

ROADMAP FOR NEIGHBORHOODS

Securing a Group Discount

The Department of Environmental Health's residential energy efficiency program, the Denver Energy Challenge (DEC), has prepared a helpful roadmap for neighborhoods looking to facilitate a group discount for specific home energy efficiency measure.

WHAT IS A GROUP DISCOUNT?

Think of it like bringing the concept of buying in bulk to your neighborhood. The more people buying a product at one time typically brings down the costs for everyone.

WHAT DOES A GROUP DISCOUNT LOOK LIKE IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD?

The purpose of a group discount is to establish a group of homeowners interested in completing one energy efficiency measure in their home (such as insulation), and then soliciting proposals from local contractors who will ultimately offer a limited-time discount on the measure the group has expressed interest in.

STEPS TO IMPLEMENT A GROUP DISCOUNT

1. Identify Homeowner Interest
2. Develop Project
3. Inquire with Qualified Contractors
4. Oversee Progress

The following checklists are intended to help a neighborhood secure a group discount offer:

IDENTIFY HOMEOWNER INTEREST

- Designate 1-2 individuals as the project lead.
- Hold a meeting to discuss the idea, or announce at existing neighborhood meeting.
- Prepare a survey to poll those interested and determine which measure is top priority.

HELPFUL TIPS

FINDING HOMEOWNERS

If you are trying to find others to join you in a group discount think about contacting your Registered Neighborhood Organization or inquire within Next Door or other closed social media groups to generate interest.

THINK ABOUT THE TIME OF YEAR

Once you've determined which measure you want to implement, think about the time of year you're inquiring about a discount. For instance, if you want to get a discount on evaporative coolers, but ask contractors during the middle of summer, it may be difficult to receive interest because many contractors will already be busy. Consider the "shoulder season" for your request when work is typically slower for contractors.

UTILIZE EXISTING OUTLETS

If your group has an existing social media page (Registered Neighborhood Org Facebook or Next Door) or email listserve, save yourself time and use them to get your message out rather than starting a new page or campaign that residents may not be familiar with. Inquire within your group if anyone has access to, or knowledge of using online surveys, meeting requests and document sharing sites to make your communication process easier.



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DEVELOP PROJECT

It is recommended that groups only try to facilitate one upgrade at a time to maintain a clear and simple offer that lessens confusion on all parts.

Example of Energy Measures:

Insulation & Air Sealing (Attic, crawlspace, walls)	Heating Upgrade (Furnace, Boiler)	Air Conditioner Upgrade
Water Heating Replacement	Evaporative Cooler	Solar PV

Things to Consider When Choosing Your Upgrade

- Decide as a group if the measure needs to be at a certain efficiency level. Ex. Certain products with low efficiency ratings may not qualify for utility rebates or low-interest energy financing.
- Estimate the average price for the upgrade. Ask around or, if possible, obtain a few quotes for the upgrade at one or two homes to assess what the average price might be. *Keep in mind every home is different and additional costs may incur based on a home's size, layout and existing systems.*
- Estimate the average time-frame to complete the upgrade.
- Decide as a group what kind of discount would be the most motivating/attractive.
- Find out if rebates are available for the upgrade. Check with Xcel Energy, the local utility for homes within the City and County of Denver, to see if rebates are available and when they expire.
- Ask if/be mindful that some residents may want/need help paying for the upgrade. If so, what type of energy financing is available in Denver? (See Denver Energy Challenge under "Helpful Resources")
- Get a final count of homes interested in the offer.

INQUIRE WITH QUALIFIED CONTRACTORS

- Discuss the energy measure your group wants (Ex. high efficiency furnace replacements in 20 homes).
- Are they licensed to do work within the City and County of Denver?
- Are they pulling permits for their specialized trade (See page 3, "Why Do Permits Matter?")?
- What certifications do they have?
- What specific measure will they provide (Brand, model, efficiency rating, etc.)?
- What type of discount will they offer? And will it include additional costs (such as venting or ducting) currently unknown until contractor has visited the home?
- Are they a factory authorized dealer? *May not be applicable depending on the upgrade your group has chosen.*
- Is the contractor's work eligible for an Xcel Energy rebate?
- Do they have the capacity to complete upgrades in all homes?

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INQUIRE WITH QUALIFIED CONTRACTORS

Continued:

- How long will it take to install the measure in all homes?
- Will they require a minimum number of homes to offer the discount? If so, what is the minimum? What happens if that changes?
- Is there a set time frame residents need to commit to before the discount goes away? And will it affect rebate eligibility?
- If the group wishes, establish a Memorandum of Understanding so everyone is clear what the final offer is, who is participating, and the time frame with which the contractor can complete projects.
- Do they have references you can call?

