



BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION TRIBAL SET-ASIDE LOW INCOME WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM

The Bonneville Power Administration has had a long-standing commitment to provide funding for weatherization services to low-income households. The Bonneville Program has been successful over the years. However, there has been a concern that the program delivery process has not been as accessible to Native Americans. In 1999, Bonneville specifically set aside funding out of the Low Income Weatherization (LIWx) Program to be targeted towards improving the installation of weatherization measures in Native American homes.

Bonneville held several meetings with Northwest Tribes to try to get a better understanding of what the barriers were to weatherizing low-income Native American households. Bonneville appreciates the comments and feedback that we received at these meetings. One important lesson we learned is that Bonneville needs to work closely with the Tribe, the local Community Action Agency, the State, and the servicing utility to understand the specific obstacles that are preventing program success on Tribal lands.

No two situations are exactly the same. However, it has become evident that there are some common threads that have provided Bonneville a basis for restructuring the program to help ensure better participation by Tribes. Some of these basic lessons-learned include:

- ✓ The LIWx Program outreach process was not effective in reaching Native Americans.
- ✓ Many Tribal members would be more comfortable in engaging in the process if a member of their Tribe were the contact person for the Program.
- ✓ It is possible that it might be necessary to provide additional funding directly to the Tribe so a person can be dedicated to activities such as outreach, intake, qualification screening, and coordination.
- ✓ It is important to have a commitment from the Tribal Government to participate in the Program.
- ✓ It is often necessary for the local Community Action Agency to somewhat modify their process of outreach. (The agencies Bonneville has interacted with so far have been very agreeable to making changes in their processes to ensure success.)
- ✓ More repair dollars are often needed in order to bring Tribal homes up to the standard required for participation in the Program.

We have had some successes over the years and Bonneville is dedicated to adding to those successes. We encourage Tribes who are served by utilities who buy their power from Bonneville to let us know their interest in this Program.

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