



Commercial Custom Design Program – New Construction, whole building design

Program overview

In collaboration with BC Hydro, we're working with commercial building owners and developers to encourage energy efficient construction. The Commercial Custom Design Program–New Construction provides an opportunity for qualifying owners and developers of commercial, institutional and light industrial buildings to minimize future operating costs and improve whole building performance through more efficient use of natural gas for space and domestic water heating.

The program will provide the new construction market with funding assistance for natural gas efficiency projects that are beyond the scope of other incentive programs currently offered by FortisBC.

Projects may include, but are not restricted to energy conservation measures that will:

- implement a high-performance building envelope
- recover and reuse energy that that would otherwise be lost
- use more efficient equipment or systems
- capture and use solar energy for heating air or water
- reduce the rate of energy consumption by systems or equipment in low-occupancy periods

Eligibility criteria – all projects

Applicants must first be accepted into BC Hydro Power Smart's New Construction Program (NCP).* To qualify for FortisBC's Capital Incentive, applicants must also meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Proposed projects must have a minimum floor area of 85,000 square feet (7900 square metres) or a proposed savings of at least 1,200 gigajoules of natural gas per year.
- Proposed projects must be quantitatively analyzed using industry standard whole building simulation software and the results submitted to, and approved by the BC Hydro Power Smart NCP, in the form of an Energy Study. For Energy Study requirements please refer to the BC Hydro Power Smart New Construction Program **Minimum Requirements for New Construction Energy Study**, available at bchydro.com/construction.
- Proposed projects must be located within the FortisBC Energy Inc., FortisBC Energy (Vancouver Island) Inc., or FortisBC Energy (Whistler) Inc. service territories.

We're working together to help B.C. save energy.

- Proposed projects must be subject to one of the following Rate Schedules, as amended from time to time: 2, 2.1, 2.2, 2U, 3, 3U, 4, 5, 7, 22, 23, 25, 27, AGS, SCS-1, SCS-2, LCS-1, LCS-2, LCS-3.
- Proposed projects must demonstrate reduced natural gas consumption for space and domestic hot water heating in new buildings or facilities. Manufacturing and transformative processes and similar heating loads are not eligible except where waste heat from processes is used to offset space or domestic hot water heating requirements.
- Buildings and facilities in which the proposed energy conservation measures (the “Energy Conservation Measures”) will be implemented must be commercial, institutional, multi-unit residential, light industrial or agricultural in nature.
- Such buildings or facilities must use natural gas as a space heating fuel source, either solely or in tandem with other lower carbon energy sources, after the proposed Energy Conservation Measures have been implemented or installed.
- Proposed projects must not achieve natural gas savings by switching to higher carbon energy sources, electric resistance heating or electric boilers.
- Proposed Energy Conservation Measures must specify the use of products and/or equipment that are new and are CSA approved or certified by a recognized, accredited, independent organization.
- Proposed Energy Conservation Measures and all their components, applications and installations must meet or exceed the requirements of the Energy Efficiency Act (British Columbia) and the Energy Efficiency Act (Canada), as amended from time to time, and any applicable regulatory requirements in British Columbia, as determined by FortisBC, in its sole discretion.
- The proposed building or facility must be owned or be under development for the purpose of resale to the end owner, by the Applicant.
- The Applicant must not have any accounts with FortisBC which are in arrears at the time of payment of incentive funding.

Study incentive

BC Hydro’s NCP offers up to 100 per cent funding for new construction Energy Studies. This incentive is co-funded by FortisBC. Please consult with BC Hydro for more information.

Capital incentive

Qualifying projects are eligible to receive financial incentives toward the implementation of FortisBC approved Energy Conservation Measures that reduce natural gas consumption for space and domestic water heating. Capital Incentives are proportional to the anticipated natural gas savings and are applicable to the incremental cost¹ of the approved Energy Conservation Measures. Generally the incentive for each measure is the lesser of:

- five dollars multiplied by the discounted natural gas savings over half the measure life, to a maximum of 10 years; or
- an amount required to reach a one-year payback on the remaining incremental cost based on the estimated annual natural gas savings

Completion of a study is not a guarantee of Capital Incentives from FortisBC. All Capital Incentives are subject to program funding, FortisBC internal cost-effectiveness tests and project size requirements, and are solely at the discretion of FortisBC. Please consult with FortisBC for more information on capital incentives.

