



# The Better Buildings Neighborhood View

April 2013

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## Better Buildings Partners Complete 50,000 Upgrades

Program data through December 2012 show that Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partners completed more than 50,000 upgrades by the end of the year. In fact, they helped home and building owners improve the energy efficiency of more than 47,000 homes and 60 million square feet of commercial space. During this time, the following seven programs have individually surpassed a milestone of completing more than 2,000 residential upgrades:



Click the chart above to see Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partners' progress.

- [New York State Home Performance with ENERGY STAR](#)
- [EnergySmart](#) (three counties across Colorado)
- [BetterBuildings for Michigan](#)
- [Energy Upgrade California](#) (six cities and counties across California)
- [Southeast Energy Efficiency Alliance \(SEEA\) Southeast Consortium](#) (13 cities across the Southeast)
- [Clean Energy Works Oregon](#) (Portland, Oregon)
- [Efficiency Maine](#)

"Not only is my furnace more energy efficient, it saves a lot of money. It's made my whole life happier, and I would say gives me a lot of hope for the future in terms of lifestyle."

-Mary Redelfs, an Omaha, Nebraska, homeowner who received her home energy upgrade through the reEnergize Program

Read more of the [growing number of testimonials](#) from satisfied customers of Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partners.

A recent third-party evaluation documented some of the reasons behind these successes. [Preliminary Process and Market Evaluation: Better Buildings Neighborhood Program](#), developed by Research Into Action, Inc. and NMR Group, Inc., identifies the factors most strongly correlated with the 10 most successful Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partners' performance. Success factors included: partnering with financing organizations; aligning with nonprofit organizations; and having energy efficiency experience, either broadly in the community or through collaboration or hiring of staff. An accompanying "[Preliminary Process and Market Evaluation](#)" webcast held in February further examined the report's takeaways, from current market effects to projected long-term impacts of the program.

## Consumer Energy Tip

When shopping for new lightbulbs this spring, look for the Federal Trade Commission's new "Lighting Facts" label. The label is

## Driving Demand

### Energy Upgrade California Drives Demand From Behind the Wheel

With a goal of "energy efficiency or bust," the [California Center for Sustainable Energy](#)

required on all lightbulb packages to help consumers easily compare energy efficient lightbulbs. Consumers can now choose their next bulb based on its brightness by comparing lumens, which measure the amount of brightness a lightbulb emits—the higher the number of lumens, the brighter the bulb. The label also provides estimated annual energy costs, so bulbs can be selected based on energy savings. Get more lighting tips from the U.S. Energy Department's ["Frequently Asked Questions: Lighting Choices to Save You Money."](#)



## Related Events

[ACEEE "Multifamily Housing Offers Opportunity to Utilities Seeking to Meet Energy Efficiency Goals" Webinar](#)  
April 25, 2013  
11:00–12:00 PM EDT

[ACI Home Energy Leadership Summit](#)  
April 29–30, 2013  
Denver, CO

ACI National Home  
Performance Conference  
April 30–May 3, 2013  
Denver, CO  
*Held in conjunction with  
the Better Buildings  
Neighborhood Program*

(CCSE) recently completed a statewide tour of its ongoing [Energy Upgrade California Roadshow](#). The mobile exhibit made 11 stops in nine cities across California during November 2012 to educate more than 1,000 homeowners on how to increase home energy efficiency, achieve cost savings, and improve home comfort.



CCSE's Energy Upgrade California Roadshow takes homeowner education on the road across the Golden State.

Although this is CCSE's first statewide tour, the 24-foot trailer has been hitting the road to drive demand for home energy upgrades since the exhibit launched in August 2011. Between that time and January 2013, the Roadshow—which includes contractors at every stop—visited more than 100 events and welcomed nearly 20,000 visitors. Of those visitors, more than 2,500 requested to speak with a participating Energy Upgrade California contractor at the Roadshow.

"We learned early on that the roadshow primes visitors for an informed conversation with an onsite contractor who can then schedule a home energy assessment on the spot," said CCSE's Better Buildings Program Manager Jeremy Hutman.

For program administrators considering taking their grassroots outreach on the road, [learn more](#) ways to ensure road show success—from maximizing your lead generation to ensuring your travel team has set-up down to a science.

## Stories From the Neighborhood

## Going Deeper in the Heart of Texas Helps Retired Officers Save

Recently, in San Antonio, Texas, Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partner [CPS Energy Savers](#) worked with the Army Residence Community (ARC) to pull off a near military precision.



The ARC, a nonprofit community for retired military officers and their spouses, was looking to upgrade the attic insulation in 189 single-family cottages built between 1987 and 1989. Aware of insulation rebates available through the local municipally owned utility, CPS Energy, the ARC contacted CPS to confirm rebate amounts. Utility and city representatives took this opportunity to convince the ARC to consider additional, deeper energy upgrades to achieve greater savings.

