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Dept. of Energy Announces New Regulations to Facilitate Weatherizing Subsidized Affordable Housing

The Department of Energy (DOE) today announced new regulations that will help improve the energy efficiency and livability of HUD, Low Income Housing Tax Credit, and USDA assisted apartments by minimizing barriers to the participation of these homes in the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP). As outlined in a [final rule](#) released on January 25th, 2010, DOE has concluded that hundreds of thousands of subsidized apartments meet certain WAP eligibility requirements without the need for further evaluation or verification by the state WAP administering agency or local subgrantee. In doing so, DOE has significantly reduced the burden of evaluating WAP applications for these multifamily properties.

The National Housing Trust has prepared a summary of DOE's final rule. [Click here for the summary.](#)

The [final rule](#) amends the eligibility provisions of the Weatherization Assistance Program so that certain properties identified by HUD and USDA will be considered automatically income eligible for the program without further evaluation and verification.

In addition, DOE has clarified that administering state agencies can take into consideration benefits other than reduced utility costs when ensuring that weatherization benefits accrue primarily to tenants. As a model, DOE cited the State of Washington's policy recognizing that preserved low-income housing, added comfort, and environmental health benefits as a result of weatherization upgrades can be considered direct benefits to tenants. This guidance will help ensure that low-income families who do not directly pay utilities have an opportunity to participate in the program.

The Weatherization Assistance Program received \$5 billion under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)- a 20-fold funding increase over previous years.