(A template with sample questions your group may wish to send to each contractor can be found at the end of this document.)

OVERSEE PROGRESS

- Maintain contact lists of those participating.
- Maintain a list of contractors and discounts they are willing to offer.
- Once offers are collected, bring findings back to the group. If necessary, send out another survey with offers to determine which one the group likes best.
- Select your contractor.
- Manage communication on behalf of the group with chosen contractor.

CITY & COUNTY OF DENVER ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROJECTS THAT CURRENTLY REQUIRE A PERMIT*

- Insulation & Air Sealing
- Solar PV
- Furnace
- Solar Hot Water
- Air Conditioner
- Water Heater

WHY DO PERMITS MATTER?

- A permit ensures that the person/company performing the work is qualified to do it.
- A permit ensures that an independent third party will inspect the work upon completion.
- Work done by someone who is not qualified to perform it could result in safety issues in your home (structural problems, risk of electrical fire, etc.).
- You have little to no legal recourse if you contract to do work without a permit and the resulting work is incomplete, subpar, or creates safety issues in your home.
- Failure to obtain a permit could cost you more in the long run. Examples include costly repairs to correct subpar work and after-the-fact permit fees from the city.
- Unpermitted work could void your home insurance coverage.
- Re-financing or selling your home could be hampered by unpermitted work, in part because unpermitted work may not comply with minimum city building code requirements.

**It is recommended you check-in with Denver's Community Planning & Development Department to confirm which permits are necessary, and if any processes have changed such as an over the counter permit versus a home inspection.*

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HELPFUL RESOURCES

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

To find out if a contractor is licensed, or if a permit is required contact:

[Denvergov.org/ContractorLicenses](https://denvergov.org/ContractorLicenses) | 720-865-2982

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Group Discount Support from City Staff

720-865-5430

DENVER ENERGY CHALLENGE PROGRAM

Residential energy efficiency program at the City and County of Denver. This program provides the following related to a group discount:

ENERGY FINANCING

Residents within the City and County of Denver have access to low-interest financing for energy upgrades. Contact the program to find out if the discounted measure your group has chosen is eligible for financing. Individuals must obtain approval BEFORE the measure is installed. Completed projects are ineligible for funds.

[DenverEnergy.org](https://denverenergy.org) | 720-865-5520

XCEL ENERGY

Visit Xcel's website or call them directly to find out what rebates are currently available and when they will expire.

[XcelEnergy.com](https://xcelenergy.com) | 800-895-4999



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REQUEST FOR INFORMATION Group Discount

FOR CONTRACTOR

Contractor:
From: (Neighborhood/Group)
Contact: (Project Lead)
Phone & Email:

Instructions: Please answer the following questions and send back to the Contact listed above.

SUMMARY OF REQUEST

QUESTIONS

1. Are you licensed to do work within the City and County of Denver?

License# _____

2. What is your process for pulling permits related to this upgrade?

3. What certifications do you have related to this upgrade?

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION Group Discount

QUESTIONS

4. What specific measure will you provide?

Brand

Model

Efficiency rating _____ Other specs?

5. What is your discount offer for our group?

6. Will this discount apply to additional costs (such as venting or ducting) currently unknown until contractor has visited the home to quote?

7. Are you a factory authorized dealer?

8. Will the work you perform be eligible for an Xcel Energy rebate? (Please attach rebate if applicable)

9. How long will it take your team to install this measure in all homes?

10. Will you require a minimum number of homes to offer the discount?

11. If yes, what is the minimum? What happens if that changes while some homes are in process?

12. Is there a set time frame residents need to commit to before the discount goes away? And will it affect rebate eligibility?

13. Do you have 1-2 references we can call?

14. Do you have any questions for us?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME! WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE POSSIBILITY OF WORKING WITH YOU!

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Group Discount

THIS AGREEMENT IS MADE BETWEEN:

Contractor Name:

Neighborhood/Organization/Group:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

AS PART OF THIS AGREEMENT, CONTRACTOR WILL:

AS PART OF THIS AGREEMENT, THE NEIGHBORHOOD WILL:

OFFER DISCOUNT GOOD UNTIL:

CONTACTS:

CONTRACTOR NAME(S):

GROUP DISCOUNT LEAD(S):