

**Discover the New Better Buildings Residential Program Solution Center – Better Buildings
Neighborhood Program Webcast
June 19, 2014**

Amanda Chiu: Hello everyone and good afternoon. My name is Amanda Chiu and I am with Energetics Incorporated, working for the U.S. Department of Energy. Thank you for joining us today. During our webcast today we will be talking about the U.S. Department of Energy's very new Better Buildings Residential Program Solution Center. The Residential Program Solutions Center is going to be released later this fall and is an online collection of proven energy efficiency program examples, templates, tips, lessons learned, and many, many other resources. This is a free, one-of-a-kind tool that can help programs quickly adapt, proven innovation, minimize trial and error, and achieve success throughout a program's phases, including planning, implementation, management, and evaluation. And content topics included in the Solution Center are business model, program integration and design, marketing and outreach, contractor engagement, workforce development, financing, and evaluation and data collection. Today we have with us Danielle Sass Byrnett, supervisor of the Better Buildings Residential Program at the U.S. Department of Energy. And she will be giving us a demonstration of the Solution Center. Before we get started, though, my colleague Sargon is going to go over a few logistical items. Sargon?

Sargon de Jesus: Thanks, Amanda. First, just wanted to let everyone know that, yes, all your phones have been put on mute to prevent background noise during this presentation. However, we request, if you haven't done so already and if you're using a telephone line to join us, to please enter your two- or three-digit audio PIN. And you can find your audio PIN in the control panel box on the right-hand side of your screen. And to enter it, you just press "pound" the two- or three- digit number and then "pound" again. And we ask you to do that so that we can unmute your line if you have any questions during this presentation. If you are listening to the presentation through your computer's speakers, however, you will not be able to ask questions over the phone, orally. Today's questions will be addressed throughout the meeting on a rolling basis. So to ask a question you can virtually raise your hand by clicking that blue circle icon with a hand, which is also found in that control panel and we can unmute you. Or you can type a question at any point during the webcast into that questions box in the control panel as well. Lastly, today's webcast is being recorded and the recording, along with today's presentation and the transcript, will be posted on the Better Buildings website soon. So now I'll turn it back over to Amanda to begin today's presentation.

AC: Great. Thank you, Sargon. So if we could go to the agenda.

[next slide]

There we go. So during our time together, what we'll be doing is going through an overview of the Solution Center: what it is, where it came from, and then Danielle will be walking us through a tour of the Solution Center covering the framework of how all the information and resources is organized in the Solution Center, and how it's structured via handbooks. And then we'll be going through some "use cases" and going through content as examples of how a program administrator might utilize the Solution Center. And then we'll wrap up with a presentation on next steps, including what's going to be going on this summer as a peer review, and opportunities to be a beta user, and a request to you on what would be useful future enhancements.

[next slide]

So before we dive into that, we would like to get a sense of exactly who's in the room. So we're going to run a poll that should be showing up on your screen now.

[poll slide]

So the question for you is "What is your role in the marketplace?" So we can understand who's on the call with us today. Do you design or implement programs, assess or install energy efficiency measures in homes? Are you a contractor at upgrading homes? Do you do research? Any type of research. Are you

involved in training of any sort related to a program? Or is your role something different than what we have listed here? So if you could, so if you wouldn't mind, please go ahead and select your option.
[pause] Ok, great! Well, thank you and we're going to close the poll now.

[poll results]

And it looks like a majority of folks are in the "design or program implementation" part of the market. We also have a few people who are involved in going to the homes and installing or assessing efficiency measure opportunities. And a couple folks who are "other." Great! Well, thank you very much for that (for participating).

[next slide]

With that we'll go ahead and dive into the Solution Center demonstration. So, Danielle?

Danielle Sass Byrnett: Great. Thank you very much, Amanda. Thank you everyone for filling out the poll. It's very helpful to know and it sounds like we've met the first step of reaching our target audience and inviting them to this webinar. The goal for the webinar, as the Solution Center's use, is largely targeted at program implementers and designers. So, this is perfect.

[next slide]

Amanda provided a brief introduction of the Solution Center at the get-go and did a nice job concisely capturing what we're after for that. But I'm going to go in just a little bit more detail over the next couple minutes before I give you an opportunity to actually see it, see the content that is included in it. The real purpose behind this is to help programs in the future not have to start from scratch when they are thinking about what strategies they might employ, what kind of program design they are going to go after, and how they would engage the marketplace of consumers. So as Amanda had said previously, we really want to help minimize trial and error, help programs and their partners plan, operate, and evaluate their programs, but also very importantly (although you are going to see the Solution Center right now) at one point in time our every intent is to actually provide a living repository of examples, lessons, and resources. So we are actively engaging with programs, who may or may not have DOE partners in the past, in search of additional examples, additional lessons learned from their perspective that we can add. And we will continue to do that in the future as the Solution Center lives on the website.

