

Good Green Jobs for Colorado

With the passage of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and Colorado's own goals for a sustainable New Energy Economy, the Weatherization Assistance Program is called upon to transcend its traditional mission of providing energy efficiency services to low income communities and become a viable “green jobs” pilot program as well.

Colorado can lead the way in combining energy efficiency, quality job creation and equity. Achieving job quality and equity requires goals and training support for WAP service providers. To that end, the state’s Weatherization Assistance Program should operate under the following principles:

- Weatherization programs providing energy efficiency services for low income communities should create job opportunities for residents of those communities. Weatherization workers should come from training programs that serve distressed communities and individuals who are economically and educationally disadvantaged, unemployed, people of color, women and/or veterans.
- Weatherization workers should be trained by providers that include high-quality instruction in basic construction, building science, and construction safety (such as federally recognized apprenticeship programs or industry accredited program providers).
- Weatherization jobs should offer “pathways to prosperity” with clear routes to family wage careers in the construction trades or energy efficiency sector.
- Weatherization providers should hire or be responsible contractors who are legally compliant, competent, and safe. Workers should be trained to be knowledgeable about the energy and cost savings measures this program provides in the context of reducing climate change and meeting state and national efficiency standards.
- In addition connecting small and disadvantaged business entities to contracting opportunities in accordance with local, state and federal law, extra effort should be made to help connect disadvantaged, minority and small business entities to training opportunities for their workforce.
- Weatherization workers should earn a family supporting wage, have access to a retirement option, and be provided affordable, quality family health insurance.