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### **My Mass Save Experience**

When I learned that I could replace my 30 year old oil burning furnace and have the cost of that replacement partially funded through the Mass Save program, I was very conflicted. The furnace was working perfectly well but I knew that that wouldn't always be the case. I knew the day would come – likely on a cold January night – when the furnace would fail and I would be forced to both pay 100% of the cost myself and to hire the contractor that could get it done fastest – not necessarily best or for the lowest price. I'm also very energy efficiency and environment conscious and saw replacing the unit as just the right thing to do.

On October 13 I had an energy audit done and I was generally satisfied with that process. My options were well explained to me (Rebates, HEAT Loan...etc) and I ended up also having some Wifi thermostats installed as a result of that audit. The wait for the thermostat install was 3 months – which was surprising.

I learned through the audit that the mini-splits units I had had installed in my home in March 2017 were eligible for a rebate. I found the paperwork associated with the install and noticed that the invoice had a hand written date of 2016 instead of 2017. With my rebate information, I included a copy of my cancelled check showing the correct 2017 date with a note explaining the contractor's error. In December my application was rejected apparently because "Your complete application was not submitted by the program postmark deadline"? I'm GUESSING this means that the 2016 date was a problem. I've contacted the contractor to try to get a corrected invoice but he has not been cooperative.

On December 27<sup>th</sup> I had my furnace replaced in addition to a new hot water tank and an outdoor sensor. The outdoor sensor was optional but I was told it would help me maximize the energy efficiency of my system and it was also eligible for a rebate. A day later, on **December 28**, I filed all of the paperwork on line for the rebate. I applied for a total of \$2,300 for the boiler (\$1,700), water heater (\$500) and the outdoor sensor (\$100). I received an acknowledgement of the submittal with the message that the rebate could be expected in 4-6 weeks – if I was approved.

In early February, I was contacted about scheduling an inspection of my installation. I called and was told that I qualified for a photo submission process where if I simply submitted required pictures, no one would need to visit my house. I submitted the pictures on February 5<sup>th</sup>. Subsequent to that I received 2-3 phone calls or emails (I don't recall which) reminding me that I

needed to have an inspection completed. Each time, I called and I was assured that the pictures that I had submitted met the inspection requirement and that the communication that I had received was an internal communication problem within the Mass Save program.

On approximately February 26, I received a check for \$1,700 which represented my furnace rebate. I immediately called Mass Save and was told that each of my pieces of equipment was being handled as a separate rebate. The other two pieces were still pending in the system and I could expect to see these rebates in another 30-45 days. I questioned this added time frame but was essentially told that this was the way that the program worked.

On Saturday, March 3, I received two emails telling me that my rebates had been denied for "Abandon inspection". What does that even mean???? I called on March 3 and was told I would have to call back on Monday, March 5. The woman I spoke with did tell me that there was a completely separate approval process for EACH of the three pieces of equipment that I had had installed as they were each covered under a separate rebate program. I spoke with someone on March 5<sup>th</sup> who told me that that he would look into the status. A few days later I received a call telling me that I would not need an inspection and that I was all set.

In mid-late March I began calling again because I had not received my rebate. The person I spoke with told me that the computer system showed that they were waiting for an inspection. Upon expressing my frustration, and upon my request, he elevated my call to "Adam" who apparently has a supervisory role. Adam told me that he would look into it and that he had the ability to waive the inspection based on the facts of my situation. He wanted to wait a few more days to see if he received the appropriate paperwork from the inspection group.

After not hearing anything for a week plus, I began calling again. As of the date of this letter I have been assured that I have been approved for payment and that I should see a check soon. I'm afraid to call though as I know that the system will still likely still show that I did not get the required inspection.

I am a persistent, organized, and very detailed person. I suspect that many people simply give up rather than make the repeated calls that it takes to meet the confusing requirements of the Mass Save rebate program. (I estimate that I have called Mass Save for various issues 12-15 times since I submitted my December rebate application). This entire process has been very frustrating for me.

I will comment further that I am fortunate that I had the ability to pay for my heating system myself. I found that the paperwork that attempted to explain the Mass Heat loan process was very intimidating. I suspect that the average homeowner would probably elect to continue running their 30+ year old heating equipment rather than attempt to understand and comply with the HEAT loan process.

Fingers crossed at this point that I will one day receive the rest of my rebate.

Sincerely,

Roger A. Cabral