[next slide]

So as mentioned, the primary target audience is program administrators and implementers. We also anticipate that there are very useful resources and information here for the folks who go into homes: the contractors, our service delivery partners (like financial institutions, marketing firms, and others) those who assist with various components or aspects of residential energy efficiency programs. And we've also been told that it will be helpful for program evaluators to be able to see what else has happened in the market before and also get access to a library of past evaluation reports, which we have in here as well.

[next slide]

So I wanted to just give you a quick sense for how long this project has actually been in development. We have been working on it since early 2012: coming up with a framework for capturing lessons learned and portraying them, making them available and accessible to program administrators across the country. And so there have been numerous feedback stages with partners, energy efficiency non-governmental organizations, state and locals, utilities, and others. At this point, we're down near the bottom. We're in what we're considering a first release, which is available while we're doing peer review and beta testing this summer. And you all are invited to be beta testers; we will give you access information at the end of the webinar. With the anticipation of going to a full public launch that will not require any kind of password or login information in fall of this year.

[next slide]

And of course to accomplish all of this work over the last couple of years, we have had a pretty sizable content development team. And so I just wanted to acknowledge them and all of their work. It has included a diversity of groups from the industry: governments, national laboratories, and consulting firms and consultant experts from across the country.

[next slide]

So that content that you will see really reflects the expertise and experience of a number of different program administrators out in the field. But in particular, it draws heavily from the Better Buildings Neighborhood Program. The Better Buildings Neighborhood Program was a Recovery Act-funded grant initiative that the Department of Energy ran and that the team behind the Solution Center ran and oversaw between 2010 and 2013. And one of the opportunities that we had with that initiative, through providing grant funds to 41 state and local governments across the country, we were able to test with them numerous models for approaching and overcoming the barriers that are in the marketplace around getting homeowners to complete energy upgrades in their homes and their businesses. So this one is focused on residential. And so you will see hundreds of examples from Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partners in here. But we also, of course, have also reached out to Home Performance with ENERGY STAR Sponsors and non-DOE affiliated utility and state energy office residential energy programs. But a significant portion of the information is from the Better Buildings Neighborhood Program. We've also mined existing materials and resources that have been written by various organizations that have published guidance on how to tackle various aspects of residential efficiency programs and so you'll find all of that inside the Solution Center itself. And one feature that we are very excited to be rolling out as part of our launch this fall will be a user submission process. As I mentioned, we want this to be a living repository. And so we are going to create a content submission opportunity for any users who, upon reading the content, think that they might have an example to contribute or an tool or a template that would be relevant as well.

[next slide]

Just a couple last framing slides. I wanted to let folks know what kind of information you're finding in the Solutions Center and how we, as DOE approached what we included in here. You will not find purely anecdotal information about new ideas and innovations that are being tested for the first time. That is very important and we are thrilled that it is happening out in the marketplace, but we don't know if those provide any solutions just yet. So they are not in the Solution Center. What you will largely find is what we consider "lessons learned." These are included in a couple of the key portions of the handbooks that you will see in a moment. These are data points, information, resources, and suggestions that are coming of the fact that multiple programs tried similar approaches and came to similar results. And so we've got at least qualitative data, if not quantitative data, and anecdotal evidence from multiple locations, which is making us confident enough to say why something worked in one place or another, what the market conditions were. So that's the kind of information you going to find in here mostly.

I did also want to flag that the Better Buildings Neighborhood Program itself is undergoing an independent, third-party evaluation. The data analysis is happening right now and the results of that will be released in early 2015. Once those results are available we will go back and update the Solution Center and incorporate any quantitative data results that come through. So any statistical analyses that can really point for all of us to particular practices that could truly be considered best practices and that are universally or broadly applicable and will be highlighted in the future in additional ways to show that those are based on quantitative evidence.

[next slide]

So the version that we're sharing today actually contains about 95% of the content that we expect to be released this fall. And more than 90% of the features and functionality. Our goal in making it available to all of you is to have you help us test it out essentially and be beta testers: to be able to look for resources,

look for information, provide us with suggestions, let us know if something isn't working. And at the same time we are also undergoing a formal peer review with experts and getting their feedback as far as the content goes and giving us a chance to incorporate those comments and make sure that everything is solid and set to go when we release this fully to the public in the fall.

