



# County of Yolo

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

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## WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM

Implementing Phase 1 Priority Action Under Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP)  
Strategy 3: Decarbonize Energy and Buildings and Increase Energy Efficiency

### PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed action will implement the Yolo County Weatherization Program, designed to provide low-income households and renters with free do-it-yourself (DIY) weatherization kits. These kits contain tools and resources to improve home energy efficiency independently, including educational materials and energy-efficient devices. The program will aim to empower residents to reduce their energy usage, lower utility costs, and enhance indoor air quality. Additionally, the County plans to offer workshops and support materials online to educate residents on using these kits effectively, as well as connect community members to possible financial assistance—such as through the Home Energy Score or Electrification Retrofit Rebate Outreach Program—for those who need further aid in weatherizing their homes and improving energy efficiency.

### BACKGROUND

In response to rising concerns about energy efficiency and support for low-income households identified during the CAAP workshops in Fall/Winter 2023, Yolo County has prioritized the development of a Weatherization Program. This initiative aligns with the state and local goals to reduce residential energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, addressing a critical need highlighted by Yolo County residents for more accessible energy efficiency solutions.

### CONSISTENCY WITH EXISTING POLICIES

The February 2021 *Yolo County Sustainability Plan* includes the following relevant strategies to support this project:

- Action ED 1.1. Support existing County outreach and awareness programs arounds stormwater quality, energy efficiency, water conservation, and waste
- Action ED 1.1. Work with indigenous groups, vulnerable populations, and community-based organizations in creating sustainability outreach and education programs
- Action AQ 2.2 Work with school districts, community colleges, and career technical education providers to develop a green workforce pipeline
- Action BU 2.1. Provide incentive programs to encourage electrification of existing homes

The 2024 *Yolo County Climate Action Plan* includes the following relevant strategies:

- Strategy 3: Decarbonize Energy and Buildings and Increase Energy Efficiency

- Action: Increase accessibility to home weatherization and energy assistance programs, focusing outreach efforts on low-income and non-English speaking households to ensure widespread access to these programs.

## **BENEFITS TO DISADVANTAGED/VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES**

By offering weatherization assistance, the program specifically benefits low-income and vulnerable populations, providing them with the tools and knowledge to enhance their homes' energy efficiency. This support helps reduce their energy bills, improves home comfort, and contributes to healthier living environments<sup>i</sup>. The weatherization program is designed to be inclusive, offering services to all residents while prioritizing aid for those in greatest need. In alignment with our commitment to social equity, the program will prioritize low-income households, the elderly, individuals with disabilities, and renters, recognizing these groups as the most vulnerable to energy inefficiency impacts. Staff will work with community outreach partners to conduct targeted outreach to priority populations, ensuring that the benefits of the program reach a broad and diverse population.

## **GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSION REDUCTION**

The effort to mitigate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions through weatherization program implementation contributes to the County's emissions reduction goal. While the precise emissions benefits of a weatherization program is expected to be modest, the project has critical adaptation, equity, and economic co-benefits.

## **CO-BENEFITS**

Beyond energy savings, the program promotes public health through improved living conditions and enhances community awareness and education regarding sustainable practices. This program also will improve climate resiliency, particularly by providing efficient cooling during heat waves.

## **TRANSFORMATIVE/REPLICABLE ELEMENTS**

If Yolo County successfully implements this program, Yolo County would serve as a model for similar programs in other jurisdictions, demonstrating an effective community-driven approach to improving residential energy efficiency.

## **DEGREE OF READINESS**

Yolo County must identify partners to assist with outreach before launch of this project. The county will begin outreach of this program in the Summer/Fall of 2024 and distribute kits starting in Fall/Winter of 2024.

## **COSTS**

The proposed action requests \$50,000.

## FUNDING

County staff recommends the County allocate \$50,000 in American Rescue Plan funds to this program.

## CONCERNS

To address potential concerns regarding financial burdens, Yolo County intends to cover the cost of the weatherization kits and make them free for all households (up to 100 households per year). The program will also seek additional funding to supplement existing state and federal rebates. Additionally, an ongoing feedback mechanism will adapt the program to meet community needs effectively, reinforcing its commitment to being a supportive resource for enhancing energy efficiency without adding financial strain.

## PARTNERS

Yolo County may collaborate with community-based organizations, real estate agents, utility providers, local job training centers, and other units of local government, such as cities to implement this program. To secure additional funding, the County may work with the U.S. Department of Energy and the California Energy Commission to secure funding to support the program on an ongoing basis.

## PERSONNEL

In the chart below, please list names, role, and contact information for all project leader(s) and project partners.

Name	Role (Lead or Partner)	Email
<b>Yuridiana Pantoja</b>	Lead	yuridiana.pantoja@yolocounty.org
<b>Kristen Wraithwall</b>	Support	Kristen.wraithwall@yolocounty.org

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<sup>i</sup> Bradshaw, J. L., Bou-Zeid, E., & Harris, R. H. (2016). Greenhouse gas mitigation benefits and cost-effectiveness of weatherization treatments for low-income American urban housing stocks. *Energy and Buildings*, 128, 911–920. DOI: 10.1016/j.enbuild.2016.07.020.