



The Switch Stratford program offers Stratford residents a simple path to energy efficiency and renewable projects. Switch participants are offered fixed rate financing for up to 20 years with no upfront costs.

Stratford Switch Program - Frequently Asked Questions

1. What kind of projects are eligible under the Switch Program?

The Switch programs will finance heat pumps, solar systems, insulation and more.

Please visit switchstratford.ca for examples of a broad range of eligible projects. Projects need to be fixed at the property. For example, the installation of insulation and/or an electric vehicle charger is eligible, but financing electric vehicles and appliances is not.

Extra costs such as upgrading your electrical panel for a heat pump installation, are eligible for financing, but cannot be more than 30% of the overall project cost.

2. What are the Stratford Switch program eligibility requirements?

Currently, the program is open to residential property owners in the Town of Stratford who pay property tax to the Town and are not in arrears with their property taxes or municipal utility accounts.

Loans are tied to the property and not the property owner(s). Mobile homes are ineligible.

3. Are commercial properties eligible to participate?

No. Future versions of the programming might include commercial properties.

4. Is there any up-front cost?

No. The Town of Stratford pays up-front for your energy upgrade. You then repay the Town over a period of up to 20 years.

5. Are there any additional fees or charges?

There is a **one-time** 5% administration fee for each project to cover program administration costs (see below). Note that the Switch program is operated on a **user-pay model** for the municipality. This means the program is **not** being subsidized by non-participating tax payers.

There will be other fees if you miss loan payments.

6. What is included in the administration fee?

This **one-time fee** covers all aspects of programming including:

- an **energy concierge** is assigned to each project to oversee the entire project
- checking the property tax status with the Province
- arranging for a free home energy assessment (pre and post project)
- helping homeowners navigate through the rebate process, both federally and provincially
- helping support industry engagement particularly in your geographic region
- providing homeowners with approved contractors to choose from
- drafting and executing legal agreements (including the participation agreement and certificates of completion etc.)
- securely storing all documents and records related to the project ensuring contractors are paid promptly
- setting up and collecting monthly payments (PAP) from homeowners for the 10-15 year period of the life of the loan

7. What is the term and interest rate of the loan?

Switch participants are offered fixed low financing up to 15 years for solar and 10 years for heat pumps, both with no upfront costs.

8. How much can be financed?

The maximum amount that can be financed through the Switch program is 15% of the assessed value of your property, to a maximum of \$40,000. For example, a property valued at \$200,000 can receive financing of up to \$30,000.

9. Is there a minimum project size?

No. However, we are expecting most projects to be greater than \$4,000.

10. What if I want to do more than \$40,000 in upgrades?

You could carry the extra costs through your own financing or break up the project into different phases to spread it over a longer time frame. Once your Switch payments over time reduce your borrowed amount enough to free up sufficient financing, you could then access additional Switch financing to complete the rest of the work.

11. Can I pick my own contractor or equipment?

Yes, but your contractor must meet our program requirements. Call us at 902-706-4042 to learn more.

12. Am I eligible to receive rebates for energy upgrade(s)?

Yes. The Switch Program will help you get credit for all rebates that are available. Call us and we can help guide you.

13. Is a Home Energy Assessment (HEA) required to go through with the program?

A Home Energy Assessment is generally required to participate in the Switch Program. The Federal Government will cover the cost and we'll help you get that part done too.

Call us to find out about the new, free, EnerGuide Home Energy Assessment Program.

14. How does the contractor get paid?

Once the work is done, a Certificate of Completion form must be signed by both the contractor and homeowner(s) to confirm that the work has been done to the homeowner's satisfaction. The contractor then submits the certificate with the invoice to us. The Town of Stratford will pay the contractor directly.

15. How do I repay the loan?

Once the contractor is paid, you will begin making monthly, pre-authorized payments (PAP) from your bank account.

16. Can I repay my loan off early?

Yes. Stratford residents can accelerate payments or repay their loan in full without penalty.

17. What happens if I move/sell my property before the loan is paid off?

Payments can be transferred to the new owner (similar to a furnace lease), or the remaining balance can be paid off at that time by you or the new owner.