

WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



YEAR IN REVIEW

- 53 homes received weatherization services
- 98 individuals served
- 1 of 6 agencies in the state to participate in Healthy Homes Pilot Program
- Over 80% of households were homeowners
- 9 homes rehabilitated under Healthy Homes Program



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2015 PROGRAM REPORT

DOUG'S STORY:

Doug is proud to be still living in his own home at the age of 79 but maintaining his monthly housing costs and keeping up with repairs around the house has gotten harder over the years. His retirement barely covers his bills each month. So when his furnace broke in the fall, Doug had no way to pay for getting it fixed. So, he reached out to OVO for assistance. Since he had already been approved for our Energy Assistance Program, he was eligible to receive Weatherization services and was referred on to that program. One of our home inspectors visited his home and assessed its weatherization needs. During the inspection, our auditors found mold in Doug's attic. Usually, mold or other health and safety concerns would mean a house was deferred until the client could fix the issue him or herself. Thanks to the new Healthy Homes Program piloted by OVO during 2015, OVO was able to cover the costs of mold mitigation and perform the necessary work to get his home ready to be weatherized. Our program was then able to replace Doug's furnace and install much needed insulation in his home. With the work completed, not only is Doug's heat back up and running, but his home is now air sealed, which will help lower his monthly energy bills, and mold free, which makes for a healthier home for Doug.

WHAT WE ACCOMPLISHED

Healthy Homes Pilot

OVO was selected as one of six programs in the state to pilot a new weatherization initiative. The Healthy Homes Program provides assistance to deferred homes in accessing weatherization services. Homes that have health and safety concerns or structural issues do not qualify for weatherization until these problems have been mitigated or corrected, which causes homes to be deferred. The Healthy Homes Program allowed OVO to provide minor home rehabilitation services, such as mold mitigation and structural repairs, in order to prevent homes from being deferred and to expand weatherization opportunities in our community. The success of the six pilot programs across the state led to the decision to fully fund this program statewide for the 2016 program year!

New Partnership

New standards enacted in 2015 required Weatherization providers to have a different individual complete the initial and the final inspection of a home. To meet this new requirement, OVO partnered with a neighboring Community Action Agency, Southern Indiana Economic Opportunity Corporation (SIEOC), to pilot a new shared staffing program. Under this partnership, OVO's final inspector field staff divides his time between the two agencies. This arrangement ensures compliance with this standard and reduces costs for both agencies. This new partnership went exceedingly well and has established a best practice across the state. We look forward to continuing and strengthening this partnership in the years to come.

Quality Control Inspector Certification

Under new Department of Energy standards, every home weatherized is required to have a final inspection completed by a quality control inspector. This certification requires rigorous study of an extensive body of knowledge, and those seeking it must sit for an examination. The Quality Control Inspector Certification is noted as one of the most difficult in the field of weatherization. Both of OVO's field staff were able to pass their exams and receive their certifications well before the deadline for this new requirement. OVO is proud of the success of our staff in securing this credential and look forward to the improved inspection services it will allow us to provide our clients!

Energy Savings

The release of the latest Weatherization Production Report ranked OVO as number one in the state for natural gas energy savings! Furthermore, we were ranked as one of the lowest across the state for cost per home. We are pleased that we are able to provide excellence in service to our clients, maximize their energy savings, and do so while responsibly using the funds entrusted to us.

WHAT OUR CLIENTS ARE SAYING ABOUT US

Our Weatherization Program received a *perfect score* for client satisfaction in 2015. Client satisfaction was based on the following categories: their customer service experience setting up the initial audit, professionalism of our contractors, and their expected energy savings. Additionally, **100%** of clients reported receiving energy education during the weatherization process. Our program also received excellent client feedback through client testimonials and thank you letters throughout the year.

"We do not have the correct words for our gratitude, appreciation and thanks for making our home not only weatherized but supplying us with central heat/ac. Now that we no longer have to "babysit" the woodstove, we are able to seek much needed employment."

-Willis, Weatherization Client

"Thank you all for all the improvements you did to my home. I have never asked for help before and this was so appreciated. Words cannot express the gratitude I feel."

-Jackie, Weatherization Client

"Contractors and crew were excellent! Would highly recommend to everyone! Awesome experience-Thank you all for everything-Greatly appreciated."

-Betty, Weatherization Client

WHAT OUR STAFF ARE SAYING ABOUT US

During the 2015 Employee Satisfaction Survey, **100%** of employees in the Weatherization Assistance Department reported satisfaction working in their department and for Ohio Valley Opportunities. Staff stated that what they liked best about working in the Weatherization Program was that *"everyone gets along, we help each other out."* All department staff reported they completely agreed that their jobs made a difference in the lives of others, and all were satisfied with their direct supervisor.



SPOTLIGHT ON OUR NEW WEATHERIZATION VANS

We are excited to introduce our new Weatherization vans. Between doing energy audits, going out to job sites, and completing final inspections, our Weatherization technicians put a lot of miles on our vehicles. In 2015, the time had come to replace our existing vans. OVO is excited to announce that our new vans are not only incredibly functional and will assist our staff in transporting necessary testing equipment but are also fuel efficient. After upgrading our vehicles, our Weatherization Program has had an approximate 50% reduction in transportation costs due to increased gas mileage. These savings reduce our overhead costs and increase funding available for services. Additionally, we are pleased to be practicing energy efficiency while on the road as well. In the following program year, we will be adding decals to these vans to assist with community outreach. Potential clients will see our contact information as we travel throughout the tri-county area.

WHAT'S NEXT

Contractor Recruitment

OVO's Weatherization Program is looking forward to procuring contractors in the next program year. During this process, we will be doing outreach in the community to recruit new contractors. We plan to increase our number of mechanical contractors from one to two. This increase will allow us to maximize our HVAC service capacity and help us to more quickly and efficiently complete onsite projects. We are excited about the increased opportunities for weatherization services and improvements in client outcomes this process will bring.

Outreach

In order to raise community awareness and identify new clients, our Weatherization Program will be increasing outreach efforts. We will be including a Weatherization Program informational flyer in the Energy Assistance application to inform incoming clients of additional services for which they qualify. We also plan on applying decals to our new Weatherization vehicles to let people know about the program as we travel for inspections throughout the community.

Client Survey

We love to hear valuable feedback and testimonials from our clients. In 2016, we will be updating our client survey in order to get more detailed information on our clients and their experience with our program. We will also be moving this survey to an online platform that allows our staff to more easily review results and gain useful insights on our client base.