



# RESIDENTIAL NETWORK

## Newsletter

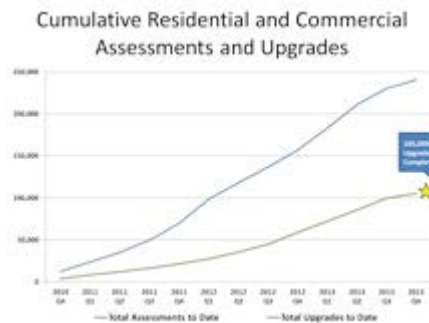
### News From the Field

#### Better Buildings Neighborhood Program Partners Celebrate 100,000+ Upgrades Milestone

#### Better Buildings Residential Network Continues the Legacy

At the [2014 ACI National Home Performance Conference and Trade Show](#), the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) was proud to announce that the [Better Buildings Neighborhood Program](#) achieved its goals by helping more than 100,000 households and businesses save energy, live more comfortably, and reduce their utility bills through energy upgrades.

DOE seed funding provided to more than 40 state and local government partners across the United States between 2010 and 2013 resulted in estimated lifetime energy savings of \$730 million. Greater savings will also accrue as loan funds established during this time are used to finance future energy



*Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partners completed more than 100,000 upgrades. [View the full-size graph.](#)*

May 2014

#### In This Issue

- [Residential Network Continues 100,000+ Upgrade Legacy](#)
- [Discover the New Solution Center](#)
- [Register for Upcoming Peer Exchange Calls](#)
- [Find Latest Peer Exchange Call Summaries](#)
- [Georgetown University Energy Prize Launches](#)
- [Members Receive Home Performance with ENERGY STAR Awards](#)
- [Appraisal Institute Expands Registry of "Green" Residential Appraisers](#)
- [Owners Recommend Energy-Efficient Homes to Friends](#)
- [New Financing Tool Expands Market to Institutional Investors](#)
- [New York Members Partner](#)

efficiency project upgrades. What's more, approximately 30 Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partners will continue their programs through at least 2014 without additional funding from DOE—expanding the lasting investment DOE and its partners have made in energy efficiency.

The [Better Buildings Residential Network](#) continues this legacy by expanding beyond a grant program to all existing residential energy efficiency programs and partners nationally with a commitment to connect energy efficiency programs and partners to share best practices and learn from one another to increase the number of homes that are energy efficient. To date, more than 70 organizations from across the United States and into Canada have become members of the Residential Network. Read the "[Meet Our Members](#)" section below to learn about the latest organizations to join the Residential Network.

## Discover the New Better Buildings Residential Program Solution Center

DOE's Better Buildings Residential Program Solution Center, which was released in a beta version at the ACI National Home Performance Conference, is an online collection of proven residential energy efficiency program examples, templates, tips, lessons learned, step-by-step suggestions, and other resources. This free tool can help programs quickly



to Create Green Jobs

- [Equipment Leasing Creates Opportunity for Cincinnati Contractors](#)
- [Residential Network Diversifies With New Members](#)
- [Kick Off Your Summer With New Reports and Case Studies](#)

### Upcoming Peer Exchange Calls

Residential Network members that are already Home Energy Pros group members must [sign in](#) to view the following links. Non-members wishing to gain access to these valuable resources are invited to [join](#) the Better Buildings Residential Network Group to participate in the online community on Home Energy Pros.

**May 22**

**Data and Evaluation: Benefits of Better Buildings Residential Network Reporting**

12:30–2:00 PM EDT

[Register now](#)

**Financing and Revenue: Using Loan Performance Data to Inform Program Implementation**

adopt proven innovations, minimize trial and error, and achieve success throughout a program's development.

Join DOE for a [demonstration webinar](#) that will showcase the Solution Center's functionality and content and how program administrators and market professionals can use the information to help design, implement, and evaluate residential energy efficiency programs. The webinar will take place June 4, 2014, from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Eastern. In addition, DOE will hold a second [demonstration webinar](#) on June 19, 2014, from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. Eastern. Before DOE makes the Solution Center fully available to the public, we invite you to become a beta user or peer reviewer to test the website and review its content. If you are interested in being involved in this final phase of testing, please [email Solution Center support](#).

