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ENERGY EFFICIENCY FUND OFFERS INCENTIVES TO PARTICIPANTS TO ENSURE PROPER INSTALLATION OF HEATING AND COOLING EQUIPMENT

New Program Developed to Maximize Return on Homeowner Investments

JUNE 22, 2011, New Britain, CONN. – Connecticut residents are among the first in the country to be given the chance to participate in an innovative new program that offers financial incentives. The Quality Installation and Verification (QIV) program certifies that new air conditioning and heating equipment is installed in accordance with standards recently created by the Air Conditioning Contractors of America (ACCA).

Participating customers of CL&P and UI will receive checks of \$500 per household once results of air conditioning or heat pump installation are successfully verified. In addition, Yankee Gas, Southern Connecticut Gas and Connecticut Natural Gas customers who replace a qualifying natural gas warm-air system, or install one for the first time, will be issued incentive checks of \$100 per home.

The program is offered by the Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund in partnership with Connecticut Light & Power (CL&P), The United Illuminating Company (UI), and the state's three natural gas companies. To be eligible for the QIV program, all equipment must be ENERGY STAR® qualified. Participation is expected to be mandatory for ENERGY STAR-certified homes beginning next year.

“This Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund program is an excellent opportunity for homeowners to make energy-saving upgrades and to receive financial incentives for being environmentally conscious,” said Richard W. Steeves, Chairperson, Energy Efficiency Board.

According to CL&P Operations Supervisor Joseph Swift, the program can significantly reduce a homeowner's air conditioning and heating bills while maximizing comfort levels.

"All too often, the installation of HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) equipment neglects a total systems approach and does not address proper equipment sizing or duct losses," Swift said. "Now we've developed a program to help solve that problem and we're in the process of implementing it for our customers."

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The Cap family of Middletown participated in a similar ENERGY STAR® HVAC Quality Installation pilot program administered by CL&P through the Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund and supported by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The Caps estimated that the program resulted in a 20 percent reduction in their natural gas usage with no sacrifice in comfort.

“It was nice to know that the system was really doing what they said it would,” said homeowner Michael Cap, whose contractor, Aiello Home Services, used the new criteria to install a central air conditioning system in place of window units and to replace a furnace that the technician determined was too large for the residence.

The contractor also performed ancillary services, including testing and sealing duct work to reduce air leaks, taking measurements throughout the home to ensure adequate air flow, and checking the refrigerant levels in the air conditioner.

On-the-spot improvements and computations like these, along with energy-saving recommendations and information on available rebates, are provided during an initial in-home assessment by a Home Energy Solutions (HES) approved contractor as a preliminary step in QIV program participation.

QIV participants may choose a contractor from an approved list provided by utility program administrators, which includes information on the level of experience each contractor has had in working with the program.

For more information on the QIV program, call 1-877-WISE USE (1-877-947-3873) or visit www.CTEnergyInfo.com, Connecticut’s complete energy information resource.

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About the Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund

The Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund promotes efficient energy use, helps residents and businesses save on their electric and natural gas bills, advances economic development, reduces electric demand, and helps reduce air pollution. Energy Efficiency Fund programs serve residential customers, including limited- and fixed-income customers, as well as business and municipal customers. Connecticut's energy efficiency programs are funded by a charge on customers' utility bills and administered by the state's electric and gas utilities including: Connecticut Light and Power, The United Illuminating Company, Yankee Gas, Connecticut Natural Gas, and Southern Connecticut Gas. Additional information on Connecticut's energy efficiency programs can be found at www.CTEnergyInfo.com or by calling 1-877-WISE-USE (1-877-947-3873).