

Redwood Coast Energy Authority Heat Pump Rebate FAQs

About Heat Pump Systems

1. What is a heat pump?

A heat pump uses the same technology as a refrigerator or air conditioner to produce heat at one end and cooling on the other. Heat pumps can be used for space heating and cooling, water heating, and even clothes drying.

2. Do heat pump units need ducts?

Heat pump systems can be ductless, either as a through-the-wall package unit or more commonly a mini-split with the condenser placed outside and one or more units inside. Heat pumps can also be designed to use existing ducts.

3. Will a heat pump save me money?

It depends. Heat pumps are a very efficient way to use electricity to create heat, since most of the hard work is done by the refrigerant cycle. If you are replacing a traditional electric resistance heating unit (coils) with a heat pump, you should expect to also see bill savings. If you are replacing natural gas, propane, or wood heat, it all depends on the cost of your existing fuel.

4. Can heat pumps be run by solar panels?

Yes, the energy produced by solar panels can offset the energy used by the heat pump. Every system is different, so talk with your contractor about properly sizing your systems.

5. Can RCEA tell me what size heat pump I need?

RCEA is not sizing systems for customers or doing cost calculations. Talk with your contractor and get multiple quotes if desired. There are many factors that go into properly sizing a heat pump that cannot be offered as a part of a customer rebate program.

6. How do I choose a contractor?

RCEA cannot make recommendations for contractors, so it is best to make sure your contractor has experience with heat pump systems and is licensed and certified to do this work. It is also important that the contractor be EPA-certified for refrigerant handling, because even a small refrigerant leak could offset all of the carbon saving benefits of your heat pump.

7. Is bigger better?

Should I just oversize my unit so I know that I will have plenty of heating and cooling ability? No. Improperly sized units, too large or too small, could end up being less efficient, not performing well, and costing more to operate. Heat pumps are designed to operate steadily in the background maintaining a constant heat. Too large a unit would cycle on and off too frequently and could result in hot and cold zones.

8. Will a heat pump help reduce my carbon footprint?

Yes, heat pumps are more efficient than other electric heating systems, and with more and more low carbon energy in RCEA's mix, switching from fossil fuels to electricity is one of the most effective things you can do to reduce your carbon footprint. You can also opt up to RCEA's RePower + option with 100% Renewable electricity sources.

9. What else can I do to improve my home or business energy consumption and carbon footprint?

Contact RCEA and one of our Trusted Energy Advisors will help you with assessments and other options.

Applying for a Rebate

10. How do I know if I've figured out the correct rebate amount?

RCEA will check everything before reserving your rebate and make sure you get the full amount you are eligible for.

11. I'm not sure if I really want a heat pump or not.

Should I just reserve my rebate now and make up my mind later? No. Rebates are limited, and we are trying to keep reservations for those who have decided to move forward and have selected their equipment and contractor. Rebates will be reserved for the specific equipment listed and there is no guarantee that they can be transferred to something else.

12. What if my installation takes more than three months from the date on my reservation form, will my reservation expire?

Reservations can be renewed for additional three-month increments. We just ask that you check in with us and give us a project status update.

13. The unit I want to install doesn't meet the eligibility requirements, can I still get a rebate?

You may still be eligible for rebates, reach out to an RCEA representative with questions about your systems eligibility.

14. Do I need a permit?

Yes, any heat pump equipment installed in residences or businesses under jurisdictions requiring permits must include a permit number on their application to be eligible for an RCEA heat pump rebate. RCEA recommends speaking to your contractor about these permitting requirements.