"We visited every cottage and looked at every possible way to reduce energy use," said Carla De La Chapa, program manager with CPS Energy Savers. "Some residents had reported problems regulating the temperature in their homes, so we made thermal improvements like adding attic insulation and sealing ducts. Because the cottages are all electric-powered, we also converted lights and appliances—including refrigerators, air-conditioners, and water heaters—to more energy-efficient models."

Not only did the project achieve 15% energy savings in all 189 cottages, but the

[\*partner workshop.\*](#)

[ACEEE Energy Efficiency](#)

[Finance Forum](#)

May 13–15, 2013

Chicago, IL

[Energy Efficiency Global](#)

[Forum 2013](#)

May 20–21, 2013

Washington, DC

[DOE Better Buildings Summit](#)

[for State and Local](#)

[Communities](#)

May 30–31, 2013

Washington, DC

[ACEEE Summer Study on](#)

[Energy Efficiency in Industry](#)

July 23–26, 2013

Niagara Falls, NY

upgrades will save the ARC an estimated 381,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity and \$33,795 in utility costs each year.

[Learn more](#) about how the CPS Energy Savers program brought efficiency home for the ARC residents, including tips for success when implementing large-scale residential upgrades.

## Innovation Nation

### Energy Impact Illinois Gets the Party Started

[Energy Impact Illinois'](#) latest promotion demonstrates how a home energy assessment can be both a reason to celebrate and an opportunity to educate. Residents in the program's Chicago service area can receive a free energy assessment when they host an energy "house party." Friends and family are invited to watch a contractor demonstrate energy-efficient concepts and conduct the free assessment in the host's home, after which they are encouraged to sign up for their own assessment and upgrade.



Contractor Anthony Stonis explains energy efficiency opportunities to house guests at a Chicago home. (Photo: Copyright WBEZ/Chris Bentley)

Since August 2012, 433 house parties have been instrumental in leading to 1,594 completed upgrades. Learn more about Energy Impact Illinois' [strategy to drive demand](#).

## Beyond the Neighborhood Program

### New CNT Energy Website Shares Valuation Tools

CNT Energy recently launched a [website](#) that provides a one-stop shop for several valuation tools to help improve real estate transactions for high performance homes—new or existing homes that use fewer resources as a result of design, technology, or efficiency improvements. Energy efficiency programs can serve an important role in ensuring that these [tools](#) are passed along to real estate professionals, appraisers, home energy contractors, and home buyers and sellers to result in a fair value for high performance homes at closing.



Click the image above to see CNT Energy's "Value for Green Homes" infographic.

## Reports Reading List

### Take a Spring (Reading) Break

Whether it's restructuring a program's business model for the long haul or examining the link between energy-efficient homes and mortgage risks, these recent reports can help programs and contractors find success:

- [\*Frontiers of Energy Efficiency: Next Generation Programs Reach for High Energy Savings\*](#) analyzes 22 leading energy efficiency programs to identify best practices by examining how current programs attain higher energy savings, improve program procedures, and reach more customers [American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE), January 2013].
- [\*Home Energy Efficiency and Mortgage Risks\*](#) gives some empirical weight to the notion that completing energy efficiency upgrades helps borrowers by providing more money through energy savings for loan repayment (University of North Carolina Center for Community Capital and Institute for Market Transformation, March 2013).
- [\*Home Performance with ENERGY STAR Program Report\*](#) provides a preliminary plan for the next phase of the program, including making it scalable and more attractive to consumer participants (The Department's Building Technologies Office, January 2013). [View a webinar](#) that explores the report and next steps for the program.
- [\*Implications of Cost-Effectiveness Screening Practices in a Low Natural Gas Price Environment\*](#) describes the challenges that low gas prices pose for the cost-effectiveness of energy efficiency programs, using an electric-gas efficiency program and portfolio as an example (Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, April 2013).
- [\*Overcoming Market Barriers and Using Market Forces to Advance Energy Efficiency\*](#) analyzes several targeted policies to improve the energy efficiency market by providing solutions to specific market failures and barriers without requiring substantial spending or government mandates (ACEEE, March 2013).
- [\*Scaling Up Multifamily Energy Efficiency Programs: A Metropolitan Area Assessment\*](#) examines 50 metropolitan areas where multifamily buildings are the most prevalent and identifies how energy efficiency can expand within these areas (ACEEE, March 2013).
- [\*The Uniform Methods Project: Methods for Determining Energy Efficiency Savings for Specific Measures\*](#) provides a set of model protocols for determining energy and demand savings that result from specific energy efficiency measures implemented through state and utility efficiency programs (The Department and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, April 2013).

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