

**Southeast Texas Regional Planning Commission (SETRPC)**

**Lighthouse Program**

**SEP No. 2011-33 – as Amended on 8/3/2021 and 7/5/2022**

**Project Description**

This Project will use SEP Funds to assist low-income homeowners within the city limits of Port Arthur and Beaumont, Texas, by (1) conducting home energy inspections and audits; (2) weatherizing and performing energy efficient improvements to homes; and (3) repairing or replacing heating/cooling systems with new, energy efficient equipment.

SETRPC receives applications from individuals seeking assistance through this Project. SETRPC's Program Manager shall conduct eligibility determinations on each applicant. Eligibility determinations include verifying that the applicant owns the home and that the applicant qualifies as low-income. Low-income households fall at or below the 80 percent median income level for households in Jefferson County.

SEP Funds will be used to hire a contractor to conduct initial inspections of eligible applicants' homes. The inspections will determine whether the home is in a condition suitable for weatherization and energy efficiency upgrades. Specifically, upgrades will not be completed at homes that need new roofs or significant foundation work. The contractor shall also determine what weatherization and energy efficiency upgrades are necessary and appropriate for the home and write a work plan. This contractor shall also conduct the final inspection of the home after the work is completed.

SETRPC shall hire a separate contractor to do the work delineated in the work plan. SETRPC shall enter a three-way contract between the contractor and the homeowner. The cost of work to be completed will be limited to the lower of \$25,000 or 75% of the home's value as assessed by Jefferson County Appraisal District. The contractor shall have 90 days to complete the work. SEP Funds will be used to pay the contractor for labor, materials, and equipment such as heating and air conditioning units, windows, and doors. Weatherization and energy efficiency upgrades may include blowing insulation into attics and walls, replacing windows, caulking, duct replacement, installing air conditioning and furnace units, obtaining Texas Windstorm Insurance Inspection Certification for the alterations made to the home, and replacing doors. Work such as replacing siding and trim may be necessary after upgrades are completed, but no purely cosmetic work will be paid for with SEP Funds. Heating and cooling units, inner doors, storm doors, and windows that are not Energy Star rated may be replaced with units that have an Energy Star rating. The contractor must properly dispose of the replaced units at an authorized disposal facility; no units may be reused for any purpose.

In addition to conducting homeowner eligibility reviews, SETRPC's Program Manager shall prepare all contracts with contractors and homeowners, coordinate between the contractors and the homeowners to answer questions, ensure that work is done timely and properly, and arrange for any necessary repairs to new equipment under the 12-month warranty period after work is completed.

Yard signs will be placed outside of homes that have been upgraded with SEP Funds. The signs will include the language specified under the agreement.

**Eligible Sites**

Eligible homes will be limited to those where the homeowner qualifies as low-income as defined by TEX. GOV'T CODE § 2306.004(15).

**Environmental Benefit**

Implementation of this Project will benefit air by reducing residential fuel and electricity usage for heating and cooling. These reductions, in turn, will reduce emissions of particulate matter, volatile organic compounds, and the nitrogen oxides associated with the combustion of fuel and the generation of electricity. Past energy audits have shown a 12-30% reduction in energy usage after completion of the weatherization and energy upgrades.

**Eligible Areas and Counties**

Angelina, Hardin, Houston, Jasper, Jefferson, Nacogdoches, Newton, Orange, Polk, Sabine, San Augustine, Trinity, and Tyler Counties

**Minimum Contribution Amount**

\$500

**Total Project Budget**

\$5,679,300.00