

State's Energy Efficient Appliance Rebate Program Starts

Residents can apply for rebates on 16 items

The Kentucky Energy Efficient Appliance Rebate Program is in full swing. The \$4 million program is funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). It is administered through the Kentucky Department for Energy Development and Independence (DEDI) and the U.S. Department of Energy.

Kentucky is offering rebates on 16 ENERGY STAR qualified appliances, including clothes washers, dishwashers, refrigerators, freezers, room air conditioners, water heaters, central air conditioners, air source heat pumps, geothermal heat pumps, gas furnaces and gas boilers. This provides residents with the widest choices possible, and represents appliances that account for 70 percent of a typical household's energy costs. Further information and frequently asked questions may be found at <http://www.energy.ky.gov/recovery/rebate/>.

Residents may apply for a rebate by visiting www.KYappliancerebates.com or by calling the toll-free number, 877-813-3669. Rebates will be administered on a first-come, first-served basis. Those eligible must be residents of Kentucky making purchases of replacement appliances from Kentucky retailers, limited to one rebate per product category. A rebate fulfillment company, under contract with the state, will review all rebate requests for eligibility and will monitor the program to ensure fraud prevention.

The purchase must replace an older, less efficient product with a qualified ENERGY STAR appliance. Consumers purchasing a new ENERGY STAR replacement appliance and requesting a rebate are strongly encouraged to recycle their old appliance. Appliances with an ENERGY STAR label meet strict energy efficiency guidelines set jointly by the U.S. Department of Energy and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. These guidelines are designed to help consumers save money and to protect the environment.

The Kentucky State Energy Appliance Rebate Program is designed to help achieve the goals of Gov. Beshear's Intelligent Energy Choices for Kentucky's Future: Kentucky's 7-Point Energy Strategy, and will be part of the effort to meet 18 percent of Kentucky's energy needs from efficiency improvements by 2025.

Montgomery DCBS Staff Bowl for Kids

The Montgomery County Family Support and Protection and Permanency offices staff competed in the Big Brothers/Big Sisters bowl-a-thon in Montgomery County. The groups have been participating in this program since 1998 and have won eight plaques between the years 2000-09 for raising the most money for a civic organization. Staff has two second-place and six first-place plaques. Staff participate in the event to further support the children of Montgomery County. This year's participants were Clay Barber, Catherine Robinson, Jessica Wilson, Sonya Howard, Peggy Parker, Davina Thomas, Patsy Mapel, Kim Delaney, and Charma and Mary Nutter.

Employee Fitness Feature: Changing Life One Step at a Time

By Ann Aukerman, Human Resource Administrator

I have a plaque on my desk that reads: “One shoe can change your life.” – Cinderella.

All of my co-workers know that I love shoes. I have a ton of them and enjoy showing them off. Last year at this time, thanks to a new health group in the Office of Human Resource Management, OHRM’s Biggest Losers, I tried out a new shoe – running shoes. I started out trying to lose the extra 15 pounds I’d gained over the years. I tried eating healthy and walking. I slowly increased my walk to a walk/run every other day. Until last October, the furthest I had run was about two miles.

My youngest son, Sam, is a 15-year-old high school baseball player. He encouraged me to sign up for a 5K run at the University of Kentucky during homecoming week. I had never run 3.1 miles before. I started training and had a successful 5K experience. I loved the atmosphere, I loved the competition, but mainly I learned that I love to run.

From that point on, I began setting goals starting with the 10-mile Hangover Classic in Louisville on New Year’s Day. What a great way to start the year, even if it was only 20 degrees outside that morning. I followed a beginning marathoner’s training book for 16 weeks starting in January. At the halfway point of training, I had scheduled a destination half-marathon in Seaside, Fla., on March 7. This was an adventure in itself that my recently retired sister and I thoroughly enjoyed. Two Saturdays ago, April 24, I met my marathon goal, completing the 2010 Derby Festival Marathon, setting my personal best time of 5:15:01.

I truly enjoyed my marathon experience, although I’ve told everyone it was worse than having a baby, and I’m sticking to half-marathons and shorter races from here on out. The unending hills in Iroquois and Cherokee Parks and the heat were problematic, but were far outweighed by the fun. Tons of people turned out to cheer us on. The sites were fabulous, including running through Churchill Downs, and the challenge of the long run was all I expected as I pounded out every mile. And even better than the finish line was this: My co-worker, Stephany Ivers, waited on the bridge to Indiana for an hour to take a picture of me in my big race.

I am 49. I am a 27-year employee of state government and will retire in three months. I have never before set goals or set out to run, but now I have a great retirement plan. New shoes anyone?

The Focus invites readers to share their personal fitness or hobby stories. E-mail your story to Focus Editor emily.moses@ky.gov.

Living Well: Bike Month

Are you considering a more economic mode of transportation? If you are, you could be joining a fast-growing population – bicycle owners. The increase in fuel prices, the number of baby boomers looking for a low impact form of physical activity, avid cyclists and tri-athletes all are

part of the driving force causing increased traffic at local bike shops. Busier local bike shops can also be attributed to the recognition of May as National Bike Month.

Kentucky has two cities that have been recognized as bike friendly. Bicycling magazine researched cities across the nation and listed Louisville at No. 21 and Lexington at No. 41 in its top 50 cities. The magazine looked at cities with a population of 100,000 or more and excluded California because of the state's dominance in bike-oriented cities. The study reviewed whether cities have designated bike lanes, municipal bike racks, bike boulevards and support of a vibrant and diverse bike culture. In 2005, Louisville's mayor pushed for a bike friendly city and has continued to support a thriving cycling community with the construction of the 100-mile Louisville loop that is about 25 percent complete. Fayette County recently developed a bike-pedestrian master plan and secured more than \$7 million in local, state and federal funding for bike facilities. In addition, they introduced the yellow bike sharing program in the downtown area where commuters can borrow the yellow bikes to get around town.

When I was a child, I had a green Schwinn with a banana seat and an orange flag on the back end for safety purposes. These days, I have upgraded to a road bike and, of course, a helmet for safety. I selected a road bike so that I can ride with my husband who is an experienced cyclist. But bike shops across the country are catering to everyone's needs with different styles of bikes for all. The right bike is out there for you.

If you have been considering purchasing a bike, I suggest doing some research and visiting your local bike shop for more detailed information. If you want to know more about riding in your area and bicycle safety, visit the Transportation Cabinet's [Share the Road](#) website. Biking is environmentally friendly, economically sensible and it could be a new form of physical fitness for you and the whole family.

Employee Enrichment

By Anya Armes Weber

If you have a conflict at work and you are ready to confront the issue, here are some problem-solving steps from the College of Business at Wright State University.

Define the problem. Even though you already know what your conflict is, you should stay open to redefining it. By focusing on the exact issue, you have a better chance at finding the most effective solution.

Search for many solutions. Remain open to creative alternatives for solving the problem. That way you might find an answer that satisfies you and any involved co-workers. Consider taking the step of inviting co-workers to brainstorm with you.

Evaluate the alternatives and choose the best one. A simple way to judge your choices is to make a list of pros and cons for each alternative.

Put your plan into practice. Be confident in your choice and give it a try.

Make necessary changes. Even the best plans may need to be tweaked to work effectively. Be sure your solution doesn't cause new problems for someone else.