

Home-grown solutions

Sometimes the best ideas come from within



Fit-for-purpose community initiatives

In the past two years, we awarded 48 Energy Efficiency Education grants to large and small energy efficiency education projects, with a variety of perspectives and participants. Some of our recipients took a home-grown approach to teaching people in their local communities about energy efficiency and renewable energy.

From targeting local businesses to ensuring local employment, some of the Energy Efficiency Education projects helped community members learn how to retrofit their businesses to be more energy efficient, all the way to providing courses on how to install solar panels. Environment Lethbridge took a small business-focused approach, pairing energy auditors with [48 local businesses](#) to enhance energy use and save money.

The Peavine Metis Settlement and Louis Bull Tribe (working with Iron and Earth) are focusing on building renewable developments within their communities and upskilling the community members to sustain the solar developments. Iron and Earth works to upskill workers in renewable energies, and used grant funds to develop their own [solar training programs](#) to continue to upskill Alberta workers. This will be closely followed by wind training programs.

The [Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley](#) co-created their project with the citizens and businesses of Canmore, driving interest and desire to save money through energy efficiency especially in the construction and hospitality industry. Through our Community Generation Program, they also developed an ownership structure where the Town of Canmore could benefit from its own renewable energy production.

Cities and towns like Falher, Okotoks, [Red Deer](#), Grande Prairie and Edmonton developed programs specifically for their communities to determine interest and demand for energy efficiency, build skills and take-home tools and knowledge to share with others. Falher's Efficiency Program reached almost a quarter of its residents and inspired the Town to apply for other grants and upgrade the Town's two recreation facilities with ice deaerators. [Okotoks built a program for residences](#), pairing homeowners with energy auditors and tools to drive energy savings. The program development funded by Energy Efficiency Alberta represents just the start for some of these programs, as many were integrated with local environmental policies to create sustainable progress towards smarter energy use.

In the picture above: The YWCA Lethbridge & District received an energy audit from Environment Lethbridge and replaced their lighting with LED lighting, installed a high efficiency air conditioner and air handling unit, and low flow water fixtures in their newly renovated washrooms.