[next slide]

[next slide]

Okay. So. We're going to dive into the Solution Center itself. First, this is the home page. I'm showing you screenshots, just so we don't have to worry about any shaky Web connections. The screenshot of the homepage has a frame for particular types of information that are in here. But there are also lots of different features that you can access on the left navigation, the right. And I'm going to go through many of these, but not all on the call today. Let's get started with the framework.

[next slide]

So the content in the Solution Center is really built around six main program components, or aspects of a program that relate to planning, operations, and implementation. And those six components start in the upper left corner with market position and business model. And this component specifically asks what kind of organization are you and therefore what kind of constraints are on your ability to implement the program, what kind of considerations do you have to keep in mind, and also what kind of partnerships might be most relevant to you. A utility program that is operating in a regulatory environment where there are energy efficiency targets or where there are strict cost effectiveness tests will probably look relatively different from a state-energy-office-run program or an NGO-run program that isn't facing those same type of constraints, but might instead be facing funding constraints in a different way. So the market position and business model is the place to start to flag what kind of an organization you are and how you might need to operate as a result.

That of course leads into our central component around program design and customer experience. And the program design is what you would think. The reason it says customer experience there very centrally is that we found through experience that programs are very complicated when it comes down to it on the ground and behind the scenes, but ultimately if the customer isn't kept central the program is not going to work. It's not going to achieve its goals. The program has to provide a positive customer experience. Otherwise the customers are not going to come back. They're not going to refer their friends. You lose a lot of opportunities as far as word of mouth, and free marketing and outreach. And you're probably not going to get the energy savings you were expecting.

So our program design piece is bolstered by the three components on the bottom. You might think of this as a bit of a triangle. These are the components that people most frequently think of when they are thinking about how to run a residential energy efficiency program. First is marketing and outreach: how do you get customers engaged in the first place? Second is financing: how are they going to pay for the upgrade measures that you want them to install? Whether you offer the financing or a partner does. And then third is the most important partnership with your contractors and ensuring that you have got an engaged contractor base who is working in true partnership with the program and vice-versa. And if you don't have fully qualified contractors sufficient to meet your program's need, then you would need to engage in workforce development, as well. We've got a variety of content pieces, guidance, and advice around that aspect of working with contractors in the workforce.

And then if you go back up, last but not least, in the upper right corner you see the evaluation and data collection box. This of course is how we answer the question of how well have we been doing. And so you need to assess that on a regular basis, but also most programs have to assess periodically on what they have accomplished: how it looks as far as their return on investments. And some of that relates to cost effectiveness, typically.

So these are the six major operational areas of a program, or at least pieces to be thinking about when considering program design and operations. And so all of the content in the Solution Center is housed within one of each of these six areas.

[next slide]

Beyond that, though, we recognize programs go through different phases. So we've broken down the content from those six components into four phases, or these ten bullets that you see here in the light green. Each of these pieces is a different step, essentially, in the process. And so for all of our program components there's some point at which you need to think about how to assess the market. So "assessing the market" for "marketing and outreach" looks at customer and customer types, market segmentation, potential residential consumer demand. "Assessing the market" if you're thinking about "market position and business model" is really understanding more what kind of environment you're operating in and what are your constraints and opportunities. If you keep moving down through the different stages, you'll get to "develop resources" and "deliver program." "Developing resources" for "financing" is probably something like loan applications and ensuring that you have easy access to loan applications for both contractors and customers and loan approval processes. "Developing resources" for "evaluation and data collection" looks very different and more like surveys and data collection reports and databases. So as you can probably get the sense, you can go through each of the program components and each of the stages to get at the particular type of content and answering the particular type of questions you're interested in. And I'll get into examples of this over the next few slides.

[next slide]

So when you select a particular program component and a stage and in this particular example we're in contractor engagement and workforce development, and we're interested in "overview." You'll see a handbook. This is where all the content itself lives. And every handbook looks the same from a structure perspective. I'm going to walk through what the structure is like and then we'll dive into some particular examples.

So the structure starts with a description. The description tab will say why that particular stage is important and what the user will learn. It also will give you some tips about other key resources that might be relevant elsewhere in the Solution Center or other DOE resources that are available on the Web.

[next slide]

The next tab in all the handbooks is the step-by-step. And the step-by-step tells you what the stage really means and how you can do it – how you can implement it. And so each of the step-by-step tabs has these window shades (or accordions, as we call them). You can see what all the steps are and then decide which one you really want to read about. When you click on one of those, it will open up. And you will be able to see information about what to actually do in order to complete that step. And it will provide you with links and resources to help you do so. This particular one is around market position and business model and we're assessing the market. So you need to consider potential market demand for project and services. And in this particular piece we're looking at policies and how the policy environment might frame some of that. And so we have got links to various places where you can find out about policy information.

