

Kootenay Energy Diet

Frequently asked questions

Who can participate in the Kootenay Energy Diet?

To qualify for the Kootenay Energy Diet and the energy assessment required to access the LiveSmart BC Efficiency Incentives program, participants must live within Central Kootenay Regional District or the Kootenay Boundary Regional District and be an electric customer of ForticBC Inc., Grand Forks electricity utility, Nelson Hydro or a natural gas customer of ForticBC Energy Inc. Only homes built prior to 2006 will be eligible for the FortisBC energy assessment subsidy. Primary heating system must be gas or electric.

Why is FortisBC organizing a Kootenay Energy Diet?

The Kootenay Energy Diet will support local homeowners in learning about their home's energy efficiency and better manage their natural gas and electricity use. This will help them to have a home that's more comfortable home and affordable to operate.

The Kootenay-wide energy diet follows the same model as the successful Rossland Energy Diet, and is funded through a partnership between FortisBC PowerSense, the Columbia Basin Trust and Natural Resources Canada.

How can residents participate?

To participate in the Kootenay Energy Diet, homeowners can register in person at an ener-vention (an introductory information session) in their community. A schedule of events is available at fortisbc.com/energydiet.

How can residents participate if they can't attend a session?

If homeowners can't attend an information session, they can complete an online application form and submit it within six weeks of the ener-vention in their community.

What happens once participants are registered?

Once participants are registered, FortisBC will help them through the next steps:

- have an initial home energy assessment with a Certified Energy Advisor
- make a commitment to complete at least one home energy efficiency upgrade before December 31, 2013
- complete a post-retrofit evaluation before March 31, 2014
- keep all retrofit receipts and submit at the post retrofit evaluation to receive rebates

When does the program run?

The FortisBC Kootenay Energy Diet starts May 22, 2013. Upgrades must be complete by December 31, 2013 or earlier, depending on the rebate offer. For LiveSmart BC rebates, participants must book and complete the post assessment prior to March 31, 2014.

When and where are the information sessions (ener-vention) taking place?

The Kootenay Energy Diet launch is taking place on May 22, 2013 from 7-9 p.m. at the Stanley Humphries Senior Secondary in Castlegar.

Other community dates include:

Salmo	May 23, 2013 from 7-9 p.m.	Salmo Community Centre
Castlegar	May 28, 2013 from 7-9 p.m.	Castlegar Community Complex
Trail	June 11, 2013 from 7-9 p.m.	Trail Cominco Gym
Rossland	June 12, 2013 from 7-9 p.m.	Rossland Miners Hall
Grand Forks	June 18, 2013 from 7-9 p.m.	DA Perley High School
Slocan	Sept 10, 2013 from 7-9 p.m.	WE Graham School
Creston	Sept 11, 2013 from 7-9 p.m.	Creston and District Community Complex
Kaslo	Sept 12, 2013 from 7-9 p.m.	JV Humphries School

What are the benefits for participants?

For a set amount of time, Kootenay Energy Diet participants will receive access to:

- a subsidized home energy assessment, which includes the installation of free energy efficiency products like low-flow shower heads and CFL lighting (participants pay \$60*, normal cost is approximately \$400),
- the LiveSmart BC and FortisBC rebate programs (up to \$4000 from LiveSmart and \$2000 from FortisBC),
- a low-interest, long-amortization loan program through local credit unions;
- a local energy coach to provide them with personalized service and information

* Grand Forks is offering the first 100 Grand Forks residents that register an additional \$25 toward their initial assessment and the City of Castlegar is providing the same to the first 50 residents from Castlegar.

Why a home energy assessment?

The home energy assessment:

- provides independent third-party energy efficiency advice for existing homes
- handles the paperwork to ensure eligibility for incentives from LiveSmart BC and FortisBC
- provides homeowners with an energy efficiency rating label of their home that can increase the home's resale potential by providing evidence of "invisible" energy improvements in existing homes
- provides the home's estimated energy consumption, energy efficiency recommendations and the estimated reductions in energy use should each recommendation be implemented
- allows homeowners to make informed decisions on improving the efficiency of their home over the short- and long-term

What is the most important upgrade people can make to improve their home's energy efficiency?

The most important thing people can do to reduce energy use is to ensure their homes have ample insulation so it doesn't leak heat and have drafts. The second most important thing to do is improve their heating system, whether it is gas or electric. And thirdly, review hot water tanks and the amount of hot water they use.

Where can homeowners go to apply for rebates?

Some upgrades, such as ENERGY STAR® appliances, furnaces, fireplaces, energy efficient lighting, programmable thermostats and windows/doors are available directly through FortisBC. Participants should check individual program offerings for terms, conditions and deadlines.

For the LiveSmart BC qualified-rebates, Certified Energy Advisor (CEA) will submit the forms directly to LiveSmart BC at the time of the post energy assessment. These updates must be complete by December 31 with the post assessment complete by March 31, 2014.

How much money can people expect to save?

It depends much on what people chose to do. The average LiveSmart qualified retrofit reduces energy use by 20 – 50 per cent. If customers improve their insulation and air sealing and heating system, they're more likely to have savings in the 50 per cent range. If they chose only to change out their windows and doors, the savings would be in the 5-7 per cent range.

What forms do I need?

Once registered for the Kootenay Energy Diet, the PowerSense Community Ambassador will help book your Energy Assessment with the Kootenay Energy Diet Certified Energy Assessor (CEA) and can be contacted for help in completing any forms for FortisBC rebates.

The Certified Energy Advisor will guide you to complete any paperwork required for the LiveSmart BC rebates.

Once you are ready to do any home improvement work, make sure that you have contacted your local authority to determine any Municipal or Regional District building permit requirements concerning home renovations.

Where can homeowners go to get more information about the program?

To learn more about the program, homeowners can contact Shelley Hastie, PowerSense Community Ambassador, at 250-368-1918, by email at energydiet@fortisbc.com or visit fortisbc.com/energydiet.

Participants looking to share their story and follow what other local participants are doing can join the conversation at kootenayplanet.com/energydiet.com.

They can also follow [#KootenayEnergyDiet](https://twitter.com/KootenayEnergyDiet) on Twitter.

