduce access to energy efficiency retrofits such as heat pumps and insulation for low- and moderate-income households.

Since 2019, Ecotrust Canada has been advocating to advance energy security for lower-income and rural, remote, and Indigenous households, and we will continue to work with our partners and the Province toward that goal. Part of that work is to share what we know about existing retrofit programs and how program updates will affect households in BC.

Josephine Schrott, Sr. Program Manager & Policy Analyst, Ecotrust Canada: *"The Energy Savings Program has allowed households to make highly impactful upgrades to their homes that they would not otherwise have been able to afford. We are discouraged to see the program offerings diminished and fear the update will exclude many households in need from participating."*

Large cost gaps for households

ESP has delivered over 30,000 rebates since 2022, enabling low- and moderate-income households in BC to access home energy upgrades they would never otherwise have been able to pursue. These retrofits, including heat pumps, insulation, and electrical service upgrades, have improved quality of life and reduced energy cost pressures, while adding life-saving cooling to combat dangerously hot summers. Ecotrust Canada strongly supports BC's income-qualified Energy Savings Program, and we believe this program plays a critical role in increasing affordability, climate mitigation and adaptation, and energy efficiency in BC.

As of July 6, 2026, ESP updates include a small increase to income caps, but also substantial cuts to coverage amounts and types of retrofits covered. These cuts will prevent many lower-income households from accessing important retrofit supports, diminishing the impact of this program.

- Heat pump rebate amounts reduced by \$1,000-\$7,000.
- Heat pump rebates for electrically heated homes removed for households with a Level 2 income (e.g., combined income of \$63,600-\$79,500 for a two-person household).
- Insulation, window, and door rebates were removed entirely.
- See our comparison tables for a detailed list of changes below.



Although the program in theory covers up to 100% of retrofit costs, lower rebate amounts will create cost gaps that must be covered by the household. Households whose income is near or below living wage do not usually have extra money to overcome these gaps, making the program inaccessible to many of the households it aims to serve. Reduced ESP coverage is likely to prevent many Level 2 households from participating.

What this means in relation to ECAP

The Energy Conservation Assistance Program (ECAP) was recently expanded for the lowest-income households (matching ESP income Level 1). ECAP's direct delivery model reduces burdens on households by selecting the type of retrofit measures as well as the contractors that deliver them. However, it offers no retrofit choice to households, and not all households receive the upgrades they hope for. The alternative, ESP, is now largely inaccessible due to reduced or eliminated coverage. ECAP is also not yet available to Pacific Northern Gas customers in Northern BC.

What this means in relation to the Home Renovation Rebate Program

A few rebate options are available to all income levels through CleanBC's Home Renovation Rebate Program. In theory, lower-income households could use these as well, but because this program requires the household to pay for the upgrade upfront and apply for the rebate after, this is only accessible to households with substantial savings or access to credit. Income Level 2 households, who cannot access ECAP and likely cannot use the Home Renovation Rebate program, will be the most negatively impacted by the July 6, 2026, updates to ESP.

What's next

In BC, we are facing intersecting crises of inequality, energy insecurity, economic impacts of the ongoing trade war, and the impacts of climate change. Now is the time to double down on programs with proven impact that keep people safe and healthy in their homes during extreme weather, improve affordability by lowering bills, increase energy efficiency, and create good green jobs. Our hope is for CleanBC's Energy Savings Program to be renewed to this effect.

Through our Community Energy Program, we see the positive impacts of home energy retrofits in our work on the ground every day. The benefits are extensive, and support for the programs enabling these retrofits is critical. This is why, in the coming months, we will share stories of people who are experiencing the benefits of home upgrades that were made possible by these programs, and our vision for a revitalized and impactful Energy Savings Program.

About Ecotrust Canada

Ecotrust Canada is an enterprising charity that works with rural, remote, and Indigenous communities toward building an economy that provides for a healthy and resilient natural environment; sustainable and abundant energy, food, and housing; prosperous and meaningful livelihoods; and vibrant and



inclusive cultures. We call this approach **building an economy that provides for life**. Our on-the-ground work and systems approach is entrepreneurial, partnership-based, and relentlessly practical.
ecotrust.ca

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Background on retrofit programs in BC

BC has multiple retrofit support programs to help households improve the energy efficiency and health of their homes, by installing heat pumps, insulation, and ventilation. While there are some overlaps, each program plays an important role in supporting affordability, energy efficiency and energy security.

- The CleanBC **Energy Savings Program** (ESP) for low- and moderate-income households. Cost coverage is paid directly to the contractor by the Province, with the household only covering any amount above the maximum coverage amount.
- The CleanBC **Home Renovation Rebate Program** available to any income level, requires up-front payment of the full cost by the household.
- The utility-run **Energy Conservation Assistance Program** (ECAP) for low-income households, installs measures entirely free of charge.

These programs are delivered separately; they require separate applications and do not integrate. Additional programs are available for multi-unit residential buildings, and Indigenous communities.

The Home Performance Stakeholder Council has shared FAQ documents for contractors that detail the grace periods and processes to follow with households who were progressing through the Energy Savings Program while the changes came into effect. They can be found at the following links, separated by upgrade type: **heat pumps**, **windows & doors**, **insulation**.

Side-by-side comparison of ESP changes

Changes to CleanBC's Energy Savings Program (ESP) **before** and **after** July 6, 2026, including side-by-side comparisons of income levels and rebate coverage, are detailed below.

No changes were made to the following rebates:

- Air-source heat pumps, converting from wood heating
- Heat pump water heater
- Electrical service upgrade
- Health & safety
- Ventilation
- Northern top-up amounts - \$1,500 for a single-head mini-split heat pump; \$3,000 for central ducted, multi-split or 2 single-head, air-to-water, and combined space and water heat pumps



Income Qualification Thresholds

All income thresholds increased.

