



## Not your mother's tax incentives

Since 2006, tax credits for energy-efficient products have allowed U.S. homeowners to enjoy the “triple crown” of energy efficiency: lower home energy bills, lower federal income taxes, and increased home comfort. Now, consumers stand to receive a savings of up to 30 percent more on their investment, thanks to the latest tax credits included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), which has raised the cap on energy efficiency home improvements to \$1,500 in federal income tax credits through 2010.

That's three times what older, now-expired tax credits were worth, which can help make these energy efficiency upgrades more affordable. In addition, the longer time frame gives homeowners more time to plan and budget for the more costly energy efficiency upgrades, which will provide a terrific return on investment for years to come in the form of lower energy costs.

ARRA's federal income tax credits for specific home improvements are very similar to those that were in effect in 2006 and 2007. However, consumers should be aware of some “new wrinkles”, mostly having to do with the installation of specific products and equipment that qualify for the 2009-10 tax credits.

Consumers should also be aware of



the all-important detailed criteria for qualifying products:

- For each type of qualifying equipment, the credit is for 30 percent of the cost up to \$1,500.
- It is a one-time tax credit with a maximum of \$1,500 per taxpayer over the 2009-2010 time frame. The \$1,500 may be used in one single year or spread among the two years.
- Homeowners who claimed any part of the \$500 credit available in 2006-2007 can still claim the full \$1,500 credit for additional qualifying products bought and installed in 2009 and/or 2010.
- There are two basic categories of qualifying equipment – “building envelope” products and heating and cooling equipment.
  - Building envelope products are replacement windows and doors (including storm windows, storm doors, and skylights), certain ENERGY STAR asphalt and metal roofs, insulation, and other sealing products.
  - Heating and cooling equipment includes furnaces, boilers, gas or propane water heaters, central air conditioning systems (but not window air conditioner units), and biomass stoves.
- Installation costs are not covered for building envelope products.
- Installation costs are covered for heating and cooling equipment.
- For some products, the qualifying criteria are more stringent than they were in 2006 and 2007 and, under different legislation, in early 2009 (from January 1, 2009, though February 17, 2009, the date that the ARRA was signed into law). For example, all ENERGY STAR windows no longer qualify; now they must meet additional energy efficiency criteria.
- Specific efficiency criteria also apply to heating and cooling equipment. But for exterior windows and skylights, the older criteria apply to products purchased and put into service before June 1, 2009.
- Homeowners who purchased and put into service equipment meeting those older criteria between January 1 and February 17, 2009, can still claim the higher percentage of the cost (30 percent) and the higher dollar amount (\$1,500).
- Incentives for geothermal heat pumps, solar and wind systems fall outside of the 30 percent/\$1,500 caps meaning a full 30 percent of the system's cost is eligible for the tax credit. What a deal!

Visit [www.ase.org/taxcredits](http://www.ase.org/taxcredits) and [www.energytaxincentives.org](http://www.energytaxincentives.org) for more information about eligible products.

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# Salmon improvements in the river, the untold story

A revolution has taken place on the Columbia and Snake rivers. While we wait to see what happens in the courtroom, where the legal wrangling is still playing out, it's a good time to reflect on the past decade and our accomplishments for salmon and steelhead. We have achieved great results with a massive program to benefit fish protected under the Endangered Species Act. Yet, this story of immense investment and measurable progress is

all but lost as attention instead focuses on courtroom antics and calls for dam removal.

The eight federal dams on the Columbia and Snake rivers have undergone major overhauls to successfully aid fish in their journey downstream to the ocean. Big changes have been made at every dam, including the installation of mammoth spillway weirs or "fish slides" at Lower Granite, Ice Harbor, Lower Monumental, Little Goose, McNary, and John Day. A highly effective "corner collector" has been constructed at Bonneville Dam, attracting and moving young fish past the dam unharmed. A new spill wall at The Dalles Dam and spill deflectors at the dams also make for safer travels for the young fish.

Northwest families and businesses have invested over a billion dollars in these massive modifications and young salmon and steelhead survival rates have improved markedly. Overall, in-river survival is three times higher than it was 30 years ago. The fish slides at the dams post survival rates of 97 to

100 percent at most projects, and the corner collector passes fish at a 100 percent survival rate.

In addition to structural modifications, significant changes have been made in the way the dams are operated with fish migration and survival taking precedent over power generation. Substantially more river flow is devoted to help fish move downstream during the spring and summer migration months, boosting survival rates through the dams. Other successful programs have reduced predation by birds, sea lions, and other aquatic animals which take their toll on salmon.

Beyond the dams, habitat projects throughout the four Northwest states have restored productive areas for



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**Lincoln Electric  
Cooperative, Inc.**

## News & Views

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Lincoln Electric's board of trustees meets monthly at the Eureka office. The regular meetings are scheduled for the third Monday of each month at 7 p.m. Members with items of interest are encouraged to contact the general manager in advance of the meeting.