## Find the Latest Peer Exchange Call Summaries

Peer Exchange Calls are an opportunity for Better Buildings Residential Network members to discuss similar needs and challenges and to collectively identify effective strategies and useful resources. These are one of the valuable resources made available to Residential Network members. To access the Group, simply [sign up for Home Energy Pros](#). After receiving confirmation (usually within two days), join the Residential Network Group. The following is a sample of recent calls:

- April 24, 2014: Working With Schools
- April 10, 2014: Effectiveness Tests and Measuring Like a Utility
- April 10, 2014: Complementary Energy and Health Strategies
- March 27, 2014: Quality Control, Standardization of Upgrades, and Workforce Expectations
- March 27, 2014: Better Buildings Residential Network Orientation
- March 13, 2014: Loan Programs for Low- and Moderate-Income Households

3:00–4:30 PM EDT

[Register now](#)

### June 12

#### **Program Sustainability: Collaborating With Utilities on Residential Energy Efficiency**

12:30–2:00 PM EDT

[Register now](#)

#### **Workforce/Business Partners: Engaging Efficiency First Chapters and Other Trade Associations in Energy Efficiency Programs**

3:00–4:30 PM EDT

[Register now](#)

### Related Events

[Efficiency First's "Doing the Numbers: Improving Energy Efficiency Cost-Effectiveness Testing" Webinar](#)

May 15, 2014

12:30–2:00 PM EDT

[EE Global Energy Efficiency Global Forum 2014](#)

May 20–21, 2014

Washington, DC

[DOE's Building America "High Performance Enclosure Strategies: Part I, Existing Homes" Webinar](#)

May 21, 2014

3:00–4:30 PM EDT

- February 27, 2014: How Can the Network Meet Your Needs?
- February 27, 2014: Using Social Media for Long-Term Branding

[Sign in](#) to view the full summaries. Non-members wishing to participate in these calls and the online community on Home Energy Pros are invited to [join](#) the Better Buildings Residential Network.

## Georgetown University Energy Prize Launches With 51 Participating Communities

The Georgetown University Energy Prize [officially launched](#) on April 23, 2014, with 51 participating communities from across the country. The participating communities are challenged to create innovative, replicable solutions for lowering their energy use in homes and municipal buildings and will compete to earn the prize of \$5 million to support local energy efficiency programs.



“The cheapest way to reduce emissions is energy efficiency, and by partnering with communities, businesses, and state and local governments, we can drive greater energy efficiency further and faster,” said U.S. Deputy Secretary of Energy Daniel B. Poneman at the launch event. “We applaud these communities as they save homes and businesses money by saving energy and protect our air and water.”

[Participate or learn more](#) about the competition and its participants [and view video highlights](#) from the event.

### [Consortium for Energy Efficiency Summer Program Meeting](#)

May 28–29, 2014  
Boston, MA

### [DOE’s “Discover the New Better Buildings Residential Program Solution Center” Webinar](#)

June 4, 2014  
3:30–4:30 PM EDT

### [Silicon Valley Energy and Sustainability Summit](#)

June 13, 2014  
Redwood City, CA

### [DOE’s “Discover the New Better Buildings Residential Program Solution Center” Webinar](#)

June 19, 2014  
3:00–4:00 PM EDT

### [2014 ACEEE Summer Study on Energy Efficiency in Buildings](#)

August 17–22, 2014  
Pacific Grove, CA

### [Alliance to Save Energy Evening With the Stars of Energy Efficiency Awards Dinner](#)

September 23, 2014  
Washington, DC

### [ACEEE Intelligent Efficiency Conference](#)

November 16–18, 2014  
San Francisco, CA

## Residential Network Members Honored by Home Performance with ENERGY STAR®

On April 29, 2014, DOE and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) honored businesses and organizations for their contributions to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions through energy efficiency at the 2014 ENERGY STAR Awards ceremony. Two Better Buildings Residential Network members received Sustained Excellence Awards in the Energy Efficiency Program Delivery category:

- [Austin Energy](#) was recognized for continuing to enhance and expand its program, completing more than 2,450 projects, and realizing more than \$10 million in energy efficiency upgrade investments in 2013.
- [New York State Energy Research and Development Authority \(NYSERDA\)](#) was recognized for its program, as well as its activities to promote ENERGY STAR qualified products and homes.

[Learn more](#) about the awards and find the full list of award winners.

## Appraisal Institute Expands Registries for “Green” Professional Development Program

The Appraisal Institute (AI), a professional association of real estate appraisers, has expanded its Valuation of Sustainable Buildings Professional Development Program’s registry of [residential appraisers](#) to

make it easier for potential clients to find qualified appraisers for energy-efficient properties. The recent expansion is in response to requests from clients seeking to hire residential appraisers who had



**Appraisal  
Institute®**  
*Professionals Providing  
Real Estate Solutions*

## Home Energy Pros Spotlight

**Tell Us Your Favorite Residential Energy-Saving Invention**

[Join the conversation](#) on Home Energy Pros, where we are asking Better Buildings Residential Network Group members to share which home energy-saving invention they appreciate the most. See “Top Four DOE Inventions Save Homeowners Energy and Money” below for more details.



