

## Smart Energy Loan Program – Home Energy Checkup

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The Home Energy Checkup is designed to help you learn how to lower your energy consumption and improve your home's performance by providing unbiased, expert guidance from nationally-certified home energy auditors.

Your Home Energy Checkup will:

- Identify energy efficiency and performance deficiencies
- Pinpoint savings opportunities prioritized by rapid payback
- Generate state-of-the-art computer analysis of your energy usage using industry-approved software designed to measure your home's energy index
- Provide information on utility incentive program and available tax credits to help pay for improvements

A non-profit organization, the Texas Home Energy Rating Organization (Texas HERO), oversees Home Energy Checkups conducted by independent auditors trained and certified in national and state standards. Texas HERO attempts to ensure homeowners receive objective recommendations by conducting stringent quality assurance of data collection, analysis, and reports as well as field observations and follow-up evaluations with participating homeowners.

### **What is the ideal time for a Home Energy Checkup?**

Consider having a Home Energy Checkup when:

- Areas of your home are difficult to heat or cool comfortably
- Your utility costs are higher than you'd like, irregular or significantly different than neighbors or families similar to yours
- Renovations and home updates are being considered
- Your home is more than five years old

### **What can I expect from a Home Energy Checkup?**

You can expect to be well informed about your home's performance and opportunities to make the most cost-effective energy efficiency improvements. The comprehensive Home Energy Checkup will include:

- An initial interview to allow you to list your energy concerns and describe your usage
- Visual inspection of the home's energy features and general condition
- Diagnostic performance testing that includes use of calibrated equipment to check for:
  - Gas leaks
  - Air infiltration in the building envelope

- HVAC system duct leakage
- Restrictions to airflow in your HVAC system
- Combustion safety of equipment and appliances
- Computer simulation and analysis of your home's existing conditions, energy usage, and costs
- A clear scope of proposed treatment to help you take action
- Information on simple behavioral and lifestyle changes you can make to conserve energy
- Guidance on potential utility incentives and tax credits available to help off-set the cost of the audit and/or the recommended improvements, which may lower your overall required loan funding amount.

The audit must meet the Texas HERO's Texas Home Energy Checkup which defines a comprehensive, whole-house approach to evaluating the home's systems and equipment. Procedures include an initial interview, visual inspection, diagnostic performance testing, energy simulation and analysis, and a clear scope of proposed treatment.

A follow-up inspection must be performed to insure proper installation and performance of installed improvement measures as part of the Smart Energy Loan protocol.