



Southwest Energy Efficiency Project
Saving Money and Reducing Pollution through Energy Conservation

PRESS RELEASE

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HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY - THE TIME IS NOW ***Energy efficiency can save consumers thousands of dollars***

(Albuquerque, NM) -- The Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEEP) and the Sierra Club are presenting a home energy audit in a typical 40-year old home in Albuquerque's Near Heights. They want to emphasize that both homeowners and renters ought to install cost-effective energy efficiency measures during the summer months, when new insulation or new heating systems can be installed without the pressures of an emergency repair or the threat of exorbitant energy bills.

"We were lucky to have a warm winter this year, but we need to get serious about weatherizing our homes to avoid really horrific energy bills in the years to come," stated Gail Ryba, New Mexico Representative of SWEEP. "Natural gas prices are expected to remain very high for years to come. Many studies show that consumers can cost-effectively reduce their energy consumption by as much as thirty percent and have a more comfortable and safer home, especially in older homes. Returns like that in the home we are auditing today are superior to Wall Street returns. Plus they reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other pollutants. "

Albuquerque Mayor Martin Chavez strongly endorses programs and measures to promote energy efficiency. "Our proposals to upgrade older homes and to build new homes that optimize energy use will save Albuquerque households hundreds of dollars per year. The savings will boost local economic growth, there will be economic multiplier effects from the growth of the local energy efficiency industry, and it will prepare our homes and buildings to take maximum advantage of renewable energies such as solar hot water and photovoltaics," said Mayor Chavez after a recent press conference announcing his support for increased measures to combat global warming.

New Mexico's largest state utility, PNM, started offering rebates on January 30th to reward consumers who weatherize their homes. Also, there is a federal income tax credit for homeowners who install energy efficiency measures during 2006 or 2007. These incentives make adding insulation, sealing a leaky building shell, or buying a high efficiency furnace even more cost effective.

The home energy audit is being performed by Larry Gorman, one of two certified HERS raters in New Mexico. The audit costs \$199 and results in detailed analysis of the heating and cooling losses in a home, with a list showing how much energy bill savings could result from various energy efficiency measures and which will produce the greatest return on investment. Moreover, the audit is eligible for the PNM rebate.

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SWEEP and the Sierra Club encourage consumers to undertake an energy audit to help them make wise choices about energy efficiency investments, and then to proceed in implementing those measure with a reasonable payback period. “In addition to adding insulation or sealing a leaky building, consumers should purchase and use compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) and ENERGY STAR appliances. Over the lifetime of these measures, the energy bill savings will pay back the first cost many times over,” Ryba added.

About SWEEP: The Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEEP) is a public interest organization dedicated to advancing energy efficiency in Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming. For more information visit the SWEEP website at www.swenergy.org.

For information on the PNM rebates, visit www.pnm.com/taxcredits/home.htm. For information on the federal tax credits, visit www.energytaxincentives.org.