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**WINTER HEATING ALERT: LONG ISLAND HOMEOWNERS
CAN GET RELIEF FROM HIGH ENERGY BILLS**

**OWNERS CAN CUT COSTS, SAVE ENERGY
AND MAKE HOMES MORE COMFORTABLE YEAR-ROUND**

**‘LONG ISLAND GREEN HOMES’ INITIATIVE HELPS HOMEOWNERS TAP
NEW YORK STATE-SPONSORED SERVICES AND INCENTIVES**

SEE: LONGISLANDGREENHOMES.ORG

Huntington, NY – Nov. 10, 2015: With fall temperatures upon us, Long Island homeowners now have a valuable new ally to help them save money on their heating bills, reduce energy use, protect the environment, and keep homes more comfortable and safer year-round.

A not-for-profit, public-private partnership launched today will help homeowners get free home energy assessments and tap into of a range of free and discounted services and resources that reduce costs and make residences more energy-efficient.

The Long Island Green Homes Initiative helps Long Island homeowners take advantage of New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) programs that generate energy savings while stimulating local jobs, boosting economic development, promoting sustainability and protecting the environment.

As dramatically underscored by last winter’s record-cold temperatures, a large proportion of Long Island’s aging housing stock lacks adequate insulation and up-to-date heating systems. It is estimated that more than a third of Long Island homes have heating systems that are 30 years old or older. Many of these are at or near the end of their useful life, are costly to maintain, and are much less efficient than new, modern equipment. Over half of Long Island homes were built before 1970 and the adoption of energy conservation codes. As a result, many are drafty and uncomfortable. Now is an ideal time for Long Island homeowners to make money-saving energy upgrades.

Homeowners in Nassau and Suffolk counties face unusually high energy costs. A 2013 report by the US Labor Department found that electricity prices on Long Island ranked 57 percent higher than the national average. Natural gas prices were 24 percent above the national average. Therefore investments in energy savings are particularly important for Long Islanders.

In the Town of Babylon, for example, where results from energy efficiency improvements have been measured since 2008, average energy bill savings equaled \$1,084 annually. Every Long Island homeowner, regardless of income, can benefit from the program. Many money-saving improvements require little or no out-of-pocket expenses. A number of improvements are eligible for cost reductions of up to 50 percent, depending upon household income.

Long Island Green Homes makes the process simple by guiding homeowners through each step. The initiative has launched a new, user-friendly website, and specially trained “Energy Navigators” are now available to advise homeowners by phone and assist in identifying the full scope of rebates, discounts and low-cost financing available.

The “Energy Navigators” help owners schedule a Free Home Energy Assessment, which produces a comprehensive analysis of a home’s energy efficiency. The assessment spells out a detailed plan for home upgrades that will save money and improve the comfort of every home. This assessment also includes important carbon monoxide safety testing.

NYSERDA provided support for the project under Phase II of Governor Cuomo’s Cleaner, Greener Communities program. The program aims to affect fundamental changes to local and regional sustainable growth strategies to offer economic growth through jobs and lowered infrastructure costs, while also addressing environmental issues and improving community health, resiliency, safety, and livability. Cleaner, Greener Communities supports projects the Regional Economic Development Councils identified as important to the economy of the region.

Cleaner, Greener Communities is funded by the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), the nation’s first market-based regulatory program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. RGGI is a cooperative effort among New York and the states of Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont to cap and reduce CO2 emissions from the power sector.

The project is expected result in direct Island-wide energy cost savings of \$1.75 million per year, and greenhouse gas reductions of 7,000 metric tons per year, with potentially much greater effects due to building the market for home energy efficiency.

NYSERDA President and CEO John B. Rhodes said, “Under Governor Cuomo, Long Island consumers are gaining more and more control over their electric bills through energy efficiency programs and other progressive energy initiatives. New York is not only helping Long Island residents reap significant savings on their energy bills, but helping them find new ways to save more by using less, creating healthier and more sustainable communities.”

“The **Long Island Green Homes Initiative** was chosen as a 2014 REDC priority project because its goal is to help homeowners access New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) incentives, get free home energy assessments, and receive discounted services to make their homes more energy-efficient,” said Co-Chairs of the Long Island Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Kevin Law, President of the Long Island Association, and Stuart Rabinowitz, President of Hofstra University. “We are pleased to see our support in action, as the consortium helps Long Island residents lower their energy bills, in preparation for the coming winter.”

The Long Island Complete Green Homes Initiative is a partnership of three not-for-profit community-based organizations (Community Development Corporation of Long Island, LI Green, United Way of Long Island), five Long Island townships (Babylon, East Hampton, Huntington, North Hempstead, ttown), and is headquartered at Molloy College. The Initiative is grateful to Supervisor Rich Schaffer of the Town of Babylon, Supervisor Larry Cantwell of the Town of East Hampton, Supervisor Frank Petrone of the Town of Huntington, Supervisor

Judi Bosworth of the Town of North Hempstead, and Supervisor Patrick Vecchio of the Town of Smithtown for their support of the program.

"The Town of Smithtown is continually looking for ways to improve energy efficiency in the Town, and we are happy to be a part of the Long Island Green Homes Initiative. This initiative has the potential not only to reduce energy consumption in the Town, but also to save town residents a significant amount of money and improve the value of the town's housing stock," said Town of Smithtown Supervisor, Patrick Vecchio.

"The Rauch Foundation is pleased to be able to support this important initiative to improve the environment by assisting Long Island homeowners in reducing their energy consumption and lowering their energy costs," said Nancy Rauch Douzinas, President of the Rauch Foundation. "This initiative is also a terrific example of public-private collaboration, and I applaud the Sustainability Institute at Molloy College for orchestrating that collaboration so successfully."

The project launch event was held at a private residence in the Town of Huntington, where a participating home energy performance contractor demonstrated the process of conducting a home energy assessment—photos and short videos have been posted online.

"Long Islanders have an extraordinary opportunity to reduce their household spending while making their communities more sustainable," said Neal Lewis of the Sustainability Institute at Molloy College. "This is a classic example of satisfying sustainability's 'triple bottom line' of people, planet and profits. Homeowners save on their energy bills, money stays in Long Island's economy and creates jobs, and emissions of air pollution and greenhouse gases are reduced."

"In addition to saving money, when people make these improvements in their home they are more comfortable since the home is less drafty, keeping it cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter. CDCLI is grateful to NYS for investing in Long Island's homeowners and in efforts to keep our environment healthy," said Marianne Garvin, President and CEO of the Community Development Corporation of Long Island. "The Long Island Green Homes Initiative will help to create affordable energy bills to relieve the burden on working families," said Theresa Regnante, President and CEO of United Way of Long Island. "By making sensible energy investments, homeowners can aggressively lower their utility bills and enjoy greater financial stability."

While many Long Islanders have taken steps to make their homes more energy efficient, large numbers of homeowners have yet to take action to have a comprehensive analysis of their home's energy use and winterize their homes. Energy efficiency investments more than pay for themselves and save money for years, and also boost the safety of heating systems. As energy prices rise, this investment makes even more sense.

Homeowners interested in cutting their home heating and cooling bills can receive a free Energy Audit by calling [800.567.2850](tel:800.567.2850), or by visiting longislandgreenhomes.org and completing the online application.