



PIIC EnergyWise Program Tribal Member Participation Guidelines

Purpose

The Prairie Island Indian Community (PIIC) EnergyWise program helps Tribal Members with homes on PIIC Tribal land to lower their energy bills and improve home comfort and efficiency. Homeowners who sign up to participate will receive a home energy audit and recommended energy upgrades at no cost.

An energy expert will evaluate your home's energy use and identify opportunities to enhance its energy efficiency. You will choose the PIIC-approved upgrades you want to make in your home, then they will be installed by a professional at no cost to you.

The goal is to provide long-term savings and support healthier, more sustainable living environments for our community.

PIIC is working with [Center for Energy and Environment](#) (CEE), a Minnesota-based energy efficiency nonprofit, to administer this program.

Program Participation

1. Who is eligible?

PIIC Tribal Members with homes on Tribal land are eligible to participate. This includes existing homeowners at Lower Island, Mato Circle, and Dakota Circle. Members planning homes on new land assignments at Oyate Place may also participate in several ways:

- Used homes placed on Oyate Place land assignments will be eligible for free energy audits and upgrades, just like existing homes on Tribal land.
- New site-built construction or newly manufactured homes placed on Oyate Place land assignments are not eligible for the audit and upgrades, but they will be eligible for rebates related to energy efficient equipment, systems, and designs.

Homes that are not on Tribal land are *not* eligible to participate.



2. How do I sign up?

Registration for this program is currently closed. Future registration opportunities will be noted on our website.

Members who register in subsequent rounds will receive program benefits after projects from previous rounds are completed, at which time the available budget may be reduced.

After the EnergyWise program team reviews your completed sign-up form and confirms your eligibility, they will be in contact to schedule your home energy audit visit. The visit takes 2–3 hours, and an adult must be present the whole time.

3. Who covers program costs?

There are no costs to participating PIIC Tribal Members for their energy audits or upgrades. PIIC pays for these projects with funding from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA; via Assistance Agreement), the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Dakota Electric Association, and Xcel Energy.

4. What can I expect as a program participant?

Key steps a PIIC Tribal Member will take when participating in the PIIC EnergyWise program are shown on the next page.

Program guide continues on the next page.



Note: if you do NOT have an existing home and instead plan to purchase or build a home on a new land assignment, you will be eligible for energy rebates rather than an energy audit and upgrades; refer to [question one](#) (1) for more information.

5. What is the energy audit like?

A typical home energy audit takes about two to three (2–3) hours. It is non-invasive and shouldn't significantly disrupt your daily activities. It is limited to finding ways to improve your home's energy use. The EnergyWise program team will examine your home's insulation levels, heating and cooling systems, appliances, and lighting to identify areas where energy efficiency can be improved. Any observations made or work performed at your home by the EnergyWise team will be strictly limited to energy-related items necessary for the program, and the data collected will be securely maintained.



6. What happens after the audit?

After your audit, CEE will prepare a report for you and recommend energy upgrades for your home based on the results of the energy audit. You will have a chance to review the report with a team member and then you will decide which upgrades you'd like to make to your home. The EnergyWise program team will complete all the work and conduct a final inspection.

7. What upgrades will I receive?

Specific energy upgrades recommended for existing homes will be tailored to the home's needs based on the audit findings. You will be able to choose what upgrades you want. Nothing will be done without your permission. PIIC will approve of some or all of the following upgrades for existing homes:

Core efficiency measures

We focus first on the most important and impactful areas of your home that can improve your energy efficiency, reduce your energy costs, and reduce carbon emissions. Examples include adding insulation, upgrading to an efficient heating and cooling system, and upgrading to an efficient water heater. This may include replacing current systems with air source heat pumps.

Advanced measures

If your home already has strong core efficiency measures, we will consider other advanced measures that may benefit your home. Examples may include upgrading to a heat pump dryer, upgrading to an induction-stove, and replacing nonfunctional windows.

Health and safety improvements

We may provide other improvements to your home if we find hazards in the home that could: a) prevent a contractor from safely completing a recommended energy upgrade, b) prevent an energy upgrade's installation/success, or c) create issues in your home because of the new energy upgrade. Examples include addressing essential energy-related plumbing, electrical, or ventilation issues and mitigating radon and asbestos, if tested for and found to be present in the home.



NOTE: PIIC and the EnergyWise program team make recommendations and approve upgrades for your home based on the following priorities/criteria: the unique needs of your home, energy upgrades that address essential efficiency, health, and safety first (prior to addressing more advanced work), reducing extraneous waste (such as avoiding the replacement of very new equipment already in the home), and balancing the program budget to provide the most support to the homes with the greatest energy inefficiencies.

