

The Better Buildings Residential Network hosts a series of Peer Exchange Calls that 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. Following are lessons learned shared by members during Peer Exchange Calls held during Fall 2015. Follow the links below to view full summaries of each call, and visit the [Better Buildings Residential Network website](#) to view a schedule of upcoming Peer Exchange Calls.

Partner to Create Complementary Offerings for Rural Residents

- ▶ Collaboration among city governments and utilities is key when working in rural areas. After realizing city governments and utilities were conducting similar but uncoordinated energy activities, [Bates County, Missouri](#), began convening a monthly meeting to coordinate energy efficiency actions in the community.
 - > ["The Other 15%: Expanding Energy Efficiency to Rural Populations,"](#) September 10, 2015

Keep Customers Happy

- ▶ In the event that a customer is dissatisfied with energy efficiency services, mentioning similar examples involving other customers may put them at ease, make the situation feel normal, and diffuse tension. Customer service representatives should focus on keeping customers happy when things go wrong by offering empathy and letting customers vent their frustrations.
 - > ["Ghosts in the Attic: Horror Stories From the Field,"](#) October 29, 2015

Make a Repair Call About Whole Home Efficiency

- ▶ Every call from a homeowner to make a heating, ventilation, or air conditioning (HVAC) system repair is an opportunity for contractors to make a home performance upgrade. Customers, who have put their trust in a contractor to complete their HVAC repair, might welcome the contractor's expert efficiency advice. [OmStout Consulting](#) works with contractors to use the repair opportunity to spark a conversation about whole-home performance.
 - > ["Home Upgrades: Leveraging HVAC Upgrades for Greater Impact,"](#) November 18, 2015

*DOE shares the items above as information, rather than endorsement.



Better Buildings Residential Network Member [Elevate Energy](#) has learned that good customer service goes a long way when things don't go exactly as planned in the energy upgrade process.

Know Your Customer, Tailor the Message

- ▶ Residential energy efficiency customers have different backgrounds, needs, and motivations, which programs can use to tailor messages and services to different groups. [EnergySavvy](#) uses cloud software to pair utility data with marketing data and create individual utility customer profiles to target energy efficiency messages.
 - > ["Audience Segmentation and Analysis Strategies for Targeted Marketing,"](#) September 24, 2015

Hold Contractors Accountable to Increase Efficiency

- ▶ Make contractor participation as simple as possible. Engage contractors on program changes and hold them accountable. [NeighborWorks of Western Vermont](#) requested that contractors complete and submit assessment reports within 5 to 10 business days. Lateness resulted in removal from the scheduling list, and, after four weeks, payment of a homeowner's fee and a new assessor. With this incentive to get contractor paperwork done quickly, average report turn-around changed from 4 months to 1 week.
 - > ["Programs and Contractors: Top Tips for Successful Relationships!"](#) October 22, 2015

Explore the Better Buildings Residential Program [Solution Center](#) for more information on these topics and other resources.

Peer Exchange Calls take place on Thursdays from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. Eastern. The schedule is announced on the [Better Buildings Residential Network website](#) and in the [Better Buildings Network View newsletter](#).