*Note: You must be a [Residential Network member](#) to access our Home Energy Pros Group. It’s an easy, two-step process—[sign up for Home Energy Pros](#), and then after receiving confirmation within two days, join the Residential Network Group.*

taken AI's green and energy-efficient valuation education courses. The registry now lists the names of AI's designated members, candidates for designation, practicing affiliates, affiliates, and other professionals who have successfully attended and passed course examinations in the Valuation of Sustainable Buildings Professional Development Program. [Learn more](#) about AI's program and courses.

## Study Says Owners of Energy-Efficient Homes Would Recommend Them to Friends

A recent National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) [study](#) aimed at uncovering how owners of energy-efficient homes felt after purchasing their homes found that not only would the majority recommend the same green homes to friends, but more than 50% believed the benefits of energy efficiency outweighed the cost.



"Historically, studies have focused on interest in green among buyers in the market or on trends as reported by industry professionals. While that's certainly important information for all those in the industry, it doesn't always get to the heart of what new buyers want to know, which is: 'How satisfied are green homeowners with their decision?'," said NAHB Energy and Green Building Subcommittee Co-Chair Matt Belcher.

Key findings of the study revealed:

- 94% would recommend a green home to a friend
- 92% would purchase another green home
- 90% were satisfied knowing they "did the right thing" in buying a green home

## Top Four DOE Inventions Save Homeowners Energy and Money



From more efficient appliances to better building materials, [learn how](#) DOE's top four advances in residential technologies can help your customers save energy and money this summer.

## Women at Work for Energy



In honor of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month this May, check out [DOE's photo slideshow](#) of some of the most influential

- 71% believed green homes are of higher quality
- 55% believed the benefits outweighed the cost

Homeowners also provided feedback on what influenced their decisions to purchase a green home, as well as the sustainable features they value most. According to respondents, low utility bills, energy efficiency, and better insulation topped the list of aspects with which homeowners were most satisfied. Read the [full report](#) or [white paper](#) to learn more.

## New Financing Tool Expands Market to Institutional Investors

A new financing platform designed to open the market for energy efficiency to institutional investors, known as [Warehouse for Energy Efficiency Loans \(WHEEL\)](#), was launched in April 2014. WHEEL leverages public funds with private capital to provide low-cost, large-scale financing for residential energy efficiency programs. The platform provides private capital to fund unsecured energy improvement loans to consumers through a government, utility, or other sponsored program. WHEEL was formed by a public-private partnership consisting of Better Buildings Residential Network member [AFC First Financial](#), Citi, DOE, the Energy Programs Consortium, the National Association of State Energy Officials, the Pennsylvania Treasury Department, and Renewable Funding. [Learn more](#) about WHEEL.



Asian American and Pacific Islander women moving advancements in energy forward.

## Stay Tuned for Information on the Benefits of Residential Network Member Reporting and How to Do It

Better Buildings Residential Network members commit when joining to provide DOE with an annual update of the number of residential energy efficiency upgrades their organizations have completed and share information about the benefits associated with these completed upgrades. Current members should look for email instructions on this annual reporting and how they benefit from it in the coming weeks.

## Workforce Development Solutions

### New York Network Members Join Forces to Create Green Jobs

Better Buildings Residential Network member [Rural Ulster Preservation Company](#) (RUPCO) is using its knowledge of the housing market to create energy efficiency contracting jobs with fellow Residential Network member and Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partner [NYSERDA](#).



RUPCO Outreach Coordinator Mike D'Arcy [encouraged local officials](#) at an April 2014 joint meeting of the New Paltz, New York, town and village boards to work with NYSERDA programs to support community development and create green jobs. RUPCO, a nonprofit affordable housing organization, already works with NYSERDA's [Green Jobs-Green New York](#). The statewide program is designed to provide New Yorkers with access to energy assessments, installation services, low-cost financing for residential customers, and pathways to training for various green-collar careers.



"Home performance doesn't always translate well to the consumer, but when you really think about it, we all want the same thing: a home that's warm when it's cold outside and cold when it's warm outside. There's no doubt that our industry can provide that, and having a child has made me appreciate what we do in a different way."

– Macie Melendez, new mom and assistant editor of *Home Energy* magazine, a Better Buildings Residential Network member

Learn more [here](#).



“If we keep contractors busier, we can make them busy enough to hire local contractors or veterans,” said D’Arcy, who also discussed with officials the benefits of contractors becoming Building Performance Institute-certified for energy-efficient construction.

[Learn more](#) about RUPCO’s efforts to spur green job growth in New York.

