

Urban Weatherization Initiative

Illinois' Urban Weatherization Initiative (UWI) grant program was created through an [act of the Illinois legislature in 2009](#). The purposes of the initiative are to decrease the effect of high energy costs on low-income households, create jobs while increasing skills and career opportunities for low-income workers and unemployed individuals, and stimulate local economies as grantees are encouraged to purchase supplies from distributors and manufacturers in their area.

Funding and Administration

The UWI is administered by the [Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity \(DCEO\)](#)'s Office of Urban Assistance. The funds are made available through the sale of bonds, as money is set aside within the budget ahead of the sale. Additionally, the act creates a Weatherization Initiative Board consisting of five voting members responsible for the approval of all grants, and charged with delivering an annual report on the program to the governor and general assembly.

DCEO awards grants to entities capable of implementing and expanding job training programs or providing home energy auditing and weatherization installation services for homes. An organization may receive up to \$500,000 per fiscal year. 15 percent is the maximum available for administrative acts. For services for households, only \$6,500 can be spent on each one.

Program Components

At first, funds are used to implement and expand weatherization job training programs, especially in areas of high unemployment.

Funding is then used to provide the labor and materials necessary for weatherization. With training, funding, and materials available, the hope is that trainees find suitable employment in new jobs auditing and weatherizing homes in communities.

Currently, three different grants have been made available. Second rounds of the [Home Energy Auditor Training](#) and the [Weatherization Specialist Training](#) grants were allocated in June 2013, while the first-ever round of [Residential Weatherization Program](#) grants were made available in May 2013.

Residential Weatherization Program - Allocated 5/1/13		
Organization	City	Award
Kankakee Co. Community Services	Kankakee, IL	\$ 1,000,000
Genesis Housing Development Corporation	Chicago, IL	\$ 1,000,000
Peoria Citizens Comm. for Econ. Opportunity	Peoria, IL	\$ 1,000,000
Habitat for Humanity South Suburbs	Chicago Heights, IL	\$ 1,000,000
Westside Health Authority	Chicago, IL	\$ 1,000,000
W & M Insulation Inc.	South Holland, IL	\$ 1,000,000
City of Harvey	Harvey, IL	\$ 1,000,000
Comprehensive Community Solutions, Inc	Rockford, IL	\$ 1,000,000
Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis	East St. Louis, IL	\$ 1,000,000

For additional grant information relating to UWI visit the [WIRE's UWI page](#).

Populations Served

DCEO awards UWI grants with the focus on the following areas:

- Urban metropolitan regions with at least a 20% rate of poverty, and areas with disproportionately high unemployment.
- Regions with high concentrations of families with income equal to or less than 60% of the Area Median Income.
- Regions with the highest energy costs in relation to income.

Organizational Eligibility

Eligible organizations are public, private, and non-profit entities that can facilitate the training for and implementation of weatherization services. Applicants must have a plan for community engagement, which explains how a portion of funds will be devoted to outreach and recruitment. Priority is given to organizations seeking to encourage collaboration amongst a range of local stakeholders from local weatherization agencies to educational institutions.

For more information contact the Chicago Jobs Council at (312) 252-0460 or visit us at <http://www.cjc.net>