

Funding for renovations available for low-income homes

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Mid-North Monitor

Homeowners who are in need of repairs, but can't afford it might get some financial help from the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Service Board (Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB) through the Ontario Renovates Program.

The program is to assist qualifying homeowners to bring their property up to acceptable living conditions, while improving energy efficiency as well as "reducing barriers for occupants with disabilities modifications."

The funding is open to all residents in the catchment area of the

Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB. However, applicants must fall under eligible criteria including: seniors, persons with disabilities, victims of domestic abuse, Aboriginal people living off-reserve, residents of remote communities and low to moderate income singles and families.

Those who apply for the program must also meet financial criteria, which includes a combined income of less than \$50,000 a year, combined household asset value less than \$50,000 and the market property value of the resident must be below \$150,000.

The funding is used for renovations such as modifications for ramps, handrails, chair lifts as well as energy saving products. There are certain projects that are not covered under the Ontario Renovates Program such as: retirement homes, long-term care homes, secondary residents and cottages, units not subject to the Residential Tenancies Act, social housing units defined under the Social Housing Service Act of 2011 or the creation of new rental units.

Before any funding is handed over, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB must approve the applications



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and work has to begin within 120 days of getting the green light. However, if the weather is a cause for delayed work there will be a grace period. But if work does not begin within 240 days, funding will be withdrawn and considered abandoned. The unused funds will then be given to the next applicant on the wait list.

Who gets the funding is

decided on a priority basis. How urgent the repairs are needed is considered as well as a lack of income to the household. Any communities that do not have social housing programs will be given consideration above others.

The average amount that will be given for the program is \$17,500. Any costs that exceed this amount have

to be covered by the homeowner. However, Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB can supply additional funding, but will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

For more information and to download a pre-screening application visit www.msdsb.net/images/SH/policies/2010_SH_Policies/10_1a_Ontario_Renovates_Application.pdf.