[next slide]

The third tab in each handbook is called "tips for success." Tips for success are lessons that are based on documented experience from multiple programs. So when I mentioned before one of key criteria around whether we included information in the Solution Center or not was if multiple programs had tried something and had some conclusions and results we could draw from across them. And so all the tips for success are particular ways of going about doing things that multiple programs have said they really wish they hadn't had to learn the hard way. And so they want users of the Solution Center to not have to start from scratch and benefit from their own experience.

So in this handbook which is around program design and customer experience, one of the tips is making upgrade options clear and concise for customers. And much like the step-by-steps, each of the tips can be opened and you can get more detailed information. Within a tip for success, it will describe what the particular barrier is that is being overcome with this strategy or approach. It will give you a synopsis of why that has been valuable and then it will provide multiple examples for particular programs that have actually gone through and demonstrated that this was valuable to them. And it will give you some information about what their market looks like and what kind of results they achieved.

[next slide]

Also in the tips for success, and throughout the Solution Center, you can find video content and other types of multimedia. And some of these are program administrators and other partners, who, in their own words, are describing why a particular tip was relevant to them, how they learned it, and what it meant in their marketplace.

[next slide]

So the fourth tab in each handbook is the “examples.” And this includes case studies, it includes presentations and reports from programs themselves, and materials from individual energy upgrade programs. So these are all different kinds of examples of resources that programs themselves have developed talking about their own initiatives, their strategies, their results, etc. in their own words. And you can click on any of these to download the PDF, download the PowerPoint, etc.

[next slide]

Similarly, we have a “toolbox” tab. The toolbox includes templates, forms, tools, and calculators. So these are different resources that you can use and adopt for your own program. Or at least look to when you are considering what you want to develop, but you don’t need to start from scratch. So we are in Evaluation and Data collection now – and at the “Conduct Evaluation” stage. And you can see that there are numerous examples of surveys that have been conducted by different programs. So you can grab one of these surveys, take a look at what kind of questions were asked, and decide if you wanted to use some of those, modify them, replicate them, etc. But again you don’t have to start from scratch.

[next slide]

The last tab is “topical resources.” This is probably what most people think that they’re going to get when they come to a website. These are the presentations, publications, the webcasts, the various resources that relate to topical information about a particular a handbook, a stage, a step. We’re in the contractor engagement and workforce development component again, and this one is around delivering the program. And so we’ve got a few materials here that are showing up as presentations. One of them is “Five Steps to a Profitable Contractor Base.” You could grab this PowerPoint presentation in PDF form, reuse parts of it, or use it as a quick way of getting through materials and information and absorbing them in PowerPoint format as opposed to in the handbook, step-by-step format.

[next slide]

There are a few other features in the handbooks that are worth pointing out, which I will do quickly. At the top of every handbook, there are four links on the right-hand side. The first of these is a “heart.” This is for favorites. You have the option, if you create a user account (which you don’t have to do), of saving any handbook and pretty much any resource into a favorites folder, which you can keep for yourself and you can refer to any time you want.

Similarly, we have a subscribe button. This allows you to subscribe to a handbook so that you can know – you’ll get an email from the Solution Center – anytime there are significant updates made to that handbook or new resources added to it. So if you are particularly interested in one of the handbook’s

topics, you can subscribe to it and you will know anytime there are any revisions to it. If you want to be able to take a handbook and share it offline, we have two options for you. One is a PDF version and you can click on the PDF version and get a fully formatted, downloaded version to be able to print or share or email. Or you can print the page itself, which is actually printing the entire handbook. And so it will just print it, again, fully formatted but from HTML.

We also are developing, as you can see here, a seventh tab for many of the handbooks that's called "Quick Links." This is a feature we expect to launch sometime late this year that will allow you to click on a particular topic that you're interested in and pull up all of the resources that are related to it – not just looking for a handbook itself, but any of the publications, reports, tools, templates, examples – all of that in one place that relates to that topic. Like cost-effectiveness tests, for example, or non-energy benefits.

[next slide]

As I mentioned, one of the features that we're getting really positive feedback on is the "Favorites." And so that was the heart icon that I mentioned. When you click on the heart, your resource will go into a folder. You can name the folder. You can save into any number of folders. You have an unlimited number – as many as you like.

[next slide]

And then the last piece I want to point out before going on to examples. No matter where you are in the Solution Center we recognize that there is a lot of information in here.