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## Business and Boardroom Briefs

The regular meeting of the board of trustees was conducted September 21, 2009. A quorum of trustees was present and the board took the following action:

- Approved a \$1,500 donation to the TVIA Board of History to complete replacing the boardwalk at the Historical Village.
- Approved a new non-union health insurance policy.
- Denied a member's information request.
- Approved signing an Energy Conservation Agreement with BPA.
- Approved submitting historical easements to the State of Montana.

	Year to Date 8/31/2009	Year to Date 8/31/2008
YTD Kwh Sales	78,250,882	80,057,128
YTD Revenue	\$5,296,653	\$4,876,614
YTD Cost of Power	\$2,044,884	\$2,161,914
YTD Operating Exp	\$2,802,021	\$2,440,562
YTD Margins	\$500,647	\$302,099
# of Members	3,893	3,829
# of Meters	5,175	5,084
Miles of Line	908	885
Total Utility Plant	\$25,928,820	\$25,090,889
Member Equity	\$6,829,378	\$6,581,934
Avg Residential Usage (kWh)	821	811
Avg Residential Billing	\$64.20	\$63.70

# Untold story

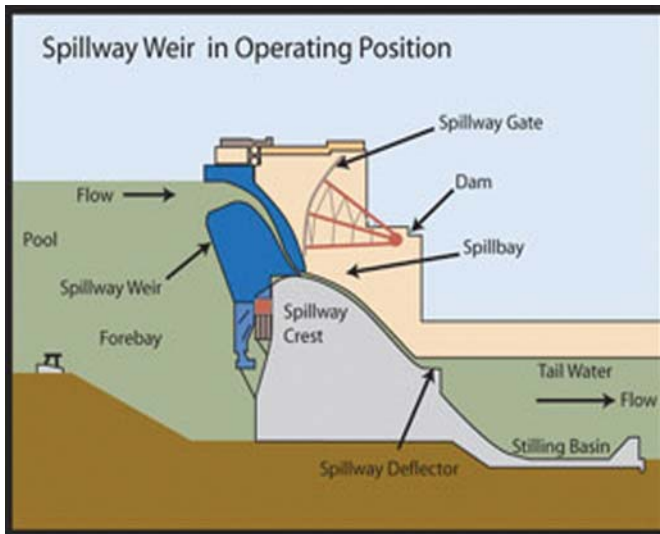
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salmon to spawn and rear both in tributaries and the Columbia River estuary. In the tributaries, government agencies, watershed groups and landowners have teamed up to restore spawning and rearing grounds, open channels for fish passage, and provide more water in stream for fish. Estuary programs benefit multiple species by protecting and restoring riparian and off-channel zones, and reconnecting wetlands and floodplains. Where these improvements have been made, the fish have quickly responded.

Progress also has been made to reform hatcheries, and "safety-net" programs

which artificially produce fish to prevent extinction and preserve genetic integrity are in place. Record-breaking runs of Snake River sockeye over the past two years are testimony to the success of one such safety-net effort in Idaho.

While attention has focused on the litigation churning away in the courtroom, there has been continued great progress in the river. Federal agencies and their partners in fish management have continued unabated, carrying out projects with demonstrable benefits for the fish. The fish don't care about hearings and briefs, they want improved living conditions and that's what the region is giving them.



# ASK THE EXPERT — Practice good zonal heating



I have Cadet and baseboard heaters and am worried about operating costs this winter. What can I do?

You can do two things: First: Practice good "zonal heating". Teach your family to turn down the thermostat to low when they leave a room, just like they do the light switch. Most of us only "live" in a small section of our homes, and those are the areas where we want to feel comfortable. And when you leave the house, turn everything down low.

Second: Consider updating

your thermostats with line voltage electronic or programmable units. Electronic thermostats have fewer temperature swings, so you'll feel more comfortable and will ultimately save more. If you can't seem to remember to turn the thermostats off when you leave or go to bed, invest in programmable models that you can program to your lifestyle. Lincoln Electric has these thermostats available in our lobby. If you elect to replace all your thermostats with new electronic models we will offer you a Buy 3 - Get one Free deal. Can't beat that!



## One good turn deserves another LEC announces residential CFL recycling program

Compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) contain trace amounts of mercury and should be recycled in order to keep hazardous mercury from contaminating our environment.

Lincoln Electric is now accepting spent CFL's for FREE at our office. This is a free service for all residential CFL bulbs. Please place

your unbroken, spent CFL bulbs in a plastic bag and bring to our office for proper disposal. We are not able to

accept linear fluorescents, incandescent bulbs or broken CFL's at this time under this free program.



In observance of Thanksgiving, Lincoln Electric will be closed November 26, 2009. We will also be closed for Veteran's Day on November 11.