NC ENERGY STAR APPLIANCE REPLACEMENT AND REBATE PROGRAM

North Carolinians will be able to save on major appliance purchases while putting $8.8 million in federal Recovery funds to work stimulating the economy, cutting energy use and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

WHEN WILL THE REBATES BE OFFERED?
Phase 1 will be over a four-day period during Earth Day weekend – Thursday April 22 through Sunday April 25.

HOW MUCH WILL THE REBATES BE?
Rebates will be 15 percent on Energy Star-rated appliances. The rebates will be in addition to any store manufacturer or other discounts being offered.

WHAT APPLIANCES QUALIFY?
Qualified Energy Star clothes washers, dishwashers, refrigerators, and freezers.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO PURCHASE ITEMS?
North Carolina residents who are replacing older clothes washers, dishwashers, refrigerators, and freezers are eligible for the rebates on designated Energy Star appliances. The program is only available to those replacing appliances. Those purchasing multiple appliances or appliances for commercial properties are not eligible.

WHERE CAN I BUY THE APPLIANCES?
The N.C. Energy Office is working with the N.C. Retail Merchants Association and expects major retail chains as well as most independent appliance dealers to participate in the rebate program.
**CAN I RECEIVE MORE THAN ONE APPLIANCE REBATE?**
You may receive rebates on more than one appliance, but it must be for different appliances. For example, you may receive rebates on a refrigerator and clothes washing machine, but not on two refrigerators.

**WILL REBATES BE ISSUED ON APPLIANCES PURCHASED BEFORE APRIL 22, 2010?**
No, the program is not retroactive.

**HOW MUCH ENERGY WILL BE SAVED?**
By replacing older, conventional appliances with the 49,960 Energy Star items, it is estimated will be purchased in the program, enough electricity will be saved to power 536 homes for a year. Natural gas savings would serve 390 homes for a year. The energy savings can be significant. For example, a new Energy Star-rated refrigerator uses half the electricity that the same size refrigerator built before 1995 uses.

**WILL THERE BE REBATES ON ANY OTHER ENERGY STAR APPLIANCES?**
Depending on the funds available, a second phase in June will offer rebates on Energy Star residential gas storage water heaters, tankless gas water heaters, central air conditioners, heat pumps and gas furnaces that replace older items. These rebates will be mail-ins and can be used with purchase through retailers, contractors or programs offered through utilities.

**HOW MUCH WILL THE MAIL-IN REBATES BE IF THERE IS A JUNE PROGRAM?**
If funds are available, rebates will be 15 percent on Energy Star-rated refrigerators, freezers, clothes washing machines and dishwashers. In addition, mail-in rebates will be offered on the following items, in the amounts indicated: WATER HEATERS (electric heat pump, gas storage, gas tankless, solar with gas or electric back-up), $200.00; CENTRAL AIR CONDITIONERS, $300.00; AIR SOURCE HEAT PUMPS, $300.00; GAS Furnaces, $300.00.

**WHERE IS THE MONEY COMING FROM TO PAY FOR THE REBATES?**
North Carolina is receiving $8.8 million in federal funds to help homeowners purchase energy-efficient appliances, from furnaces and room air conditioners to refrigerators and dishwashers. The funds are part of nearly $300 million from the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act being distributed nationwide by the U.S. Department of Energy.

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**Success In School**
Recent studies have shown that children’s success in school depends as much on their most important teacher. The learning process begins when your children are infants, thus providing a foundation for school learning. In the beginning stages of growth, children learn vital skills, manners and speech from you, their parent. As they grow up, they constantly look up to you as a role model and for guidance. Your role as a teacher should never end, especially when they enter school.

**Encourage Learning Early On**
Talk with your child, not at your child
Baby talk shouldn’t be in your vocabulary. Try to use full sentences when communicating with your child. Always listen to what he/she has to say. Overall, allow your child to express his/her feelings to you freely.

**Encourage, encourage, encourage!**
Making mistakes is an important part of life. We all make them. Rather than stressing the importance of failure and/or success, stress the importance of moving forward and trying again.

