

BC Hydro Home Renovation Rebate Program—minimum electricity consumption requirement

Background

BC Hydro's Home Renovation Rebate program provides rebates to customers that heat their homes with electric heating systems like electric baseboards, heat pumps, and electric furnaces. As of October 1, 2020, the program introduced a minimum electricity consumption requirement. This requirement will ensure rebates are targeted at customers whose electric heat is causing them to have higher bills relative to the size of their home and provide them an opportunity to save electricity. Customers must meet the minimum electricity consumption requirement.

All other rebate requirements remain the same, including:

- Upgrades must be installed by a licensed contractor with a valid BC business license for the trade applicable to the installation work.
- Customers must have a residential utility account with BC Hydro or a municipal utility.
- Upgrades must be installed in an eligible home i.e. single-family dwelling, duplex, side-by-side row or townhome, or mobile home on permanent foundation.

To determine eligibility, BC Hydro will look at the past three years electricity consumption at the customer's home relative to the size of their home. Customers can find their home's square footage by searching their property assessment on BC Assessment (bcassessment.ca).

On average, an 1,800 square foot electrically-heated home in BC uses more than 15,000 kwh/year and costs approximately \$2,000 annually in electricity charges.

Determine eligibility before making upgrades

Customers who heat their homes with electricity should check their eligibility found at bchydro.com/seeifyouqualify. The tool is easy to use and requires a BC Hydro account number and the total square footage of the home.

Frequently asked questions

Does this apply to all rebates within the Home Renovation Rebate Program?

Yes, all BC Hydro funded rebates must meet the minimum electricity consumption requirement. BC Hydro provides rebates for insulation, heat pumps, heat pump water, window and door upgrades installed in electrically heated homes. This is a permanent requirement for BC Hydro funded Home Renovation Rebates starting October 1, 2020.

Is there a grace period for projects already started or planned?

Yes, there is a grace period. If the project is agreed to by the customer, but the invoice date is after October 1, 2020, the program will accept an application until November 1, 2020.

If the project is installed and invoiced before October 1, 2020 the program will process the rebate application under the previous rules. Applications must still be received within 6 months of the upgrade invoice date.

As of November 1, 2020, if a customer with an electrically heated home doesn't meet the minimum electricity consumption, they will not be able to submit their rebate application.

Can a customer check their eligibility before they make any upgrades?

Yes, a program eligibility tool is available at bchydro.com/seeifyouqualify. Customers should check their BC Hydro rebate eligibility prior to considering making any upgrades and the tool will show them if their home has met the minimum electricity consumption requirement.

If a customer already has a heat pump, are they eligible for a heat pump rebate?

No, the program requirements remain the same. Replacement of an existing heat pump or adding a head to an existing heat pump are not eligible for a rebate.

What will happen if a customer tries to apply for BC Hydro rebates and they do not meet the minimum electricity consumption requirement?

If a customer tries to apply for a rebate and does not meet the minimum electricity consumption requirement they will not be able to submit their application form. It is highly recommended that customers who use electricity to heat their home use the eligibility tool before they make any upgrades.

Does this apply to FortisBC electric customers?

No, FortisBC electric customers do not have to meet the minimum electricity consumption requirement that applies to BC Hydro funded rebates.

Customers that do not heat their homes with electricity can visit **FortisBC** or **CleanBC Better Homes** to see if they qualify for rebates funded by these program partners.

Still have questions? Ask us.

If you have any further questions about the minimum electricity consumption requirement, please contact us at alliance@bchydro.com.