



Delaware Weatherization Program
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*Weatherization
Works*

November 19, 2010

The following questions have been posed by attendees at the mandatory bidders meeting held on November 18, 2010 and those submitted by bidders prior to 4PM on Monday, November 22, 2010 as required under the RFWP.

1) Will all proposals be awarded a contract?

No.

2) I was out of town last Thursday the 18th and missed the Mandatory Bidders Informational Meeting. Can I still submit my bids by Monday Dec 6th ? Even though I missed the Bidders Informational meeting?

No.

3) Are auditors and inspectors subject to Davis-Bacon rules?

No.

4) Will auditors be responsible for checking, installing, and/or replacing CO detectors, smoke detectors, and compact fluorescent light bulbs?

Yes. A part of an energy audit is to identify base-load savings measures, as well as health and safety measures needed in the unit. The activities should be included in auditors' bids.

5) Should the bid for auditing break down various categories so that a house with heat pump will not get charged for a CAZ test, a house with all CFL bulbs will not get charged for them, etc.? If so, what categories should be bid?

Bidders should bid the details of the RFP. These types of situations will be considered in the development of the final price list.

6) How should the installation of each CFL bulbs, CO detectors, and smoke detectors be considered in the quotes?

The need for these items will vary from unit to unit. Bidders, however, should project a need for up to 5 CFL bulbs per unit, one CO detector per floor, and one smoke alarm per floor. The cost of the items and materials may be reimbursed on a per-unit cost. Specifications are to be developed.

- 7) Is a sample NEAT/MHEA data entry sheet available?

NEAT & MHEA Users Manuals are available for reading and downloading with an online search <http://www.waptac.com/Weatherization-Assistant/Weatherization-Assistant-Manuals.aspx>.

- 8) How extensive is the written audit that will be required and what is the average time it takes for completion?

Refer to the NEAT and MHEA Users Manuals online.

- 9) Will the Program allow the use of other software such as Beacon, or the Priority List like the surrounding states, or will data entry into one of these two software packages be required for every unit?

The WAP program will require the use of NEAT and MHEA exclusively on all units.

- 10) What are the auditing requirements in general - State Guide, BPI, CAZ, other?

The RFWP provides further specifications for the auditing requirements.

- 11) Is the auditor responsible for calculating the BAS (Base Airflow Standard) of each unit?

The State will establish guidance for calculating the Building Tightness Limits per unit based off of DOE guidelines. The auditor will be responsible for performing this calculation.

- 12) Will payment for the audit be made prior to the Final Inspection?

Invoices for audits and final inspections (and all work performed on the unit) may be paid only after the unit has passed the Final Inspection.

- 13) Can auditing/inspecting be invoiced on a weekly basis?

The frequency of invoicing will be determined by the subgrantee contract.

- 14) Is the auditor/ inspector responsible for contacting contractors or is this done through the subgrantee agency?

Each subgrantee agency will assign the jobs to the contractors directly.

- 15) Is the inspector allowed to invoice for re-inspection if a failure occurs?

Yes. If a company represents its job as complete but the work does not pass Final Inspection, and the inspector needs to re-inspect the job, an additional fee will be paid. Bidders do not need to account for that cost in their bids as those costs will be supplemental to the original work and negotiated as part of any contract with the subgrantees.

16) What items must be completed during the Final Inspection?

The Final Inspection is a verification that all of the work is effectively completed within program standards of workmanship, and that the unit received measures according to the original (or officially modified) work order. Some steps in the final inspection include, but are not limited to: visual and blower door inspection of all air sealing work; visual inspection of insulation and the insulation certification; visual inspection of all other ordered weatherization work; post-weatherization blower door readings; CAZ testing where applicable combustion appliances exist; inspection of other health & safety measures called for in the audit (not necessarily paid for by weatherization.)

17) When and where will training take place?

Training times and locations have not been determined as yet. Contractors will not be required to pay for training classes or any out-of-state travel costs associated with the start-up training requirements as specified in DNREC's WAP State Plan.

The personnel costs of employees during training is the responsibility of the company and should be considered as a part of doing business when completing the proposal quotes.

Keep in mind that contractors, and the staff, will be signing an agreement that these staff must be available to work for at least a year in the program since they will be receiving this training, free to them and their company.

18) Who pays for ongoing training?

As part of the DOE grant, funding will be allocated each year for training. The State WAP program cannot however guarantee funding for ongoing training.

19) Will a stipend be allotted for employees attending first round of training to help offset costs to contractors.

No.

20) Is it possible to test-out of further training?

No.

- 21) If an additional staff member needs to be added, how often will training be offered to get him/her qualified?

The weatherization program will be enhancing local training capacity to provide ongoing training so that as new workers are added by contractors, personnel can be trained and quickly begin working in the network. As the program progresses, a training schedule will be formulated that reflects the demand for various types of training.

- 22) Do contractors and their staff need to be BPI certified?

The requirement for BPI certification only applies to all Auditors and Final Inspectors.

- 23) Can Contractors be in more than one “pool”?

Yes. Note, however, that there are restrictions regarding the work on an individual job. The Auditor/ Inspector may not represent the company that is completing any of the other weatherization work on any given unit. (See proposal specifications.)

- 24) How many contractors will be selected for each pool?

The contractors in each pool will be determined through the evaluation process based on the number of qualified proposals submitted and an analysis of need conducted by the weatherization program. The program anticipates a larger pool of contractors to start with. As the program progresses some attrition in the pools will probably occur. The volume of ongoing work with individual subcontractors will partly depend on the quality, efficiency and cost of their work. The goal is to provide an increasing volume of work to a strong and stable network of weatherization professionals.

- 25) How many units can a successful bidder plan on weatherizing?