**Give your child creative freedom.**
Creativity is fun as well as educational for both you and your child. If it’s music he/she likes, sing songs with him/her. If reading has caught his/her interest, ask your child to make up a story. In general, allow your child the opportunity to discover his/her talents.

**Read with your child.**
Read often with your child. Ask questions in regard to the story, the characters, the plot, etc. In turn, answer any questions he/she may have.

**Discipline.**
Rather than saying, “don’t do that” all the time, reinforce a positive approach to disciplining by saying, “do this.”

Treat your child as an individual. Don’t make your child feel inferior and/or superior by comparing his/her development to other children’s development patterns. Though there are strong similarities among children of the same age, not every child develops at the same pace.

**Ways Parents Can Help**
- Help them develop their goals.  
  - Be available to aid them when they need you.  
  - Advise them and give them your support.  
  - Praise your children when they have done something well.  
  - Help them visualize success and acknowledge their progress.

**Students’ Study Secrets**
Ways children can succeed at school:

#1 **Set goals for yourself.**
Goals should be specific. What is it that you wish to accomplish? For example, you may want to improve your grade in science. You will want to set the following goal: To increase my test score in science up to a letter grade B. Write down your goal(s) and brainstorm what you will need to do in order to accomplish it.

#2 **Manage your time.**
The things you want to do are very different from the things you have to do. Plan ahead by using a calendar. Write in the things you have to do (for example: baseball practice, club meetings, etc). Next, fill in your assignments on the day they are to be turned in. As you will see, you may have to start on an assignment days before it is due in order to make baseball practice. Remember, school comes first. Fun is always second.

#3 **Take notes.**
Most of the time teachers will tell you what’s likely to be on a test. Taking notes will allow you to know ahead of time what needs to be studied. Try and review them quickly after class. This will help the information move into your brain’s long-term memory.
#4 Study, study, study.
Studying the night before a test is not always the best plan in order to get a good grade. Put in a little time every night for each of your subjects. The next time you have to study for a test, you will ease through the process.

#5 Review your assignments.
Check for accuracy in your assignments and reports. Reviewing the assignment guidelines and proofing the actual assignment are two important steps of homework that shouldn’t be overlooked.

DIVORCE
More than half of all marriages end in divorce. Children of divorcing parents are always strongly impacted. Millions of families in the USA are challenged by the process of divorce. Divorce is a huge change in lifestyle that affects everyone in a family. Children always experience confusion, anxiety, helplessness, hurt and frustration when their parents dissolve the marriage. Divorce presents parents with great challenges regarding the mental, emotional and even physical well-being of any children in the family.

Regardless of the reasons for divorce, parents must commit themselves to modifying their family relationships in the healthiest and best possible ways. Keep in mind: it is the parents who divorce each other, not their children. Parenting is a permanent responsibility, at least for a child’s first 18-20 years. Children of divorcing parents are thrust into the middle of an economic and emotional roller coaster over which they have no control. The dramatic changes created by divorce increase the stress levels of both children and parents.

Common child reaction to increased stress
✓ Behavioral acting out or withdrawal
✓ Decreased sense of safety and security
✓ Lowered self-acceptance and self-esteem
✓ Poorer academic performance
✓ Sleeping difficulties
✓ Emotional changes (anger, resentment, depression, loneliness, etc…)
✓ Change in appetite
✓ Emotional withdrawal from relationship(s)
✓ Engaging in high-risk behaviors, such as drug and alcohol abuse, stealing, sexual acting out, running away, etc…)
✓ Self-blame, guilt and shame

These are just a few of the effects associated with children of divorce. Difference in family structure, abandonment issues, parental conflicts and loss of an important parental family member are all causes if increased stress in children of divorce.

Tips for divorcing parents who want to minimize the negative effects on their children
Divorce is disruptive of the live of everyone in the family. Here are a few tips for coping as healthy as possible.

➢ Acceptance of the child
➢ Reassure them of their safety and security.
➢ Free them from any guilt or blame for the divorce. Assure them that divorce is a parental
decision and that they are not the cause(s) of the divorce.

➤ Provide structure and routine. It stabilizes their environment.

➤ Provide age-appropriate, honest answers and explanation to their questions about the divorce.

➤ Never depend on your child to address your emotional needs. Look to other adults for that.

