



Maryland Historical Trust Energy Efficiency Initiative

IMPORTANT OFFER FOR OWNERS OF PROPERTY IN THE CHESTERTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT

Homeowner Information and Application

The Maryland Historical Trust's Energy Efficiency Initiative is a partnership between the Trust and various local governments, including Chestertown, to identify the best ways to improve the energy efficiency of historic buildings while maintaining the character and features that make them unique.

What is the Energy Efficiency Study?

The first project in the Initiative is a study of the energy performance of historic homes in four communities across Maryland.

- Participating communities will receive grants of \$6,000 each to hire an energy auditor who will perform energy audits on 8 to 10 historic homes within locally designated historic districts.
- The energy auditor will review the draft findings with the Historic Preservation Commission in each community as well as staff from the Maryland Historical Trust.
- The Commission and the Trust will help the auditor identify energy efficiency strategies that achieve the maximum energy savings while meeting historic preservation standards.
- If the property owner implements some or all of the recommendations, the auditor will return to "test" the effectiveness of the changes.
- The best practices from all of the investigations will be turned into case studies for other property owners, historic preservation commissions, energy auditors, and preservation professionals.

What is an Energy Audit?

According to the U.S. Department of Energy – "A home energy audit is the first step to assess how much energy your home consumes and to evaluate what measures you can take to make your home more energy efficient. An audit will show you problems that may, when corrected, save you significant amounts of money over time. During the audit, you can pinpoint where your house is losing energy. Audits also determine the efficiency of your home's heating and cooling systems. An audit may also show you ways to conserve hot water and electricity."

Why are Energy Audits for historic buildings important?

An energy audit is a simple and cost-effective way to identify energy and money saving techniques for all buildings. Historic properties, particularly those located in designated historic districts, often have unique needs and circumstances. While the most common and often the most effective energy saving activities are usually minor in scope and involve HVAC, sealing cracks and air leaks, or insulating attics and basements, some recommendations may include alterations to the exterior of the building. Additionally, some interior modifications, particularly the installation of certain types of insulation, can have unanticipated adverse effects on historic buildings. The goal of this project is to help energy experts provide energy saving tips that are simultaneously practical, effective, and preservation-friendly.

Why is this study important?

- **Energy is a big deal** – both because of its financial costs, but also because of the significant impacts that existing buildings have on climate change. Buildings account for approximately 40% of all of the energy used in this country each year. In order to affect climate change, we need to reduce the amount of energy our buildings use.
- **Historic buildings are unique** – Not all buildings were created equal. Older buildings were constructed differently than modern buildings and require special attention when attempting to change how they perform. Sometimes, commercially available products and techniques can do more harm than good for old buildings, and we need to find better solutions to those problems. Additionally,



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historic fabric is impossible to truly replace once it is gone, so it is important to develop techniques that allow us to maintain as much historic fabric as possible while providing maximum comfort and efficiency to the owners of historic properties.

- **We have a lot to learn** – There is a significant amount of information about new energy efficient products (insulation, appliances, windows, etc.), a wealth of information about historic buildings and construction systems, and an increasing amount of information about the environmental impacts of buildings. The problem is that there isn't a lot of information about how all of these things can work together.

This study is designed to not only provide property owners with good information about lowering energy consumption, but to create a dialogue between energy performance contractors, historic preservation commissions, and preservation professionals. We are also gathering a number of important pieces of data about the energy performance that will help us identify common trends and issues.

How will the Study work?

- The Town of Chestertown will hire a qualified home energy performance contractor to conduct 10 FREE energy audits on individual properties throughout the Chestertown Historic District.
- The auditor will visit your home at a time that is convenient for you to conduct the energy audit. Energy audits usually last 2-3 hours.
- The auditor will review the results of the audit and the energy usage information provided in advance and will prepare a draft audit report, including identification of key problems and recommendations.
- The auditor, historic preservation commission, and Maryland Historical Trust will meet to review the recommendations and work together to find solutions that achieve the maximum amount of energy savings while preserving the historic fabric of the building.

Why should I participate?

By participating in this study, property owners will receive a free energy audit (~\$500) that has been conducted by a qualified energy performance contractor and has been vetted by a variety of preservation professionals. In addition to the cost savings, the property owner can be reasonably assured that the recommendations that have been provided will, if followed, meet applicable local and state standards for historic preservation. Additionally, most energy audit contractors also identify available incentives, including tax credits, grants, and rebates, as part of the audit report. An energy audit conducted by a qualified contractor is often a prerequisite for qualifying for these incentives. MHT and the HPC will also be able to identify which, if any recommendations would qualify for state or local rehabilitation tax credits.

What types of information will I have to provide and will it be made public?

In addition to basic contact information (name, phone number, etc.), you will need to provide information about your energy consumption for at least one year prior to the audit. This includes total energy used as well as the total cost of all the forms of energy you use in your home (electricity, natural gas, etc.). This information will be used in preparing your individual audit report and will be shared with the Maryland Historical Trust for research purposes only. Published studies and reports will include aggregate data; information about individual properties will have personal information redacted.

Property owners will be expected to allow the energy auditor and a limited number of other team members into their home, but only at such times when the owner is present and have been mutually agreed upon by the owner and the audit team.

Property owners may be asked to give permission for photographs of the interior and exterior of the property to be taken as part of the study. These photographs may be used in promotional or educational materials in the future, but the owner reserves the right to restrict the use of certain images if, in their opinion, the images would compromise the safety of themselves or their property.

Do I have to do anything with the results of the audit?

Participating property owners are under no formal obligation to implement any of the recommendations in the audit report. However, preference for participation in this study will be given to property owners who express and can demonstrate an interest in undertaking some form of energy improvement measures within the next 3 –12 months.

Participants to do perform some form of energy efficiency work within an allotted time frame will have the auditor return to their property after completion of the work to "test" the effectiveness of the work.



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Homeowner Application

Application Deadline: May 30, 2010

Please Return to: Kees de Mooy
Town of Chestertown
118 N. Cross Street
Chestertown MD 21620

Date _____

Your Name _____

Property Address _____

City _____ **State** MD **Zip** _____

Are you the legal owner of this property? Yes No

Daytime Phone _____ **Email** _____

How long have you owned this property? _____

Is this property your primary residence? Yes No

How many people live in this home? _____

Have you ever performed any work intended to enhance the energy performance of this property in the past?

Yes No If Yes, please describe: _____

Are you considering performing work to improve the energy efficiency of this property in the near future?

Yes – I intend to perform some work within the next 3 months

Yes – I intend to perform some work within the next 6 months

Yes – I intend to perform some work within the next 12 months

I have thought about it, but have no plans as of now

No – I have no intentions of doing any energy efficiency projects in the foreseeable future

What types of projects are you considering? _____

What are your primary motivations in performing this work? (check all that apply)

Lower my energy bills

Improve the comfort of my home

It's time to make some energy upgrades and I want to do it right

I want to take advantage of Federal tax credits for energy efficiency improvements

I want to do my part to reduce energy consumption

Other



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Why do you want to participate in this study?

I understand that if selected, I may be asked to provide detailed information about my home's energy performance, afford access to the Town of Chestertown, their contractors or agents, and/or representatives from the Maryland Historical Trust/Maryland Department of Planning.

Signature _____ Date _____