There is quite a bit of structure. The framework, I think, becomes logical over time, but if you are finding something that you think is interesting, but you not sure where you've ended up or where to go next, you can always click "Where Am I?" And it will provide you with this pop-up box that will show you which component you're in, and how that relates to the other ones, and which phase of a program you're in. And that's the icons at the bottom. If you see on the left-hand side, you also get this in the outline format, so you can see specifically which stage. And if you want to go to the next one, then you can go back and select from "Make Design Decisions" to "Develop Implementation Plans" and keep working your way through the handbooks if that's your preference.

[next slide]

Okay. Did we have any questions come in, or should we go on to examples?

AC: Yes, we have two questions. So I'm curious as to whether the Solution Center team has polled audiences that would like to start an energy efficiency program, but haven't, and what they see as the most useful resources.

DB: So because we are just starting to roll this out and we first made it available in the beta version on May 1st, we have not yet asked folks what they found most useful, but we're excited to do that this fall once we go to the public launch.

AC: Okay. Great. The second question is: in the Solution Center have we grouped or categorized content for greatest relevance, perhaps along the lines of barriers, benefits, and program design being somewhat different for an urban versus a rural setting? Things like that.

DB: Got it. Great question. So you'll see when we go through the filters that we have a variety of filters, including those – there are filters for urban, suburban, and rural areas. And we also have opportunities to develop additional filters in the future. And then one of our longer term possible enhancements that I'll flag at the end is to actually help with decision support and ask any of the users who would like what kind of marketplace they're operating in. And then we can point them to specific examples and types of resources that are in here. But as of right now, it is possible to filter resources according to different community types, among other features.

AC: Okay. Great. And one more question before we move on to the examples: will this residential program Solution Center eventually connect with the Building America Solution Center, which has the technical and QA material, or the standardized work specification? It seems like this would be a good way to allow for cross-resource engagement.

DB: Absolutely. So the Building America Solution Center and the standardized work specifications teams are working together right now to figure out how to integrate. And, yes, there are links in here over to those resources for particular technical details. And those are largely found in the contractor engagement and workforce sections right now, of the program solution center.

AC: Okay. Great. Thank you. Folks, if you have any other questions, feel free to chat them in or raise your hand and we'll get to your question at the end of the examples. All right. Danielle?

[next slide]

DB: Thanks, Amanda. Okay. So we've got four examples for you that we're going to walk you through for questions that we get asked relatively frequently and that you can answer on your own now with the Solution Center itself. So the first question is: "Our program needs contractors to perform upgrades, of course. How do I identify and recruit contractors to develop a local workforce?" If you come to the homepage, you will of course see our program component icons and hopefully it will be intuitive to click the "contractor engagement and workforce development one as a first starting point.

So should you pick that, it will bring you to an overview handbook, where you will in fact get confirmation that this is where we talk about contractors.

[next slide]

And in the step-by-step, you'll see in particular that we discuss ideas of establishing relationships with contractors around recruitment, training, and certifying workers in the "identify partners" handbook. Let's go there. So in the "identify partners" handbook, you will see that we do in fact have a section about the fact that, yes, you do need contractors as your most important service delivery partners. And that there are various trade associations, economic development institutions, and others that can help you promote your program to contractors to recruit them. So we're probably going to want to dig in.

[next slide]

If you go then to the step-by-step, you can find a variety of steps around assessing, developing strategies, engaging and recruiting the workforce. And so we might pick one around developing strategies for contractor recruitment in particular. And this provides a few suggestions of particular approaches that you might want to use to do contractor recruitment, and also provides links for other handbooks and places that we talk about contractor recruitment and give you examples and tips and guidance.

[next slide]

You also would be interested in tips for success: what have other programs learned when they've gone through and tried to engage contractors and recruit them to their program? And one of those tips is around helping contractors enter the market by lowering barriers to entry and providing them with training, networking, and mentoring opportunities. And so you'll read that there are a variety of ways you can help contractors overcome the barriers to entry in the marketplace. You can help them learn the trade, enter the market through training and mentoring, but there are also other strategies. And you can read about those strategies through examples in Fayette County, Pennsylvania and New Hampshire's Beacon Community Project, specifically. And also click on – I know that this one is a case study about contractors entering the market and get more details about these examples.

[next slide]

We work through the tabs of the handbook. And you'll find that in terms of case studies, we actually have an entire business case for home performance contracting. This would be very valuable for you to understand if you're interested in recruiting contractors because you need to understand how they operate, how they think, and what kinds of enticements might be motivating to them to get them to engage with your program. So you can pull down this case study and go to the toolbox and find templates and forms and tools and calculators, including an actual contractor agreement form. So for participating contractors. This one is from Efficiency Maine and it shows you what exactly they have used when they have engaged contractors in their program. So you can take advantage of this, replicate it, request the form itself, or use it as it a starting point when you're thinking about what you might ask for your contractors.

