

**United States Department of Energy**  
**Supporting Statement**  
**OMB Number 1910-XXXX**

This supporting statement provides additional information regarding the Department of Energy (DOE) request for processing of the emergency proposed information collection, on behalf of the Office of Weatherization and Intergovernmental Programs (OWIP).

The numbered questions correspond to the order shown on the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Form 83-I, "Instructions for Completing OMB Form 83-I."

**1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.**

Under the Recovery Act, OWIP is deploying billions of dollars and piloting numerous program structures and business models for delivering retrofits to existing buildings. These activities include:

- \$5 billion for the Weatherization Assistance Program to retrofit low income homes distributed via 58 states and territories to 984 community action agencies;
- \$3.2 billion in Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants distributed via over 2,350 state and local governments to implement energy efficiency and renewable energy projects including residential and commercial retrofit projects;
- \$3.1 billion distributed to 56 State and Territorial Energy Programs to implement energy efficiency and renewable energy projects including residential and commercial retrofit projects

The Department of Energy (DOE) needs to gather utility bill data in order to manage these three energy efficiency programs effectively. The utility billing data will help DOE determine the impacts and success of these programs in achieving savings, creating jobs, and expanding retrofit markets. In particular, DOE is interested in understanding:

- The results and relative impacts of different program structures/models on expanding market-reliant residential retrofit activities; and
- The relative performance of its recipients in order to improve program administration in the future

The authority for the data collections are provided by the following provisions:

Weatherization Assistance Program

Title IV of the Energy Conservation and Production Act of 1976 (42 U.S.C. 6861 et seq.), as amended, authorizes the DOE to administer the WAP. Section 6867, 42 U.S.C., states that:

(a) Reporting requirements

The Secretary, in consultation with the Director, by general or special orders, may require any recipient of financial assistance under this part to provide, in such form as he may

prescribe, such reports or answers in writing to specific questions, surveys, or questionnaires as may be necessary to enable the Secretary and the Director to carry out their functions under this part.

#### State Energy Program

Title III of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975, (42 U.S.C. 6321 et seq.) as amended, authorizes DOE to administer the SEP. Section 6323, 42 U.S.C., states that:

##### (c) Records

Each recipient of Federal financial assistance under subsection (b) of this section shall keep such records as the Secretary shall require, including records which fully disclose the amount and disposition by each recipient of the proceeds of such assistance, the total cost of the plan, program, projects, measures, or systems for which such assistance was given or used, the source and amount of funds for such plan, program, projects, measures, or systems not supplied by the Secretary, and such other records as the Secretary determines necessary to facilitate an effective audit and performance evaluation. The Secretary and Comptroller General of the United States, or any of their duly authorized representatives, shall have access for the purpose of audit and examination, at reasonable times and under reasonable conditions, to any pertinent books, documents, papers, and records of any recipient of Federal assistance under this part.

#### Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program

Title V, Subtitle E of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17151 et seq.) authorizes DOE to administer the EECBG. Section 17157, 42 U.S.C., states that:

##### (a) In general

The Secretary may review and evaluate the performance of any eligible entity that receives a grant under the program, including by conducting an audit, as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

### **2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.**

- A. The prime recipient of DOE Recovery Act funds will oversee the distribution of the Authorization form, a standard energy-use disclosure form, to each participating site receiving retrofits funded fully or partially by OWIP Recovery Act funds. DOE will provide a standard energy-use disclosure form for use by grantees. The grantee will aggregate the Authorization forms and provide to DOE, or a third-party evaluator specified by DOE. DOE will oversee the transfer of the information into an electronic database.

The Authorization form will allow an evaluator specified by DOE to obtain the site's monthly energy usage and cost (electricity and natural gas) for at least each of the 36 consecutive months prior to the retrofit, and for up to 36 consecutive months post-retrofit, or as much usage and cost information as exists within this timeframe.

- B. Once the Authorization forms have been completed, the third party evaluator will gather the specified monthly energy usage and cost information with the assistance of the utilities that serve our grantees. The third party evaluator will develop templates and information transfer processes for these data elements, designed to minimize burden to the utilities.

The purpose of the information collection is to estimate the direct impacts on energy and cost savings of ARRA energy efficiency programs. DOE has a particular interest in identifying the most successful market-reliant retrofit activities and the necessary conditions for their spread.

**3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.**

The third party evaluator will collect the authorization forms in batches from grantees, who will have aggregated the individual waivers from the site owners. This portion of the data collection process will not require electronic submission, due to the high degree of variation in sophistication among recipients.

DOE's intention is to develop an electronic system whereby DOE (or an evaluator specified by DOE) can transmit the list of necessary customers directly to the utility and gather the resulting information on energy usage and cost data electronically.

**4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above.**

This request does not duplicate other efforts. DOE currently does not have access to monthly energy usage data from its recipients. DOE is currently developing retrospective program evaluations of the Weatherization Assistance Program, State Energy Program, and Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program during the Recovery Act period. These evaluations will use utility billing information which may overlap that collected under this effort. To address that eventuality, DOE will identify a method by which to uniquely identify (e.g. account numbers) the information collected that obviates the need for duplicate collection during the conduct of the program evaluations.

**5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities (Item 5 of OMB Form 83-I), describe any methods used to minimize burden.**

This request has minimal impact on small businesses, local governments and individuals. Site owners (including individuals and small businesses) will be asked to fill out the Authorization form, which is estimated to take 15 minutes to complete. Local governments will be asked to aggregate the disclosure forms from their subgrantees or sites and provide them to DOE. DOE

will compile utility bill disclosure information into a database and work directly with utilities to gather energy usage data on a monthly basis.

