

Long Island Town Pays Residents To 'Go Green'

Energy Efficiency Is The Name Of The Game In Babylon



Reporting

[Kirstin Cole](#)

BABYLON, N.Y. (CBS) —



We all want to be kind to the environment -- recycling, using less energy, driving a more efficient car. But when it comes to spending tens of thousands to upgrade our homes many say it's just too big a price tag.

CBS 2 HD found one town, though, that's actually footing the bill for homeowners to go green.

Jo Christiansen likes saving energy, but likes saving money even more.

"It's a win-win situation," Christiansen said.

She recently signed up for a home energy audit. Using an infrared camera, a contractor found spots like her crawl space that needed more insulation, and that she needed a more efficient oil burner and hot water tank.

"This is our new oil boiler, 87 percent efficiency, and this is our new water storage. It loses 1 degree an hour," Christiansen said.

Despite having high ceilings and lots of glass the Christiansens anticipate saving half this winter. Their tab for this energy efficient retrofit is about \$12,000.

"We pay it back at \$111 a month," Christiansen said.

"We'll pay contractors directly, contractors we license so we know they're qualified. They go in, make the energy efficient upgrades and the homeowner pays us back over time with the energy savings they received from the improvement," said Babylon Supervisor Steve Bellone.

Supervisor Bellone has overseen the entire town of Babylon going green. In addition to 200 homes upgraded in the past year through the Long Island Green Homes program, they've made energy-efficient changes to all town buildings and even passed new codes for energy efficient home construction, and used federal stimulus dollars to do it.

"We've decreased the amount the co2 emissions about 650 tons just from this program," Bellone said.

"The genius of a lot of these programs is that people get these improvements in their homes, we can do what's better for the planet and we can do it with no up front costs for the homeowner," said Neal Lewis of the Malloy College Sustainability Institute.

And that's savings that everyone can bank on.

For more information on the Long Island Green Homes project, as well as how your town can engineer a similar program, please click [here](#) and [here](#)