➤ Both parents need to provide continual support and love to the child in order to deter feelings of rejection or abandonment. This can be achieved by continuous contact via phones, visits, letters, etc.

➤ Avoid attacking the character of the other parent in any way. Allow the child to love both parents without restrictions.

➤ Maintain communication between you and your ex spouse. Never use the child to communicate between parents.

➤ Maintain a consistent schedule for child-care. It minimizes changes in child’s daily routine.

➤ Never use the child as a weapon in any conflict between parents. Shield the child from parental arguments and conflicts. Never sabotage your child’s relationship with the other parent.

➤ Preserve and nurture the child’s relationship with his/her extended family members on both sides of the family.

➤ Don’t burden the child with situations over which they have no control. Never ask them to handle adult issues.

➤ Both parents’ goal should be to meet the individual needs of the child and minimize the price she/he has to pay for the dissolution of the spousal relationship.

➤ Keep in mind that a child would prefer to be from a broken home than live in a dysfunctional one.

➤ Never transfer your hurt or guilty feelings toward your spouse onto your child. Don’t over indulge or over control your child because of your own guilt about the divorce.

You have a high calling to nurture, protect and prepare your children for life, despite your divorce and all the emotions surrounding it. If their requires professional help, then get it.

For Spring Closet Cleaning

For most people, cleaning out their closets ranks right up there with cleaning out the attic, basement or garage. They know it’s going to take some time, so they keep putting it off until something major stirs them to action, like a move, death, divorce or other life-changing event. They equate the task with drudgery and simply assume that because they no longer use the items, that the objects must be of little worth.
But, what if I told you that you could be sitting on assets of which you're unaware? That you could, in fact have sequestered in your closet right now a way to pay off some debts, buy some new seasonal clothes, or even send your kid to summer camp? Or at the very least, that you have a way to reduce your 2009 tax bill? What would you think of the task now?

In truth, the best time to go through your unwanted items is when you're NOT being pushed to do so by dire circumstances. When you're under pressure, you tend to turn a blind eye to the possibilities in order to “just get it done.” Calm, cool and collected is always a better approach, because it allows you to think things through a rational, profitable eye:

**What To Toss**

You should toss anything in your closet that has permanent stains, irreparable damage or that is worn, threadbare, or falling apart. If you don't wear them to garden, paint, or strip furniture, they need to go. Fast.

Yes, you should keep a few ratty-tatty things around for those household grunge jobs, but unless you do that type of work all the time, you don't need an endless supply. Two pairs of shorts and two t-shirts for warm weather, two sweatshirts and two pairs of long pants for cold weather should see you through.

**What To Sell**

Clothing and accessories that are in good condition and that are either less than three years old or more than twenty-five years old are the most sought-after items. Jewelry and furs from all periods tend to sell quickly as well. All price ranges except discount tend to fare nicely on the resale market, with designer brands the most desirable. Vintage designer apparel is also particularly popular.

Yard sales are an okay way to turn a profit, but why not let someone else do the work for you? Consignment is where a retailer offers your items for sale in their establishment for a percentage of the sale price. Since their goal is to turn over merchandise quickly, they'll only accept items that they know their clientele is likely to want, so don't expect them to take everything you offer (although they might, depending on what you bring in). If an item doesn't sell in a specific time frame, you can either take back the item or direct the store to donate it.

Some consignment shops pay out all commissions at a specific time each month; others hang on to them until you come to claim them. If they're unclaimed for a long period, you may forfeit your money. Check out several stores to see what kind of merchandise they have and whether your stuff would be a good fit. If you find one you like, ask the necessary details, like the commission split, what days and times they accept new consignments and how they pay out. Allow roughly 30 minutes when you go in for them to look over your stuff.

**What To Donate**

Once you've tossed your old, unwearable clothes and have set aside the best pieces to sell, you're probably left with a lot of items that aren't current or pristine enough to sell, but that are still in good shape. These are the items you want to donate.
Now before you stuff everything in a plastic bag and drop it off at a donation center, take a few minutes to inventory what you're giving away.

Not only will you be able to arrive at as fair market value of these items for tax purposes, you'll also have an accurate record of what you donated should you ever find yourself face-to-face with an auditor.