New Site-Built Construction or New Manufactured Homes (Oyate Place)

Through the EnergyWise program, Members who are building new site-built homes or who are purchasing new manufactured homes are eligible for rebates when energy efficient choices and investments are made during the construction or assembly process. Members who purchase a previously owned manufactured home can participate in the existing homes pathway. Members with new homes can earn a maximum of \$6,000 in rebates. For the purposes of this program:

- Site-built homes are considered “new” if they were built on/after 9/1/2024.
- Manufactured homes are considered “new” if they were purchased on/after 9/1/2024.

Members with new homes can earn rebates in one of two ways:

Whole Home Certification Rebates

Whole Home Certifications for new homes	Rebate
ENERGY STAR®-certified manufactured homes or site-built homes	\$6,000
Department of Energy (DOE) Efficient New Homes site-built homes	\$6,000

- If the Whole Home Certificate is earned, the home is not eligible to receive project-based rebates.
- Members can [contact the New Homes team](#) at Center for Energy and Environment for assistance earning these certificates.



Project-based rebates

Technology	Required specifications	Rebate
Heating and cooling		
High-efficiency furnace (gas)	At least 96% AFUE	\$500
Cold climate air source heat pump (electric)	At least 8.1 HSPF2	\$5,000
Air source heat pump (electric)	At least 7.5 HSPF2	\$3,000
Water heating		
Heat pump water heater (electric)	ENERGY STAR rated or AHRI listed	\$500
Appliances – electric only		
ENERGY STAR clothes washer	ENERGY STAR rated	\$50
ENERGY STAR clothes dryer	ENERGY STAR rated	\$50
ENERGY STAR refrigerator	ENERGY STAR rated	\$50
ENERGY STAR induction stove (electric)	ENERGY STAR rated	\$200

Project-based rebates are available to:

The owners of new site-built homes when the project is completed by a contractor during construction or when the owner can demonstrate that they've purchased qualifying Energy Star Appliances for their new home.

The owners of newly assembled manufactured homes when they purchase qualifying equipment for the assembly process or install an eligible ENERGY STAR appliance during or after the assembly process.

Applications for the project-based rebates can be found [online](#).



Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who covers program costs?

There are no costs to participating PIIC Tribal Members for the energy audits or following upgrades. PIIC can pay for these projects with funding from Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Dakota Electric Association, and Xcel Energy.

2. What are the responsibilities of participants?

When participating in the EnergyWise program, PIIC Tribal Members will agree to:

- Allow EnergyWise program team access to the home for up to three (3) hours on the day of the energy audit; sign required forms prior to start of visit.
- Spend approximately 15–30 minutes discussing the audit results with the EnergyWise program team within approximately two (2) weeks of the audit.

If Tribal Members want to proceed with any of the energy upgrades recommended during the audit, you will also agree to:

- Accommodate a few visits to the home to enable environmental testing (radon, etc.) if required, and up to five (5) brief contractor visits to secure firm quotes for the work.
- Sign a Task Order to agree to the energy upgrade projects.
- Allow contractors to access the home to complete the energy upgrades.
- Allow the EnergyWise program team to access the home for a final quality assurance inspection within two (2) weeks of the final project completion.
- Sign a completion form and provide feedback on your program experience.
- Operate and maintain the installed equipment and/or systems on an ongoing basis (up to the homeowner).

Our goal is to support you through this EnergyWise Program process; however, **please note that if you are non-responsive to our repeated attempts to reach you, you may be removed from the program** so we can focus our resources on the participants ready to take the next steps. Please note the following expectations:

- The program team will make *three (3) attempts to contact* you via your preferred communication channels at each step of the program; no response to these attempts may result in being removed from the program. No shows to scheduled



estimate or installation appointments may result in being removed from the program.

- Timely signature on all required paperwork is critical; no signature on required paperwork within two (2) weeks of receiving it from the EnergyWise Program team may result in being removed from the program.

If you are removed from the program due to non-responsiveness, you are invited to contact the program team at your convenience to see if funding is still available and determine if continued participation is possible.

3. Who will maintain the new energy equipment and/or systems?

PIIC members participating in the PIIC EnergyWise program will be responsible for operating and maintaining installed energy equipment and systems once the project work is complete and ownership/warranties are transferred to the homeowner. Much of the equipment/systems will come with standard warranties. Any future maintenance or fixes not covered under the warranties that may arise after the projects are installed and verified through a quality assurance inspection shall be the responsibility of the homeowner. For example, if a new water heater is installed, annual equipment tune-ups are the responsibility of the homeowner.

4. Who is the PIIC EnergyWise program team?

PIIC has hired the nonprofit [Center for Energy and Environment](#) (CEE) to deliver the PIIC EnergyWise program, including performing home energy audits and overseeing the implementation of energy upgrades in PIIC member homes. CEE has nearly 40 years of experience performing this work for many other homes and communities across Minnesota, including delivering a similar energy audit program for the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community. They are energy experts and held to high industry standards for their work performance.