Expert guidance for energy cost savings and increased comfort

Case Study

**Customer:**
Tina Thomas

**Location:**
Black River, NY

**Industry:**
Single-Family Residential

**Approved For:**
- EmPower New York Program
- Weatherization Assistance Program

Background

Tina Thomas and her husband reside in an 1,876 sq. ft. single-family home located in Black River, NY. The floors of the house were always ice cold and the front door produced a terrible draft—Tina often had to adjust the thermostat to higher temperatures to stay comfortable. However, due to their financial situation, home improvements were not in their budget. While at a local food pantry, she was approached by a Community Energy Advisor (CEA), Kathryn Ripstein from Cornell Cooperative Extension Jefferson County with information about New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) programs designed to help residents cover the costs of energy efficiency upgrades in their homes.

Kathryn explained that through the Community Energy Engagement Program, Tina could access the support needed to make informed decisions on what approach would work best for her and her situation.

Benefits of a Community Energy Advisor

CEAs work directly with homeowners to discuss financing options for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects and products. They act as a guide through the process of identifying and implementing a clean energy project and connect homeowners with qualified contractors.

The CEA felt the EmPower New York and Weatherization Assistance programs would best suit Tina’s needs. With Kathryn's assistance, Tina immediately filled out the application and was subsequently approved.
**Project Costs**

- **Before incentives:** $8,798.78

  - **Incentives provided:**
    - Weatherization Assistance Program: $7,595.50
    - EmPower New York: $1,203.28

  - **Total cost to client:** $0.00

**Energy Savings Results**

- **Estimated annual energy savings (kWh):** 70 kWh

  - **Estimated annual energy savings (BTUs):** 73.79 million BTUs

  - **Estimated annual energy cost savings:** $812.81

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**Taking Action**

Tina’s upgrades included installing vented bath fans, a range hood, three smoke detectors, one CO detector, dryer ventilation, a gable vent and cellulose insulation in the attic, fiberglass insulation in the basement, a blow-off tube for pressure relief on the water heater, two pipe wraps, and mastic sealant on ducts.

In addition, new LED light bulbs were installed as well as a new ceiling fan in the master bedroom. Tina indicated she had not expected to be so pleasantly surprised by these upgrades. She absolutely loves how bright the LEDs are and is thrilled with how quiet the new ceiling fan is compared to the old one.

Tina’s biggest problem was the extreme draft coming from her front door, which also caused her floors to be uncomfortably cold. Since project completion, she no longer feels the draft, eliminating the need to hang blankets up in front of the door—something she would do every year during the colder months. This significantly increased the comfort level of her home. The project’s success inspired Tina to share her experience to help spread awareness about available programs for others in similar situations.

**Going Forward**

Tina expressed that while she does not have any solid plans for more improvements, she would like to replace her current appliances with ENERGYSTAR® rated models and is saving up to make those purchases.

**Learn about resources and funding available in your community for energy projects.**

Visit: nyserda.ny.gov/ceep

Call: 1-866-NYSERDA

“**My home is much more comfortable now. I do not have to turn my heat up anymore to stay comfortable, my dryer is working better, and I am saving money on my utility bills. I am so happy with this program and told my mother about it. I am very pleased with all the work that was done”**

- Tina Thomas