Income Level 1 maximum household income cutoff:

Household Size	Previous cap	Updated cap	Increase
1	\$47,007	\$51,100	+\$4,093
2	\$58,522	\$63,600	+\$5,078
3	\$71,945	\$78,200	+\$6,255
4	\$87,350	\$94,900	+\$7,550
5	\$99,072	\$107,600	+\$8,528
6	\$111,735	\$121,400	+\$9,665
7+	\$124,402	\$135,100	+\$10,698

Income Level 2 maximum household income cutoff:

Household Size	Previous cap	Updated cap	Increase
1	\$61,697	\$63,900	+\$2,203
2	\$76,810	\$79,500	+\$2,690
3	\$94,428	\$97,700	+\$3,272
4	\$114,647	\$118,600	+\$3,953
5	\$130,032	\$134,500	+\$4,468
6	\$146,653	\$151,700	+\$5,047
7	\$163,277	\$168,900	+\$5,623

Income Level 3 maximum household income cutoff:

Household Size	Previous cap	Updated cap	Increase
1	\$99,891	\$102,100	+\$2,209
2	\$124,358	\$127,200	+\$2,842
3	\$152,884	\$156,300	+\$3,416
4	\$185,620	\$189,800	+\$4,180
5	\$210,528	\$215,200	+\$4,672
6	\$237,438	\$242,700	+\$5,262
7	\$264,353	\$270,200	+\$5,847



Upgrade types removed entirely

ESP as of July 6, 2026 no longer includes:

- Insulation rebates
- Windows & doors rebates

Coverage comparison by type of upgrade and income level

Air-source heat pumps, converting from electric heating:

Reduced from Income Levels 1 and 2 to Level 1 only. No change in Level 1 amounts.

Upgrade	Level 1 coverage	Level 2 coverage
Ductless mini-split, ductless multi-split, or central ducted heat pump	\$5,000	removed

Air-source heat pumps, converting from natural gas or propane:

\$2,000 - \$7,000 reductions.

Upgrade	Previous Level 1	Updated Level 1	Change
Single head	\$7,500	\$5,500	-\$2,000
2 heads	\$14,000	\$11,000	-\$3,000
Central / 3-head	\$16,000	\$13,000	-\$3,000
Upgrade	Previous Level 2	Updated Level 2	Change
Single head	\$5,500	\$4,500	-\$1,000
2 heads	\$10,500	\$5,500	-\$5,000
Central / 3-head	\$12,000	\$7,000	-\$5,000
Upgrade	Previous Level 3	Updated Level 3	Change
Single head	\$4,000	\$1,000	-\$3,000
2 heads	\$8,000	\$1,000	-\$7,000
Central / 3-head	\$10,500	\$3,500	-\$7,000



Air-source heat pumps, converting from oil:

\$3,000 - \$7,000 reductions.

Upgrade	Previous Level 1	Updated Level 1	Change
Single head	\$10,000	\$7,000	-\$3,000
2 heads	\$14,000	\$11,000	-\$3,000
Central / 3-head	\$16,000	\$13,000	-\$3,000
Upgrade	Previous Level 2	Updated Level 2	Change
Single head	\$10,000	\$5,000	-\$5,000
2 heads	\$10,500	\$5,500	-\$5,000
Central / 3-head	\$12,000	\$7,000	-\$5,000
Upgrade	Previous Level 3	Updated Level 3	Change
Single head	\$10,000	\$3,000	-\$7,000
2 heads	\$10,000	\$3,000	-\$7,000
Central / 3-head	\$10,500	\$3,500	-\$7,000

Dual-fuel ducted heat pumps, for Pacific Northern Gas customers:

\$3,000 - \$7,000 reductions.

Heating fuel	Previous Level 1	Updated Level 1	Change
Natural gas / propane	\$11,500	\$8,500	-\$3,000
Tank propane	\$15,000	\$12,000	-\$3,000
Heating fuel	Previous Level 2	Updated Level 2	Change
Natural gas / propane	\$6,500	\$1,500	-\$5,000
Tank propane	\$10,000	\$5,000	-\$5,000
Heating fuel	Previous Level 3	Updated Level 3	Change
Natural gas / propane	\$6,500	\$1,500	-\$5,000
Tank propane	\$10,000	\$3,000	-\$7,000



Air-to-water heat pumps, converting from fossil fuel heating:

\$3,000 - \$7,000 reductions.

Upgrade	Previous Level 1	Updated Level 1	Change
Air-to-water heat pump (space heating only)	\$16,000	\$13,000	-\$3,000
Combined space & water heat pump	\$19,500	\$16,500	-\$3,000
Upgrade	Previous Level 2	Updated Level 2	Change
Air-to-water heat pump (space heating only)	\$12,000	\$7,000	-\$5,000
Combined space & water heat pump	\$16,500	\$11,500	-\$5,000
Upgrade	Previous Level 3	Updated Level 3	Change
Air-to-water heat pump (space heating only)	\$10,500	\$3,500	-\$7,000
Combined space & water heat pump	\$14,000	\$7,000	-\$7,000

Air-to-water heat pumps, converting from electric heating:

No change to Level 1 support. Level 2 support removed. No rebates for Level 3 before or after the update.

Upgrade	Previous Level 1	Updated Level 1	Change
Air-to-water heat pump (space heating only)	\$5,000	\$5,000	No change
Combined space & water heat pump	\$8,500	\$8,500	No change
Upgrade	Previous Level 2	Updated Level 2	Change
Air-to-water heat pump (space heating only)	\$5,000	None	Removed
Combined space & water heat pump	\$8,500	None	Removed