So who should get your stuff? Goodwill, Finders Keepers, Catholic Charities and The Salvation Army rank among the most popular recipients. Depending on where you live, they may even offer pick up service.

Also, your local shelters for abused women are always looking for clothes for women and children. Check your phone book or ask someone in the office of a local parish, temple or church for names and groups in your area.

Going through your closet takes time, particularly if you haven't done it in a while. But once you get a system down, you can whip through your closets during the season change twice a year to rid yourself of unwanted items and make money or secure a tax deduction at the same time. All it takes is a little action to get the ball rolling. So why wait? Get Cleaning.

Healthy Eating Without Fuss
Nutritionists tell us that if children are consistently presented with items from the basic food groups, they will choose a healthy diet.

This doesn't mean they will eat the same amount of a balanced diet each day. Teething, colds, or a slow growth period can cause a lackluster appetite, and it's quite common for a child to temporarily reject meat or go on a banana binge. It does mean that given the chance (and an absence of prodding and tension) kids can develop reasonable habits. Make it easier for your child to enjoy eating by trying some of the following:

- Sidestep potential conflicts by substituting “likes” for “dislikes” whenever possible. If Becky hates roast beef but loves hamburger, why fight it? They have the same nutritional characteristics. Lean on fruit during a “down-on-vegetables” phase or offer cheese instead of eggs.
- Take advantage of your child's “hungry time.” In one family the oldest son awakened ravenous each morning and could easily consume almost a day's supply of nutrition at breakfast. His parent supplied vast quantities of oatmeal, fruit, eggs, and toast and ignored his “pickiness” during the rest of the day.
- Change the setting. A “bored-with-food” tot may regain her appetite with a bang if allowed to picnic in the park or back porch or eat in a tent (a sheet thrown over a card table) or on a tray while reading or building blocks. Where is it written that food must always be consumed at a table?
- Once your child is more agreeable about food let him or her help you in the kitchen. You'd be surprised what kids will eat if they can make it themselves.
- Two-year-olds may “hate” salads
but let them tear up greens for a taco and they soon change their minds.

- Slightly older children can shape dough for cookies, slice bananas, (with supervision) or assemble cheese sandwiches for toasting.

The Month of April “Spotlight”

Buy Fresh, Buy Local When choosing fruits and vegetables always look for produce that is closest to it's most natural form. The less processed the food, the better. This is one of the many reasons we suggest visiting your local farmers’ market. It's a great place to purchase fresh, healthy food directly from the farmer or grower. Onslow County Farmers’ Market is opening for the 2010 market season on April 10th, and it's a perfect time for you to come out and enjoy the best that nature and your local farmers’ have to offer.

The benefits of shopping locally at the farmers’ market are numerous. First the market is filled with food that's good for you, brightly colored fruits and vegetables that change with the season. Enjoy corn on the cob, tomatoes and berries in the summer, or squash, sweet potatoes and collards in fall.

The majority of the produce in supermarkets was picked almost a week before it hits the shelves and traveled many, many miles before being sold. When you shop at the farmers’ market you can be assured that the food you purchase is fresh, hasn't traveled long distances and undergone lots of packaging.

When you buy locally at a farmers’ market, you're doing your part in reducing the energy consumption needed to support large-scale food systems. You're also helping to put money directly into the pockets of local farmers’ who don't or can't produce supermarket quantities. And you're buying recently harvested produce – cutting down the time between the harvest and consumption means more nutrients are preserved.

Finally, the farmers’ market offers great opportunities to try something new. Onslow County farmers’ and growers are there because they have a passion for their product. They're a wealth of information. Don't be afraid to ask questions, as this can be a great chance to get new ideas and tips for food preparation.

Not only will you experience the health benefits of eating locally, but also you'll have some fun and may well learn something new in the process.

The Onslow County Farmers’ Market (located at 4024 Richlands Hwy, Jacksonville, NC 28540) 2010 Season begins Saturday April 10th. The Market is open Tuesdays and Saturdays from 8:30am until 1:30pm.

Starting April 15th, the Thursday Market at 1108 Western Blvd will be open from 12pm – 6pm behind Dick’s Sporting Goods on Western Blvd.