



RESIDENTIAL NETWORK

Newsletter

News From the Field

Network Members Invited to Review Optional Program Benchmarking Guide

The first Better Buildings Residential Network voluntary initiative will benchmark programs so members can see how they compare to others, and you are invited to provide feedback on a draft [Guide for Benchmarking Residential Energy Efficiency Program Progress](#). All Residential Network members are encouraged to review the guide and [submit their feedback](#). Members can also [download](#) the draft outline and send redline comments to [Dale Hoffmeyer](#) by **tomorrow, March 12, 2014**.

Benefits of using the guide include:

- Identifying your program's strengths and weaknesses by developing a program benchmarking plan
- Measuring progress for years to come by establishing a baseline of performance

Next Steps

- **Winter 2014:** DOE finalizes guide and pilots it with up to nine Residential Network members
- **Spring 2014:** DOE evaluates pilot and starts defining requirements for online tool
- **Summer 2014:** Beta version released online

March 2014

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Upcoming Peer Exchange Calls

Residential Network members

Gaining insights from comparing progress with peers'

- Communicating success with key stakeholders

A limited number of Residential Network members will take part in an optional pilot to benchmark their programs, which will be the basis for a larger, member-wide optional initiative. Learn more about the [Guide for Benchmarking Residential Energy Efficiency Program Progress](#).

Nevada Network Member Tests Home Energy Score Effectiveness in Pilot Program

[EnergyFit Nevada](#), both a Better Buildings Residential Network member and Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partner, announced in February 2014 that it will work with DOE and EnergySavvy on a new pilot program designed to determine the effectiveness of DOE's [Home Energy Score](#). The home energy rating system assigns homes a score based on their energy efficiency. The program is currently looking to determine Home Energy Score's effectiveness in driving home energy upgrades using EnergySavvy's cloud-based Optix software.

"EnergySavvy will allow us to do more retrofit work with less administrative overhead, reduce the time and effort required by contractors to work with the program, and engage Nevada homeowners more intelligently," EnergyFit Nevada Executive Director Denee Evans said.

Emphasizing the importance of this type of program in EnergyFit Nevada's transition from a Better Buildings Neighborhood Program-funded program to a sustainable statewide program, Evans added that participation in the pilot program will help staff learn and incorporate

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.

March 13

Program Sustainability: Mastermind Facilitation: Spirit Foundation's Jim Mikel asks Residential Network members how to pair complementary services with energy efficiency, and how to message in markets new to energy efficiency

12:30–2:00 PM EDT

[Register now](#)

Multi-Family/Low-Income Housing; Financing and Revenue: Loan Programs for Low- and Moderate-Income Households

3:00–4:30 PM EDT

[Register now](#)

March 27

Better Buildings Residential Network Orientation

12:30–2:00 PM EDT

[Register now](#)

Workforce/Business Partners: Quality Control, Standardization of



the latest best practices in customer engagement. Since launching in summer 2012, more than 30 Home Energy Score Partners in 18 states have scored more than 10,000 homes. [Learn more](#) about EnergyFit Nevada's pilot participation.

Provide Comments on Energy Efficiency Standardization Roadmap

The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Energy Efficiency Standardization Coordination Collaborative (EESCC) seeks comments on its [EESCC Standardization Roadmap V1.0 draft](#), which outlines 116 recommendations to advance energy efficiency in buildings through standards and conformance activities. U.S. experts on energy efficiency-related issues, members of the standardization community, and other affected stakeholders are invited to submit input on the draft by **March 15, 2014**. [Learn more](#) about the draft and instructions for submitting comments.

Register for the 2014 ACI National Home Performance Conference and Trade Show

Those interested in attending the [2014 ACI National Home Performance Conference and Trade Show](#) can save up to \$200 by [registering](#) prior to April 1, 2014, and that is no April Fool's joke.

Detroit, Michigan's Cobo Center will host the conference April 29 through May 1, 2014. ACI's annual event convenes home performance experts to present a well-rounded and educational [agenda](#), including presentations from DOE representatives. Sessions this year will explore core competencies and essential building science; sales, marketing, and business management; and emerging technologies. Discounted lodging rates for the nearby Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center are available for conference attendees. [Read the e-brochure](#) to learn more.



Upgrades, and Workforce Expectations

3:00–4:30 PM EDT

[Register now](#)

April 10

Data and Evaluation: Cost-Effectiveness Tests and Measuring Like a Utility

3:00–4:30 PM EDT

[Register now](#)

April 24

Marketing and Outreach: Working With Schools

12:30–2:00 PM EDT

[Register now](#)

Workforce/Business

Partners: Contractor Rating and Feedback Systems

3:00–4:30 PM EDT

[Register now](#)

Related Events

[U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's State & Local Climate and Energy Program's "Avoided Emissions and Generation Tool \(AVERT\)" Webinar](#)

March 18, 2014

2:00–3:30 PM EDT

[State and Local Energy Efficiency Action Network \(SEE Action\) "Setting Energy Savings Targets for Utilities" Webinar](#)

March 27, 2014

Marketing and Outreach Solutions

Michigan Saves' New Marketing Campaign Using Boxing PSAs to Solve "Energy Drama"

Better Buildings Residential Network member and Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partner [Michigan Saves](#) is using humor to help residents in the Great Lakes State become more energy efficient. The program's [Avoid Energy Drama](#) public service announcement (PSA) features a series of boxing parody videos about a couple arguing over conflicting methods to reduce their home energy use. The bouts are even mediated by a tuxedoed announcer with a suspended microphone and a ringside bell.



"We wanted it to be something that everyone could relate to but also showed our silliness around energy efficiency," Michigan Saves Marketing and Communications Director Selma Tucker said.