**Projects that don't qualify for the FortisBC Capital Incentive may still qualify for BC Hydro Power Smart's New Construction Program.*

Process map



Frequently asked questions

Q. My building is too small to qualify. Can I still participate in FortisBC's Commercial Custom Design – New Construction Program?

A. No, but you may be eligible to participate in other FortisBC or BC Hydro Power Smart commercial rebate programs for your building. Visit fortisbc.com/businessoffers or bchydro.com/construction or call 1-866-884-8833 for more information.

Q. Can I participate in FortisBC's program without also participating in BC Hydro's New Construction program?

A. No. All program participants must apply and be accepted into the BC Hydro program in order to be eligible to participate in FortisBC's program.

Q. If my project contains some measures that only save natural gas can they be included in the energy study and considered for a FortisBC Capital Incentive?

A. Yes, as long as your project is otherwise eligible to receive incentives from the Commercial Custom Design Program – New Construction Program. **Please note:** Your project must also contain measures that save electricity in order to qualify for BC Hydro Power Smart's NCP.

Q. I would like to heat my space or water with electricity and use natural gas as a standby fuel. Can I participate in FortisBC's program?

A. No. Natural gas must be used to provide some proportion of the primary space or domestic water heating load. Projects or measures that use natural gas purely as a standby or backup fuel source are not eligible for an incentive.

Q. Can a project apply for both the New Construction Program and other FortisBC incentive offers?

A. Possibly. Specific Energy Conservation Measures can only receive one incentive per utility. Measures that are not approved for a capital incentive via the Commercial Custom Design Program may be eligible for a rebate from one of FortisBC's other energy efficiency incentive programs. Visit fortisbc.com/businessoffers to learn more.

Q. What happens if I want to change an approved Energy Conservation Measure or add a new one to my project?

A. You are required to advise BC Hydro and FortisBC promptly of any proposed changes that either eliminate or substantially change the design of the Energy Conservation Measures during the course of the design, tender or construction of such measures. The approved Energy Study report will need to be updated to reflect these changes and sent to BC Hydro for review. You may be eligible to receive post-tender update funding under BC Hydro's Energy Study funding process with prior approval. Otherwise, you will be responsible for the cost of updating the Energy Study report. Capital incentive funding adjustments may be made in FortisBC's sole discretion.

Q. I've applied for additional funding through another organization. How does this impact the funding I will receive from FortisBC?

A. Whether you are receiving Energy Study funding, Capital Incentive funding or both, you must notify FortisBC in writing if you receive contributions or contribution commitments from a third party organization other than BC Hydro. In the event the combined total of FortisBC funding and third party contributions exceeds 100 per cent of the FortisBC approved amounts, FortisBC will adjust the amount of its funding or, if already paid, you may be required to repay FortisBC for the full amount of the excess within 30 days of receiving the notice to repay.

Q. Is there a maximum incentive amount I can receive from FortisBC?

A. Yes. The maximum amount a customer is entitled to is \$500,000 per year for the Energy Study and Capital Upgrade funding.

Q. How do I contact my FortisBC key account manager.

A. Visit fortisbc.com/accountmanager to find the contact information for your key account manager. For general inquiries, or if you aren't sure who your account manager is please call 604-576-7028.

To apply

- contact your BC Hydro key account manager
- call 604-522-4713 in the Lower Mainland or 1-866-522-4713 elsewhere in B.C.
- visit fortisbc.com/commercialcustomdesign

¹ The cost of implementing the approved Energy Conservation Measures over and above the cost of an otherwise equivalent yet less efficient alternative. Tools, clothing, scaffolding, equipment rentals, travel, insurance and all other miscellaneous or incidental costs that may be required by the Consultant or Customer to implement the energy conservation measures are NOT eligible for an incentive.

² Tender refers to awarding the building construction contract to a contractor.