



Photo by Zoe Tuck

Skyline CAP's Energy Efficiency Specialist, Carla Mace (right), presents "The Consumer Guide to Home Energy Savings" to Orange County's Librarian, Katie Hill. The book is a how-to guide for simple home repairs that will reduce energy use. Providing this book for use by all of the residents of Orange County's is part of Skyline CAP's efforts to provide education about reducing utility bills to make housing costs more affordable.

Consumption consideration

Skyline CAP working to education public on energy, water usage

Skyline Community Action Partnership, Inc. is continuing to educate the public about how to reduce energy and water consumption.

Most recently, the agency did this by donating a book to the Orange County Library, Consumer Guide to Home Energy Savings.

The book is a thorough how-to on home improvements that will help reduce energy use, thereby reducing utility bills.

By making this reference tool available to the general public, Skyline CAP hopes to reach the broader community, providing them with some of the same benefits as the agency's clients.

"We know that utility bills are a major expense for our clients and others. With budgets stretched thin, we are trying to do whatever we can to provide some breathing room," said Kim Fry-Smith, Executive Director of Skyline CAP.

"In addition to the emergency assistance and budget counseling we have always offered, we have added a practical way to do this by suggesting ways to reduce utility bills, creating a long-term solution to their affordable housing needs. In the current economy, we know this need stretches beyond

our clients so we were happy to be able to provide this educational tool to the community"

Beginning in October 2009, the agency established an energy-efficiency education program with funds from the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

The agency's energy-efficiency specialist, Carla Mace, educates clients about ways they can reduce energy use through simple behavioral changes beyond turning out lights and unplugging appliances when they are not in use.

Another key component of the program is the energy efficiency kit she provides with easy, practical tools such as caulk and weather stripping to reduce energy usage.

Mace has also conducted several public meetings to teach about being energy-efficient including a brief talk when she presented the book to the library.

According to Mace, there has been a lot of positive feedback about this program.

"Clients are pleased by how easy it is to create real savings for themselves," says Mace.

The Agency hopes to be able to continue this program long-term. seniors and residents with dis-

abilities have especially benefited from the energy efficiency audits.

Funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act expire in September 2010.

With no new federal funds anticipated, Skyline CAP is applying for grants to help continue the program.

"With hard to come by grant funding and anticipated assistance from the community, we hope to continue providing this service to residents well into the summer and also into the fall to help prepare for winter's high utility costs," Smith said.

Anyone interested in making a donation to the agency for its programs can contact Carty Yowell, Finance Director, at 948-2237 x210 or go online to the agency's web site at www.skylinecap.org. The web site also provides more information about the agency and the services it provides.

Skyline Community Action Partnership, Inc. was established in 1990. The mission of Skyline CAP, Inc. is to give a hand up to those in need through actions that promote self-sufficiency.

The agency seeks to alleviate the impact of poverty in its three-county service area of Orange, Madison, and Greene counties through programs that promote education, affordable housing, and emergency assistance.