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Pa. tabs \$81M in stimulus funding for weatherization

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Curt Hudson

Marco Ricca (right), a senior instructor at the Green Jobs Training Center, oversees John Mentzer, a trainee with the Youth Conservation Corps, as he glazes a window.

Pennsylvania has pushed out \$81 million of its \$226 million in federal stimulus funding for weatherization work.

With the path the state is on, the program will not only wrap up early, but exceed its goal of weatherizing 29,700 homes statewide, E. Craig Heim, executive director of the state Office of Energy Conservation and Weatherization, said.

As of Aug. 6, \$123 million in funding had been authorized by the state and nearly 10,000 homes weatherized. The state expects to close out the program in November, four months ahead of schedule, with more than 34,000 homes completed, Heim said.

The state's weatherization program is sustaining a work force of 2,200 statewide, with more than 1,000 jobs resulting from the infusion of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding. Although ARRA funding will disappear, state and local officials expect plenty of opportunities for employment.