## Stories From the Neighborhood

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### Equipment Leasing Program Breaks Down Barriers for Cincinnati Contractors

The [Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance](#) (GCEA), a Better Buildings Residential Network member and Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partner, helped jump-start the region’s home performance contracting market by removing a



common barrier to entry for contractors—investing in new equipment. Since November 2010, GCEA’s equipment lease program has provided contractors with access to more than \$66,000 worth of equipment on a lease-to-own basis, reducing upfront costs and giving motivated—but cash-constrained—contractors an entry point into the home performance marketplace. Following is an abridged transcript of an interview with two GCEA staff: Chief Executive Officer Andy Holzhauser and Project Development Manager Rob McCracken.

**What types of equipment do you lease, and which items are most frequently requested?**

*McCracken:* We offer the main types of equipment a new contractor would need in order to start performing home energy assessments, including a blower door, pressure pan, gas leak detectors, and combustion analyzer. We most frequently lease the blower door and infrared cameras—two high-cost, big-ticket items that most contractors don't have easy access to.

### **How has equipment leasing benefitted the residential energy efficiency marketplace in Cincinnati?**

*Holzhauser:* It has enabled us to ramp up the home performance marketplace from basically nonexistent to fully functioning. We were able to do this by reducing the initial costs of energy assessment equipment, which is an investment that contractors have to make before even entering the market. Our equipment leasing program is a hand-up, not a hand-out; we are drawing on DOE capital and deploying it in the marketplace. It's been a win-win because contractors can take advantage of capital they don't normally have access to, and we see our investments come back to us over the course of 12 months.

Read the [full Focus Series interview](#) to learn how GCEA's equipment leasing program is helping contractors break into the home performance field.

## **Meet the Members**

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### **Residential Network Continues to Diversify With New Members**

The Better Buildings Residential Network is pleased to welcome new members:

- [CalCERTS, Inc.](#) was approved by the California Energy Commission to become a Home Energy Rating System (HERS) Provider. The company's mission is to fill the growing need in

the energy efficiency industry for a technically qualified and customer-oriented HERS Provider. It provides service, support, training, and certification to HERS raters.

- [Davis Energy Group](#) is an energy consultancy that provides solutions for building systems and building science. The company uses sustainable technologies and strategies to help create energy-efficient new buildings and improve the efficiency of existing buildings.
- [Efficiency Nova Scotia](#) is the independent, nonprofit organization that helps Nova Scotians use energy better and save money. The organization is dedicated to providing a customer-focused, innovative, and accountable approach to energy efficiency.
- [Empower Efficiency](#) specializes in developing, implementing, and evaluating large-scale energy efficiency, renewable, and clean energy programs that combine consumer-focused community marketing with behavior and social science approaches.
- [Greiner Heating & Air Conditioning](#) is a residential heating and air-conditioning company that started in 1991 and continues to serve the same service area in northern California. It employs Building Performance Institute-certified staff who specialize in designing, engineering, and installing complete energy-saving solutions for owners of existing homes.
- [PECI](#) designs and manages energy efficiency programs for utility providers, government organizations, and other clients. Its programs aim to promote the understanding and adoption of energy-efficient technology and demonstrate the value of efficient buildings.

Connect your organization with these and other related programs. Sign up to become a Better Buildings Residential Network member by completing a [membership form](#).

## Resource Corner

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### Kick Off Your Summer With New Reports and Case Studies

Soak up some sun while you read the latest reports and case studies about energy efficiency policies and DOE programs.

- [\*Change Is in the Air: How States Can Harness Energy Efficiency to Strengthen the Economy and Reduce Pollution\*](#) outlines how energy efficiency could be used in an upcoming standard by EPA to reduce carbon dioxide levels with no net cost to the economy (American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy [ACEEE], April 2014).
- [\*Clean Energy Finance Through the Bond Market: A New Option for Progress\*](#) explores how state and local bond financing has high potential but is currently an underutilized tool for future clean energy investment (Brookings Institute, April 2014).
- “[Energy Efficiency Case Study: Waldoboro, Maine](#)” shares how a homeowner completed upgrades and increased the comfort of his home while lowering his energy bills by 40% (Penobscot Bay Pilot, April 2014).
- [\*Energy Efficiency Resource Standards: A New Progress Report on State Experience\*](#) concludes that states are leading the way with energy efficiency and targets implemented in half of U.S. states in 2012 saved enough electricity to power 2 million homes for a year (ACEEE, April 2014).
- “[Whole-House Solutions Case Study: Evaluating Energy Savings in All-Electric Public Housing in the Pacific Northwest](#)” summarizes the results of a seven-phase project to rebuild the homes in a public-housing community to ENERGY STAR standards, including the modeled and measured energy usage data throughout the phases (DOE’s Building America program, April 2014).

## Share The View

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Forward this email to your colleagues or encourage them to sign up to receive each issue by asking them to send their email address to [Better Buildings Residential Network Support](#).

Do you have something you would like to share with other members through the *Better Buildings Network View*? Send an email to [Better Buildings Residential Network Support](#) to submit your idea.

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