



## NEWS RELEASE

**For immediate release**

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### **PA Treasury, DEP Lower Rates on Popular Loan Program to Help Flood Victims Replace Damaged Property with More Energy Efficient Equipment**

*Limited-time rates on Keystone HELP loans available to homeowners in 19 affected counties for 90 days*

**Harrisburg** – Homeowners in eastern and central Pennsylvania who experienced flood damage may be able to replace certain household appliances with more energy efficient models with the help of special low-interest rate loans through the Keystone Home Energy Loan Program.

Pennsylvania's departments of Treasury and Environmental Protection worked together to lower interest rates on the popular program for homeowners in 19 counties where the federal government has issued a disaster declaration. The reduced interest rates are available for 90 days for those who are eligible for Keystone HELP loans.

While many homeowners will take advantage of assistance through their insurance policies or receive aid from state and federal agencies, State Treasurer Rob McCord said the special Keystone HELP loans may be of help to Pennsylvanians who do not qualify for government programs or who do not have other options.

Treasurer McCord encouraged those residents who must replace their water heaters, windows, doors, insulation, or heating and cooling systems to consider newer, energy efficient models that can reduce home utility bills for years to come.

"The president's disaster declaration will make a great deal of federal aid available to families that must rebuild their homes and their lives in the wake of last week's devastating floods," said Treasurer McCord. "Pennsylvanians affected by those floods should try to take advantage of that assistance – as well as other resources available through the state – but we want to do whatever we can to provide other forms of help. These lower-interest rates through the Keystone HELP program are another option for people to consider and can specifically help to replace damaged equipment with money-saving, energy-efficient models."

"Some people were simply wiped out by this terrible event. They lost everything," DEP Secretary Mike Krancer said. "So the Keystone HELP program is well named for this occasion because we are extending this opportunity to those Pennsylvanians who most need this help right now. It's rebuilding and with new energy efficiency, to boot."

Under the limited-time special Keystone HELP terms, interest rates for stand-alone heating, cooling, windows, doors, insulation and domestic hot water systems are 4.99% and 3.99% for ENERGY STAR and Advanced Performance projects,

respectively. Right now, the interest rates are 8.99% and 7.99%, respectively. The interest rate for whole house improvements or projects with Air Sealing and Insulation done by a Building Performance Institute-certified contractor is 1.99%.

These special Keystone HELP rates and conditions are available through December 14, 2011.

To qualify for the special rates, a homeowner's primary residence must be in Adams, Bradford, Columbia, Cumberland, Dauphin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Luzerne, Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Perry, Schuylkill, Snyder, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Union, Wyoming, or York counties. The primary residence must also be ineligible for federal aid under the Federal Emergency Management Agency's disaster assistance program.

Affected residents may register to apply for federal assistance at [www.disasterassistance.gov](http://www.disasterassistance.gov) or by calling 1-800-621-3362. Disaster assistance applicants with a speech disability or hearing loss who use TTY, should call 1-800-462-7585. Those who use 711 or Video Relay Service (VRS) should call 1-800-621-3362. Each number is available from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. (local time) seven days a week until further notice.

To apply for a Keystone HELP loan, visit [www.keystonehelp.com](http://www.keystonehelp.com) or [www.patreasury.org](http://www.patreasury.org). Interested residents may also call 1-877-282-9448 to ask questions or apply.

Both Treasury and DEP are partners in the Keystone HELP program, which is administered by Allentown-based AFC First Financial Corporation. The program has offered affordable energy efficiency financing options since 2006 for Pennsylvania homeowners to purchase and install energy efficient equipment or to undertake whole-house improvements that will result in reduced energy consumption.

Keystone HELP began offering even lower rate loans in 2009, when Treasury partnered with DEP to expand the program's impact by using funds from Pennsylvania's Alternative Energy Investment Act.

To date, Keystone HELP has helped approximately 8,600 homeowners finance nearly \$63 million in money-saving home improvements.

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