Homeowners can get weatherization help

Program offers energy efficient improvements

By Cheryl P. Allen
Staff writer

Mauldin resident Andy Wallin couldn't remember the last time the Upstate had been that cold, referring to the recent polar vortex-laced temperatures that hit the United States.

"The weather makes it worse because it makes your (heating) unit work harder," he said. "So it's not good for your home."

He would know. He helps people make their homes more energy-efficient, not just for the winter but year-round.

Wallin is program coordinator for the Community Conservation Corps. The corps' goal is to help households in the Greater Greenville community become more energy efficient while promoting sustainability and conservation.

The corps, which is housed at Furman University's David E. Shi Center for Sustainability, offers free weatherization assistance for qualifying homeowners.

A recent partnership with Habitat for Humanity of Greenville County will allow more homeowners to take advantage of the program, Wallin said. Piedmont Natural Gas is funding the program.

Homeowners in the county have already taken advantage of the program.

"We're glad to help anywhere in the county," he said. "We don't operate on an emergency basis."

Interested homeowners can contact Wallin at 864-294-3680 or andy.wallin@furman.edu.

Weatherization services include energy audits, insulation, weatherstripping, water heater blankets, duct work inspection, energy-efficient CFL bulbs and

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INTERESTED?

Contact Andy Wallin at 864-298-3680 or andy.wallin@furman.edu.

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water-saving faucet aerators. Energy bills are monitored before and after services are rendered.

"Most of the time our clients find between a 15 to 35 percent savings," Wallin said.

One of the more beneficial aspects is insulation in the attic, especially for the winter months, said Ben Dellinger, director of construction for Habitat for Humanity of Greenville County.

"Your heat is rising, and if there is nothing there to act as a blanket ... that heat can simply travel up and right out of the house," he said.

Outside of the program, costs for such services could run from a few hundred dollars into the thousands, Dellinger said.

"Each project is going to be different from the previous one because each house is different," Dellinger said.

Some variables include the age of the home, current weather conditions and assessing what improvement would have the most impact.

"You don't want to take your house and make it into a complete construction project, but you can do some little things and you might be able to save yourself a few dollars per month on your utility costs," Dellinger said. "And everybody is looking for ways to reduce their monthly expenses."