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**ELECTRIC
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July 17, 2013

Feature for immediate release
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BPU Encourages the Use of Free State Energy Audits for Homes, Small Businesses and Non-profits; Subsidized Audits for Local Governments

Still looking for a cost-effective way to save energy – and money – in your home, small business, non-profit or local government office?

According to Jamestown Board of Public Utilities (BPU) Energy Efficiency Coordinator Dan Reynolds, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) “Green Jobs - Green New York” (GJGNY) program has free energy audits available for qualifying homes, small businesses, non-profit organizations, and reduced-cost audits for local government buildings.

NYSERDA programs are funded through, and normally limited to, New York State investor-owned electric companies whose customers’ higher rates include charges for these types of projects. GJGNY, however, is open to many categories of electric customers in the state of New York because GJGNY is funded from the proceeds of selling carbon dioxide allowances under the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI).

Free Residential Audits

For two years, the BPU has offered its own home audit program to homeowners, but its audits require a subsidized fee. While the state offers *free audits* in GJGNY, BPU customers who make changes as a result of *state* audits may still take advantage of the rebates offered by the BPU program.

Reynolds notes that the GYGNY home audits are available free-of-charge to those who earn less than \$108,000 a year. For residents whose yearly income is \$108,000-\$135,000, the audit costs \$50. For those earning more than \$128,000, the audit fee is \$100.

The first steps toward a GJGNY home audit are to download an application at <http://www.nyserdera.ny.gov> and contact a Business Performance Institute (BPI) – certified auditor to schedule your audit. A list of BPI-certified auditors is available from Reynolds. Once the state audit is completed, select the weatherization measures recommended by the audit that you want to accomplish.

BPU electric customers who own their homes and who complete a BPI-certified audit should contact Reynolds at the BPU at 661-1646 to inquire if recommended weatherization upgrades may qualify for rebates through the BPU. Qualified weatherization work could be funded at 25% of the cost of the project with a \$1,500 maximum limit per audit for residential electric

customers. For BPU residential electric customers whose primary heat source for the last three years is electric, BPU rebates for the audit-recommended upgrades could fund 50% of the cost of the project with a \$3,000 maximum limit per audit.

Reynolds says that NYSERDA provides low interest financing of 3.5 - 4%, up to a maximum of \$13,000. NYSERDA also offers incentives that can rebate up to ten percent of the work undertaken as a result of the BPI-certified audit, up to \$3,000. In addition, the Federal government offers a tax credit benefit of ten percent of the project with a maximum of \$500.

Free Small Business and Non-profit Audits, Low-cost Government Audits

Small businesses and non-profit organizations also may apply for free BPI-certified audits through the GJGNY programs by accessing the NYSERDA website where the application may be downloaded. State and local governments may apply for audits on a cost-shared basis, with a fee determined by their number of employees. For instance, a state or local government with ten employees or less must pay \$100 for the audit. A state or local government with greater than ten employees must pay \$400 for the audit. Qualified small businesses and non-profit organizations pay nothing for the audits. Facilities in all three categories of this audit must have an average electric demand of 100 kilowatts or less.

The Jamestown BPU's Lighting and Motor Rebates for Commercial and Industrial Customers program offers commercial and industrial customers financial rebates for energy efficiency projects. Commercial and industrial electric customers who are classified as service class 2 or 3 qualify.

Information on the BPU's Lighting and Motor Rebates Program is available at <http://www.jamestownbpu.com>. BPU Energy Efficiency programs may be accessed by clicking on the white "Energy Efficiency Opportunities" rectangle on the homepage. The BPU recommends that a licensed electrical contractor be contacted to assess the project and develop a proposal for upgrading your facility. Customers must have pre-approval for rebates greater than \$1,000. The BPU reserves the right to inspect the work before issuing a rebate.

"Any of our customers who are interested in the BPU's Lighting and Motor Rebates for Small Commercial and Industrial Program are welcome to contact me before they arrange an audit," invites Reynolds, the BPU's specialist in energy efficiency. "Often, I will visit a business and suggest ways in which they could save by upgrading lighting, motors, exit lights and so forth. Replacing inefficient products with energy-efficient versions may make you eligible for rebates through our BPU Lighting and Motor Rebates Program."

Call for Advice

Reynolds has been with the BPU for four years, administering energy efficiency programs that help reduce the amount of electricity used in the BPU electric territory. He may be reached at 661-1646 or by e-mail: dreynolds@jamestownbpu.com.