**6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.**

Utility billing data gives DOE a greater ability to manage and evaluate the \$11.3B in grant funding under management through the WAP, SEP, and EECBG programs. Provision of this data gives DOE a faster method by which to start understanding the actual impact of the investment made through the Recovery Act and an opportunity to start identification of best practices across all three programs. If unable to undertake the collection, OWIP will be unable to use actual impact data for managerial purposes and will likely have to wait 18 months at minimum to begin to identify best practices off of actual result through process and impact evaluations, which is too far into the execution of the Recovery Act to be of any utility. There are no technical or legal issues to reducing burden.

**7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:**

**Requiring respondents to report information more frequently than quarterly.**

None.

**Requiring written response in less than 30 days.**

None.

**Requiring more than an original and two copies.**

None.

**Requiring respondents to retain records for more than 3 years.**

None

**Utilizing statistical sampling.**

None.

**Requiring the use of statistical sampling which has not been reviewed and approved by OMB.**

None.

**Requiring a pledge of confidentiality.**

There are no such requirements.

**Requiring submission of proprietary trade secrets.**

None

**8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden. Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported. Consultation with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained or those who must compile records should occur at least once every 3 years - even if the collection of information activity is the same as in prior periods. There may be circumstances that may preclude consultation in a specific situation. These circumstances should be explained.**

As published in the Federal Register on January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2010 (Vol. 75, No. 13 pp. 3454), DOE provided a 14-day public comment period on Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP), State Energy Program (SEP), and Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program reporting guidance for the Recovery Act along with a utility billing disclosure form. During this period, 106 public comments were received.

Of the 106 public comments received, 2 comments were relevant to utility billing disclosure and came from private organizations focused on energy efficiency and energy management. These comments were supportive of DOE's efforts to use utility billing data to verify energy savings.

**9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than reenumeration of contractors or grantees.**

None.

**10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.**

As part of the collection of respondent utility billing data from utilities or other energy providers, DOE will require the third-party evaluator to sign non-disclosure agreements that restrict the disclosure of personally identifiable information (PII) such as account numbers to any individuals or organizations external to the conduct of the analysis. In utilizing a third-party evaluator to implement this collection, storage, and analysis of this information, DOE will avoid the potential of utility billing data being released with PII through a Freedom of Information Act request.

**11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.**

Utility billing information is considered to be sensitive in nature but its collection is essential to the effort DOE is undertaking. Signature of the waiver to disclose utility billing data is voluntary and will not affect respondent eligibility for programs under the Office of Weatherization and Intergovernmental Programs. These waiver forms will be provided to prime recipients for further distribution to the respondents. Furthermore, PII will be protected per Question #10 above.

**12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.**

Prime and sub-recipient burden

Potential facilities: 150,000\*

\*This is an estimated number of facilities retrofitted across EECBG and SEP. WAP sub-recipients (CAAs) nominally provide utility billing waiver forms as a part of a program implementation. Thus this collection imposes no additional burden.

Estimated hours required for distribution of waiver forms: (5 min to identify correct respondent and address correspondence)

Prime recipient burden: 150,000 potential respondents x 0.08 hr/respondent: 12,500 hours

Respondent burden

Facility respondents: 600,000 facilities \*

\*This assumes an 80% response rate for an estimated 750,000 facilities retrofitted across EECBG, SEP and WAP programs.

Estimated hours required for information submission: 0.25 hr (15 min for completion of the utility billing disclosure waiver)

Respondent burden: 600,000 respondents x 0.25 hr/respondent: 150,000 hours

Energy supplier burden

Facility respondents: 600,000 facilities \*

\*This assumes an 80% response rate for an estimated 750,000 facilities retrofitted across EECBG, SEP and WAP programs.

Estimated hours required for information submission: 0.16 hr (10 min for querying corporate systems for billing data and assembling response)

<u>Usage</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Per unit burden</u>	<u>Total</u>
Electricity Usage	100%	600,000	0.16 hour	100,000
Natural Gas	50%	300,000	0.16 hour	50,000
Total				150,000

Total burden

Prime and sub-recipient burden:	12,500 hours
Respondent burden:	150,000 hours
<u>Energy supplier burden:</u>	<u>150,000 hours</u>
Total	312,500 hours

**13. Provide an estimate for the total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in Items 12 and 14).**

At the time of this collection, it estimated that approximately one-half of the retrofits will be completed. For the remaining facilities, distribution of forms will occur in the normal course of business (i.e. the form will be included in other administrative paperwork) and as such, prime recipients will not incur a cost in distribution. For facilities retrofitted prior to inception of data collection, prime recipients will have to distribute waiver forms, likely via post. Costs to be incurred:

Estimated per recipient cost for waiver distribution:

Postage: \$0.44/letter x 2 (return envelope)

Letter and envelope: \$0.26 (two sheets of paper and A10 envelope)

Prime recipient cost burden: 750,000 forms x 50% x \$1.14/form (\$427,500)

**14. Provide estimates of annualized costs to the Federal government.**

Data analysis is to be completed by a third-party evaluator. Management and guidance for this effort will be provided by DOE, but all further collection (data from utilities and energy providers) will be conducted by a third-party evaluator. The costs associated with this task are still being determined.

**15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 or 14 of the OMB Form 83-I.**

Not applicable

**16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.**

The information collected is not intended to be published at this time. No complex analytical techniques will be employed.

**17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.**

Not applicable. DOE is not seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of this information collection.

**18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19, "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions," of OMB Form 83-I.**

Not applicable. There are no exceptions to the certification statement.

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