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N.C. CONSUMERS TO SAVE ON APPLIANCE PURCHASES

Energy Star Rebates Use \$8.8 Million in U.S. Recovery Funds

RALEIGH – North Carolinians will be able to save on major appliance purchases while putting \$8.8 million in federal Recovery funds to work stimulating the economy, cutting energy use and reducing greenhouse gas emissions under a plan filed today with the U.S. Department of Energy. The plan calls for rebates of 15 percent to be offered to replace major home appliances with Energy Star-rated appliances over a four-day period next spring during Earth Day weekend – Thursday April 22 through Sunday April 25, 2010. Energy Star rebates will be in addition to any store, manufacturer or other discounts being offered.

“Consumers can make smart choices by replacing older, energy-gobbling appliances with efficient new Energy Star appliances that save money, cut utility bills and grow our state’s economy,” said John Morrison, Assistant N.C. Secretary of Commerce for Energy. “This is good for the environment, will grow jobs and help manage energy consumption.”

By replacing older, conventional appliances with the 49,960 Energy Star items it is estimated will be purchased in the program, enough electricity will be saved to power 536 homes for a year. Natural gas savings would serve 390 homes for a year.

The Energy Star Rebate program is planned to be conducted in two phases. The first would offer a 15 percent rebate on qualified Energy Star household appliances (clothes washers, dishwashers, refrigerators, and freezers) during Earth Day weekend.

The second phase, in June, will match rebates on gas storage water heaters, tankless gas water heaters, central air conditioners, heat pumps and gas furnaces offered through electric and gas utility programs. The public can comment on the application by going to the Web site for the N.C. Office of Economic Recovery and Investment at www.ncrecovery.gov.

The energy savings can be significant. For example, a new Energy Star-rated refrigerator uses half the electricity that the same size refrigerator built before 1995 uses.

North Carolina is receiving \$8.8 million in federal funds to help homeowners purchase energy-efficient appliances, from furnaces and room air conditioners to refrigerators and dishwashers. The funds are part of nearly \$300 million from the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act being distributed nationwide by the U.S. Department of Energy.

The Energy Office application provides a program that works to the greatest benefit for consumers, who also are being offered savings opportunities on home energy improvements through utility companies and other

energy providers. In addition, the state and federal government offer tax advantages on the purchase of some major home appliances.

North Carolina also offers a sales tax-free holiday weekend on the purchase of specific ENERGY STAR products (clothes washers, freezers and refrigerators, central air conditioners, room air conditioners, air-source heat pumps, geothermal heat pumps, ceiling fans, dehumidifiers and programmable thermostats). Consumers will typically save 7.75 percent on their purchases, in addition to any retailer discounts. This year it is scheduled for Friday, Nov. 6, through Sunday, Nov. 8.

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