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Beyond Toxics seeks participants in clean energy program

The Bethel Clean Energy Project connects low-income, West Eugene residents with access to resources and information to make home improvements for energy efficiency.

Eugene, OR. – Local environmental justice nonprofit Beyond Toxics is seeking low-income, West Eugene residents to participate in the Bethel Clean Energy Project fall cohort. The Bethel Clean Energy Project is an innovative pilot program in partnership with Eugene Water and Electric Board to make clean energy accessible to Bethel residents. This program offers information on, and assistance accessing, funding to replace old and inefficient appliances with updated, clean energy models. Participants will receive a stipend upon completion of the program.

Beyond Toxics' goal is to collaborate directly with neighborhood residents, to research and identify the best options for implementing free or low-cost clean energy home improvements. Through this program, Bethel community members will save money on home projects while contributing to the solution for a healthier environment.

During the fall workshop, which meets weekly from Oct. 8-22, participants will have the opportunity to learn from Beyond Toxics and EWEB staff about their energy usage, available rebates and incentives from EWEB and the Inflation Reduction Act to support a switch to cleaner technologies like electric heat pumps and water heaters or make their homes more energy efficient.

Past participants said they would highly recommend the program to their neighbors and some ultimately took advantage of incentives to make improvements. "Even more important than finding out about heat pumps was to learn that my wife and I qualify for the full rebates from both the agencies," said one participant. "It's not something we thought about before and didn't even realize it was a possibility. And to be a part of a group that is asking questions and who are dealing with the same things, that is wonderful."

For more information, or to sign up to participate in the 2024 fall workshop, please contact West Eugene Community Organizer Arjorie Arberry-Baribeault at 541-543-2468 or aab@beyondtoxics.org. Meetings are held Tuesday evenings in West Eugene for three weeks. Light meals are provided. This program is supported by the Oregon Raindrop Fund and the U.S. Energy Foundation.

Beyond Toxics provides leadership to build a community-driven environmental justice movement for a thriving and just Oregon. We envision a society where everyone has equitable access to healthy food and clean air and water, and underserved communities are included in decision making processes that affect them. Together, we move beyond the damaging environmental practices of the past and collectively work to support and maintain ecological resilience and balance.