ECAA

Energy Conservation Assistance Act

Frequently Asked Questions

The Energy Conservation Assistance Act (ECAA) offers zero-interest rate loans to public schools and one percent rate loans to public entities and California Native American tribes. Loans finance energy efficiency and energy generation projects, energy storage systems, and electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

When are loan applications due?

Applications are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis until all funds are awarded. Contact the California Energy Commission (CEC) for funding availability before applying. More information is in the program opportunity notice (PON):
PON-22-001 - ECAA-Ed
PON-22-002 - ECAA 1%

FOR QUESTIONS, EMAIL ECAA AT:

PubProg@energy.ca.gov

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:

Energy Conservation Assistance Act

https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/programs/energy-conservation-assistance-act

1. Who is eligible for ECAA?

ECAA-Ed Zero-Interest: Public school districts, charter schools, county offices of education, state special schools and California Native American tribal schools.

ECAA 1% Interest: Cities, counties, special districts, public colleges/universities, public care institutions/public hospitals, and California Native American tribes located in California that are on the Native American Heritage Commission's contact list.

2. How is the loan repaid and what is the maximum payback period?

Loan Repayment: ECAA loans are repaid through energy cost savings calculated for each energy measure. For example, a lighting retrofit costs $10,000 and is estimated to save $1,000 annually. The ECAA loan will be repaid over 10 years ($1,000/year).

Payback Period: The maximum loan term for ECAA-Ed zero-interest is 20 years and 17 years for ECAA 1% interest.

3. What are some examples of eligible energy projects under the ECAA Program?

- Lighting system upgrades.
- Pumps and motors.
- Streetlights and LED traffic signals.
- Energy management systems and equipment controls.
- Building insulation.
- Energy generation including renewable and combined-heat-and-power projects.
- Heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning equipment.
- Water and wastewater treatment equipment.
- Load-shifting projects, such as thermal energy storage.
- Energy storage systems.
- Electric vehicle charging infrastructure used to power public fleets.

4. What is new to ECAA?

Energy Measure Bundling: Applicants are now able to "bundle" energy measures. This allows for less cost-effective energy measures to be combined with more effective measures to create a larger overall energy project.

For example, an applicant would like to retrofit their HVAC to more energy efficient units, but the payback period for this energy measure is 25 years. To have this energy measure covered by ECAA, it would need to be bundled with a more cost-effective energy measure like LED retrofits to bring the overall project payback period under the 17- or 20-year maximum payback period.

New Eligible Energy Measures and Maximum Loan Amount: ECAA is now able to fund energy storage systems and electric vehicle charging infrastructure used to power public fleets. These energy measures will likely need to be bundled with more cost-effective energy measures. The maximum loan amount for an ECAA-Ed loan involving either of these energy measures is **$5 million** instead of the standard **$3 million.** The $5 million maximum loan amount option does not apply to ECAA 1%.

Eligible Entities: ECAA loans are now available to California Native American tribes located in California that are on the Native American Heritage Commission's contact list.

5. When are loan repayments due?

The first loan repayment is due at least 12 months after project completion to allow for energy cost savings to be accrued. Loan repayments occur twice per year in June and December until the loan is completely paid off.

6. What is the timeline for loan approval once an application is submitted?

Once all required application materials are received and evaluated by CEC staff, the loan will be presented at a CEC Business Meeting. Typically, it takes 60-90 days for loan approval once an ECAA application is received.

7. How is the loan administered?

Once approved, the loan is administered on a reimbursement basis. The loan recipient submits invoices and proof of payment for work related to the ECAA project, and the CEC reimburses the recipient for this work. Only approved project-related costs with invoices dated within the executed term of the loan are eligible to be reimbursed from loan funds.

8. Can a loan recipient with an existing ECAA or ECAA-Ed loan apply for another ECAA/ECAA-Ed loan?

A loan recipient with an existing ECAA 1% or ECAA-Ed loan may apply for an additional loan if additional funding is available, and the loan recipient's existing loan project is complete.

9. Can a loan applicant split a project into two applications and receive the maximum loan amount for each application?

A loan applicant may only submit one application at a time. A subsequent loan application may only be submitted if an ECAA 1%/ECAA-Ed loan approved project has been completed.

Where can I find a list of ECAA 1%/ECAA-Ed loan awardees?

ECAA GIS map coming soon!

10. Can a loan applicant use the ECAA/ECAA-Ed loan in conjunction with other funding sources for the project?

The applicant may reduce the estimated total project cost to the estimated total energy cost savings level by using rebates, incentives, loan co-funding, or its own funding. Bond funds cannot be used for co-funding.

FURTHER QUESTIONS? EMAIL ECAA AT:

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