DNREC’s State Plan for ARRA estimated approximately 1400 units to be weatherized. The DOE 2010 base grant and potential 2011 base grants, as well as units weatherized with state funds may add an additional 500 units through 2011. We cannot estimate the number of units per contractor as this is dependant on the number of successful bidders and the performance of each.

- 26) Once a bidder is selected is immediate involvement required? Can they be in the pool, but just sit on the side to see if they really want to jump in?

No. The program needs contractors who are 'ready, willing and able'.

- 27) What is the length of the contract period?

The exact period is yet to be determined. It is anticipated that the initial contract between contractors and the subgrantees will begin in very early 2011 and may extend for a period of twelve to sixteen months.

- 28) For how long are the successful bidder's books required to be available?

Five years.

- 29) Will prices vary by county or by subgrantee agency?

No. The program will arrive at pricing that will be the same across the state.

- 30) How will buying in bulk effect contractors bid qualifications?

Buying in bulk may help individual contractor's quotes in that they will have lower quotes for materials and thus, will have higher proposal score, however contracts are not awarded on price alone, so smaller contractors should not be penalized for an inability to buy in bulk.

- 31) Will the same bulk purchase invoice be sufficient when submitting for reimbursement for material?

Yes. The per unit price as well as purchase lot information will be required on the invoice. Inventory records reflecting the purchase and use of materials or parts charged to the program must be maintained and available to be monitored. Moreover, materials and parts used in weatherization must be physically segregated from other stock.

- 32) Will contractors be actually bidding for the work or will the program be doing cost averaging on a price list?

Contractors are proposing to work in the Weatherization Program. The quoted prices are going to be scored and used as one of the factors in the proposal evaluations.

The price that the WAP program is willing to pay for any one measure or service will be determined by several factors, including the following: (1) the prices that are submitted by the bidders in the proposals; (2) a survey of price lists from surrounding states; and, (3) prices charged for similar work in the private sector. A price that the program will pay will then be determined for each measure and made known to contractors ahead of contract negotiations. Contractors may then elect to accept the specified price or decline participation in the program. Some unique measures may be bid on a case-by-case basis, see later question.

- 33) Where do contractors put any mark-up on parts, overhead, labor, and profit?

All such costs would have to be reflected in the "labor" unit rates.

34) Can the WAP pay for removal of trash, debris or other belongings prior to weatherization services?

No. The unit will need to be deferred until the unit is suitable for weatherization work.

35) If material prices go up substantially, can contractors adjust bid?

No. This would not be necessary as the weatherization program will be paying for materials at the documented, actual cost, plus handling. Increased material cost will be reflected in the actual billed amount.

36) For attic insulation, will the State take into consideration the additional cost of set-up when pricing any incremental amount of attic insulation versus full insulation of attics for zero to R-38?

Proposal quotes should reflect the specific situations given in the specifications in terms of the quantity of insulation to be used. The price list development should take into consideration the costs of set up into the full insulation pricing structure.

37) Is there a markup on HVAC parts, etc., allowable to cover warranty calls for HVAC contractors?

No.

38) Will contractors be submitting weekly certified payroll?

Yes, as required under the Davis-Bacon Act.

39) Will contractors be required to do supplemental competitive bids?

This answer varies depending on the work to be done. For weatherization and shell work, no, unless the audit reveals special circumstances that calls for extraordinary or specialized work. For replacing furnaces or water heaters, yes, supplemental competitive bids will be required from contractors within the HVAC pool.

40) What type of references are best suited for this type of an RFP?

The required references are as listed in the General Proposal section.

41) What standards will Weatherization work be held to – BPI, local building codes, field guide?

It is incumbent on all companies to comply with all codes, laws, regulations and standards that apply to their work whether or not they originate from the weatherization program. State and local code compliance will be a contractual requirement under the weatherization program.

42) How are lead issues dealt with in bidding?

The weatherization program pays for lead-safe work practices when disturbing paint on a dwelling built prior to 1978. The additional cost of time and materials should be considered when developing the bids. The weatherization program does not pay for testing or for remediation for lead, mold or asbestos. Contractors are also required to follow the EPA RRP rules.

43) Is there any set aside contracts for minority owned businesses, in particular with respect to “Section 3”?

In conformance with weatherization program regulations, the weatherization program encourages proposals and participation by women and minority owned businesses. The program does not specifically “set aside” funds for that purpose.

44) How will notification of pricing be done? Put everyone in one room and present or individually?

Contractors will receive the pricing information at the same time via email and the State WAP website. There will not be a meeting held specifically for this purpose.

45) Will the program be weatherizing chicken houses, pole buildings, etc...

No.

46) If a contractor is awarded air sealing on a job, will he also be awarded the insulation for this job?

Potentially, if that is in their suite of services.

47) Baltimore pays by CFM reduction, will Delaware consider paying for air sealing on a CFM reduction rather than an hourly rate?

No

48) Will air sealing contractors be paid by an hourly rate?

Yes. As indicated in the proposal, basic weatherization air sealing jobs will be based on the “labor” rate expressed in dollars per hour.

49) Will air sealing contractors be required to air seal by blower-door directed air sealing and take a final blower door number when finished?

Yes. The auditor will take pre-weatherization readings and note the initial air sealing locations that are most cost effective. The use of the blower door during air sealing will further identify leakage and will also tell the air sealing crew when an optimum exchange of air has been attained.

50) If air sealing is to be “blower door directed,” then would the air sealing contractor need to purchase a blower door?

Yes.

51) Would it make sense for the initial auditor to be allowed to air seal as well?

No. The audit/ inspection functions are to be segregated from the work functions for quality assurance and proper accountability.

52) Will the state be purchasing any equipment?

No.

53) Will the State negotiate pricing on materials such as insulation, etc.?

No.