[next slide]

And then of course, the last tab around topical resources includes a variety of presentations related to recruitment. This particular one we've got here is on contractor outreach: so designing or implementing residential retrofit or energy upgrade programs and how you engage in contractor outreach. So you can go through the PowerPoint and get some additional suggestions from Efficiency First.

[next slide]

So our second example is that our program is starting soon and so we need to research what the market for energy efficiency looks like in our community. What should I do to understand the market?

[next slide]

So understanding the market is probably going to be in our strategy development. And in fact we have an entire set of handbooks, an entire stage around assessing the market.

[next slide]

So if you clicked on that, if you clicked on the hyperlink for "Assess the Market," it's actually going to bring you to search results for the Solution Center that will show you all the handbooks around assessing the market. So you will need to decide what kind of market assessment are you really asking for, are you really interested in. If you think that you're really talking about is potential demand for products and services for the entire marketplace, as opposed to "marketing and outreach" and "target audiences," then you'll pick the "market position and business model" handbook.

[next slide]

And this handbook, again, will provide you a general description of how to assess what kind of activities and actors exist in your community, but it will also give you access to all of the other "assess the market" handbooks. So if you decided that this is actually not where you wanted to go, and instead you were thinking more along the lines of barriers and needs for a program as opposed to what the market structure actually looks like, you can get to the other handbooks very easily, right from here. And when you do want to dig in, and you have found the right handbook, you can access the step-by-step, the tips, the resources and examples, the way we've described as we've gone through the handbooks.

[next slide]

Our third example is: how do I develop an RFP to procure the financing services that my customers need? So a little bit more operational and more specific. And because we're interested in procuring financing services, we'll go into the financing program component. And when you see the step-by-step there, like we did in the first example, you can see that is where we identify and partner with financial institutions that can provide capital, underwriting, and other functions (so, financing services) to enable our customers to access financing.

[next slide]

In the Financing – Identify Partners handbook, you can see very quickly that we do in fact have specific steps around determining the process for soliciting proposals from prospective lending partners. We also have information on evaluating the proposals, and actually negotiating the lending agreement. As in the other step-by-step handbooks (or tabs), you'll find particular information, the items you might want to include, background information that you might want to think about – even items to ask lenders to respond to when you're putting together your RFP. If you go down to the next step you'll see "evaluating proposals." There are examples of qualification criteria beyond whatever your organization already requires, but specific to financing and financing for energy efficiency programs.

[next slide]

In the latter tabs of this handbook you would find actual sample RFPs that have been used by multiple program administrators. And even template RFPs that DOE put together under the Recovery Act to make it easier for state and local governments to their own RFP to engage financial institutions.

[next slide]

And our last example is: I need to explore options for setting up a quality assurance program. Where do you talk about that? So although it may have seemed – we think it's very logical to work through the different program components and the stages, when you want to get an answer to a question, of course we also have a robust search capability. And so you can just type in "quality assurance" into the keyword search. And you don't have to figure out where we talk about it, we'll tell you where we talk about it. And so our search results for "quality assurance" bring up a variety of resources around quality assurance procedures from one state program, from the U.S. EPA, which has run the Home Performance with ENERGY STAR program in the past, examples from program implementers, and even the Community Benefits Law Center. And you can see with each of these that some of them are PDFs, others are Word documents, and icons will tell you what it is that you're finding.

[next slide]

When you actually get search results, as I mentioned during the Q&A in the middle, you have the opportunity to filter the content to refine the results further. We've selected to filter by handbook to figure out where quality assurance is discussed at the handbook level. And you can see that here we talk about it in "Contractor Engagement and Workforce Development," "Evaluation and Data Collection," and also in "Program Design." But you can use the filters to filter by other content types as well, like just topical presentations, other kinds of publications. You can also filter by state or territory. And ultimately when you select a resource, it will open up and you will be able to review it right there on the screen and not have to anywhere else.

[next slide]

So, we are back at our homepage and I did want to mention a few other features that are available in the Solution Center beyond the content that we've already seen. And so you can see if you follow along with me on the left-hand side, you will be able to go to an "about" screen anytime and get information about how to navigate the Solution Center. You don't have to have memorized all of this on the webinar. What kind of content is available and how it's organized. You also have a handbook index, if you know there's a particular handbook that you want to go to right away, you can just select the handbook index and then go directly to whatever handbook it is that you want. You don't have to navigate around. We have an "Energy Data Facts" page, which provides our answers to frequently asked questions around typical residential energy efficiency and energy data questions. What percent of U.S. energy consumption comes from the residential sector? For example. How much energy savings can I expect from air ceiling and insulation program? We also have a glossary of terms that provide you with definitions for all of the terms – not just used in the Solution Center, but it is attempting to tackle terms that are used throughout the

industry. And then, as we've discussed, the various options for going into program components, program design phases, and you can actually select just particular content types. So if you're only interested in what we have for case studies, you can go and browse by content types and just select case studies. And then you have all the filtering options that we mentioned previously, including things like is a case study relevant to an urban, suburban, or rural area. Or is it relevant to or talking about a program in a particular state or within a particular program.

And then on the right-hand side of the home page, we talked about "search" and the "favorites." We also show recently updated resources, recent content – so you can see what we've been busy uploading and working on – and also the most popular handbooks. These are ones that other users are accessing most frequently. Last, but not least, we have a nice acknowledgements section for all of our peer reviewers, so should you be willing to volunteer to do peer review, we'll be very happy to acknowledge you on the home page and thank you for that effort.

[next slide]

[next slide]

All right. So the next steps are that we are engaging with our peer reviewers right now and in fact many of them are reviewing handbooks as we speak. This is the URL for all of you who would like to become beta users. You don't have to tell us. You're welcome to just go to: <https://bbnp.pnnl.gov>. The username is 'betauser' and the password, which stands for Better Buildings Residential Program Solution Center, is 'bbrpsc' and I will show this information again at the end of the webinar when we do Q and A.

When you get into the Solution Center you are welcome to access it freely, but you will need to create a user account if you want to be able to save your own favorites and to subscribe to any of the handbooks. You are also welcome to contact us if you're willing to be a peer reviewer, for particular types of content, or issue areas where you have expertise that you want to lend. We would love to hear from you and we encourage you to email us at BBRPSolutionCenter@erg.com.

[next slide]

So now I'm going to pause, I think, and ask Amanda to run the next poll.

AC: Okay. Great. So we have a number of things that we're going to be developing and focusing on over the next year or so that we are looking for your input on for future enhancements: what you think would be useful as you're taking a look at the Solution Center. Based on the very brief demonstration that Danielle has just given you, what kind of things do you think you'd be interested in seeing? So we're going to pull up a poll.

[poll screen]

And we'd really appreciate your feedback. So what do you think would be the most useful enhancement to the Solution Center? What would you be interested in seeing? User comments and ratings on any of the content – if there any kinds of questions or comments. "This is a really great resource" type of thing, or not. Content highlighted for your market and program that are specific to your marketplace based on some information that you provide. Multimedia like videos, and other images, and graphs and icons and anything else. Feel free to chat them in and we're definitely open to suggestions. Or anything else in general, feel free to please just type in any ideas or suggestions that you have in the chat box on the right side of your screen. So feel free to go ahead and select anything that you think you would be interested in seeing in the Solution Center. [PAUSE] Okay. Great. So let's go ahead and close the poll and see what kind of results we got.

[poll results]

So it looks like most of you were interested in things that are really tailored for you and your market environment: what kind of rural or urban environment you're working in or any other particular criteria. And that user comments and multimedia would be pretty useful and then there are a couple other things that seem pretty handy that if you're interested feel free to type in your suggestions or comments. We would definitely love to hear what you have to say.

DB: Great. Thanks, Amanda. Yes, we will definitely take these into consideration. It's really helpful to get your feedback. We're excited to hopefully do all of these things, but there's always a question of sequence, timing, and budget. So do we have any questions about the examples, access to the Solution Center, types of resources or information, or suggestions that anyone on the phone has?

AC: So we have a few questions, but, folks, feel free to raise your hand virtually, clicking on the little button with the hand on the top part of your control panel on the right side of your screen or feel free to type your questions directly into questions field and then we can certainly field them.

So the first question is: is the Solution Center geared toward existing home programs or is there information specific to new home programs as well?

DB: The Solution Center is geared toward existing home programs. There are some materials that are probably relevant to new home programs, as well, but the ENERGY STAR New Homes and Zero Energy Ready (formerly Challenge Home Programs) focus on the new homes marketplace. And this Solution Center is intended to help existing home programs across the country get super market penetration for energy upgrades.

AC: Okay. Great. We have a question Katherine Mitchell. And Katherine, we're going to unmute you in just a second. Katherine, are you there? Let's try that again. Katherine, you might have muted yourself. [PAUSE] Katherine, you might be muted locally at your phone. Okay, I think I understand – oh, okay, I think I understand your question: is there any division within DOE that will be developing (and correct me if I'm wrong) a commercial and industrial Solution Center? Can you let us know if that's what "C and I" is – yes. Okay. That's the question.

DB: That is a great question. There are efforts underway internally to build out additional Solution Centers. And those would include commercial and industrial. For right now, the Better Buildings Better Plants initiative, and you can find that on the energy.gov website. Better Buildings Better Plants has numerous resources for industrial facilities. And then the Better Buildings Challenge has lots of information and examples available for commercial building entities. But we were the first on the residential side and there is a long-term plan to come up with a combined Solution Center that would cover all of the sectors. There are still lots of information resources available on the energy.gov website. So I would encourage you to look for those two pieces: Better Buildings Challenge and Better Buildings Better Plants.

AC: Okay, great. Thanks. And we have an enhancement suggestion from Dan Wildenhaus. Dan, we're going to unmute you in just a second and if you can expand on your suggestion. Are you there?

Dan Wildenhaus: I'm here. Thanks. It's really more focusing on one of the ones you that did mention and suggesting how you might provide focus based on someone's market environment.

DB: Great.

DW: And that would be to have some filters where a program manager or whomever could actually do some grading based on the maturity of the marketplace. So if they can kind of put in some things of: "how mature are your contractors?" In other words, do you have an "efficiency first" chapter locally, or a trade association that kind of gets contractors together? Have you had a lot of ERA funded trainings around EPI or HURS in your area? Then you ask additional questions: have there been operational, whole-house retrofit programs provided by the utilities in your region? And then a whole separate category on what is the general market awareness towards energy efficiency in your region, and depending on how folks are

able to kind of answer those questions, it would be great to tailor the content then that best suits that kind of particular mix. I think folks that are in kind of slightly upper half of that spectrum, where you have a partially developed marketplace already happening, could really benefit by kind of tailoring the things that are really going to be more geared towards them. Versus someone who is kicking off a new program probably doesn't need to read about the real nuances between program marketing and contractor marketing that you would find in a very mature market. They may need things that are much more on the introductory level due to their market maturity. Does that make sense?

DB: That makes perfect sense, Dan. Thank you so much for speaking up. And in fact, what you're describing is exactly what we've been talking about internally, and we're really excited to do some analysis over the coming six months with some of our national lab partners in particular and based on some of the independent evaluation that's happening to identify which factors specifically play into that idea of market maturity and which path would lead people to the relevant resources. But we've been talking about it in the form of a quiz type structure or, just what you're describing, a grading type structure that would then give somebody sort of a composite score and head them to different types of examples. So I'm thrilled that that's what you're thinking about because so are we. I hope we'll be able to meet your needs in the next year.

DW: Cool. And I promise everybody they didn't pay me to say that or to ask that question that way. It was just sheer luck!

DB: But you have, by speaking up, volunteered yourself to be one of our reviewers when we get to that phase in the future. How about that?

DW: No problem. Just tell Sarah Whitter to give me a call from PNNL. We know each other so, absolutely. Happy to help.

DB: Thank you very much.

AC: Thanks, Dan. We have one last question before we wrap up. Actually, it's an enhancement suggestion from Lea Yancey. Lea – so we're going to unmute you. Are you there?

Lea Yancey: Yeah, I'm here.

AC: Great. So can you tell us about your suggestion?

LY: Yeah, my enhancement suggestion is just to throw out the idea of some form of an interactive forum online, almost like an online Q and A. If there's a new community with a specific question, they could pose it and program implementers with different levels of experience could reply and really target a response to their question, attach resources, and provide contact information for offline conversations.

DB: Excellent. That's a fantastic suggestion, Lea. Thank you. Yes, we would love to do that. We've been experimenting with the online community separate from this through Home Energy Pros website. And I would encourage anyone who is not already a member of Home Energy Pros to go check that out and become a part of it, but we are looking to integrate those features into the Solution Center at some point in the future. And you can get access to all of those kinds of benefits – so asking one another questions, peer sharing, and resource sharing, through Better Buildings Residential Network. If anyone on the phone is not aware of that, the Better Buildings Residential Network is in fact a peer sharing group and was created specifically to enable that kind of learning and information sharing across program administrators. So once we get the Solution Center launch fully public, we'll work on pulling the two together, but the plan is for the network to leverage a lot of the resources in here and to also be one of the key places where we collect new examples and lessons to augment the Solution Center moving forward as well. So thank you for your suggestion and we will definitely be trying to get there soon.

LY: Great. Thanks.

AC: Great. All right. Well, thank you Danielle for today's demonstration. We'll be posting today's presentation, and a recording, and a transcript on the Better Buildings Neighborhood Program website soon. And you will receive an email pointing you to where you can access that. So with that, thank you for joining us today and this concludes today's webcast. Have a good day. Bye.

DB: Thank you all. Goodbye.