Michigan Saves partnered with a number of statewide energy utilities and other organizations to bring the PSA to life. Noting that consumers sometimes blame utilities for high energy bills, Tucker said the campaign was devised with Michigan Saves leading the effort, because the nonprofit program can take more risks.

"Everyone thinks their energy bills are too high, but the fault is usually misplaced," Tucker said.

The campaign has already attracted the media attention of *The Wall Street Journal*, industry [publications](#) and [blogs](#), and Michigan [news outlets](#). Michigan Saves is also planning to take the PSA on the road,

2:00–3:00 PM EDT

[ACEEE 2014 National Symposium on Market Transformation](#)

March 30–April 1, 2014
Baltimore, MD

[A Day of Home Performance Leadership: Home Performance with ENERGY STAR Partner Meeting](#)

April 28, 2014
Detroit, MI

[ACI 2014 National Home Performance Conference](#)

April 29–May 1, 2014
Detroit, MI

[ACEEE Energy Efficiency Finance Forum](#)

May 11–13, 2014
Washington, DC

#AskEnergySaver Answers Home Energy Assessment Questions



DOE Residential Building Technologies Program Supervisor David Lee served

where the video series' mediator will appear at local sporting events, schools, and other community spaces to spread the message in person. [Learn more](#) about Michigan Saves' marketing efforts.

We want to hear about your marketing and outreach solutions to share with other Residential Network members. [Tell us](#) what you are doing.

as a [guest participant](#) in January's #AskEnergySavers series about home energy assessments. Better Buildings Residential Network members can use the series talking points and [accompanying infographic](#) to promote home energy assessments to customers.

Stories From the Neighborhood

Energy Advisor Program Helps Homeowners Go the Extra Mile in Mile-High City

An inaugural Better Buildings Residential Network member and Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partner, the City and County of Denver, Colorado, launched the [Denver Energy Challenge](#) in 2011 with a



“neighborhood blitz” model focused on door-to-door outreach. In early 2012, after experiencing difficulty scheduling energy assessments and converting them to upgrades, Denver Energy Challenge revamped the program and ultimately completed more than 20,000 installed energy efficiency measures by enlisting energy advisors who helped customers through each step of the home upgrade process. Following is an abridged transcript of an interview with Elizabeth Babcock, community sustainability and energy administrator for the City and County of Denver.

Q. How did energy advisors impact your program's success?

The fact that 80% of customers enrolled in the advisor program

“The Energy Alliance puts money back in the pockets of our residents; it puts money back into the economy through the savings they see; and it makes our housing stock much more competitive.”

– Roxanne Quall, former vice mayor of the City of Cincinnati, Ohio, about the [Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance](#)

completed at least one upgrade speaks to how effective the advisors are. The percentage of homes that completed a major building upgrade was also high—around 37%. The advisors were critical to getting customers to move forward with home energy upgrades. When homeowners first hear about utility rebates, they can be confused about the application process or overwhelmed by the number of potential contractors. Energy advisors can help explain these processes and answer questions along the way. For people already thinking about upgrades or an assessment, the advisor service can be what pushes them to take the next step. When customers made a good connection with an energy advisor, they would refer the program to friends and neighbors.

Q. What advice would you give programs interested in trying your energy advisor approach?

- Take the time to understand each customer's motivation. It's critical to understand where each person is coming from. Why are they calling? Are they uncomfortable in their home? It's all about understanding what they need—why they called you—and helping them achieve their goals. We've tried to eliminate every barrier possible and make it easy for the customer.
- Build strong relationships with the contractor community. Contractors are crucial to the equation: they were one of our biggest sources of referrals.
- Integrate additional advisor services where possible. Since advisors are already familiar with a customer's account, we could have had them manage the utility rebate process for the customer and contractor, which would have reduced hassle and avoided potential miscommunication among the customer, advisor, and rebate processor.

Read the [full Focus Series interview](#) to learn how Denver Energy Challenge's energy advisors are helping customers take the next step in undertaking home energy upgrades.

Meet the Members

New Members Bring Residential Network to More Than 60 Organizations

The Better Buildings Residential Network is pleased to welcome its three newest members:

- The [City of Kansas City, Missouri](#), implemented EnergyWorks KC, a Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partner.
- The [National Association of State Energy Officials](#) (NASEO) is a national nonprofit that facilitates peer learning among state energy officials and advocates the interests of the state energy offices to Congress and federal agencies.
- The [Wisconsin Energy Conservation Corporation](#) (WECC) is one of several organizations helping to support [Wisconsin Energy Efficiency](#) (WE²), a Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partner.

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

Resource Corner

Spring Your Reading List Forward With the Latest Publications

Now that you have set your clocks forward, it is time to look ahead to spring. From tips for engaging lenders to a Washington state community's multifamily energy upgrade success, thaw out your spring reading list with these hot-off-the-press publications:

- [Cascade Apartments: Deep Energy Multifamily Retrofit](#) and the accompanying [case study](#) discusses key lessons learned and results from home energy upgrades implemented in a Kent,

Washington, community (DOE's Building Technologies Program, February 2014).

- “[*EM&V 2.0—New Tools for Measuring Energy Efficiency Program Savings*](#)” explores the existing uses of advanced metering data for evaluation, measurement, and verification (EM&V) and identifies recent technological developments that have the potential to reduce the cost of EM&V, produce more timely results, and increase the acceptance of savings calculations (Electric Light and Power, February 2014).
- [*Engaging Small to Mid-Size Lenders in the Market for Energy Efficiency Investment: Lessons Learned from the ACEEE Small Lender Energy Efficiency Convening*](#) presents the obstacles to engaging private-sector lenders and offers recommendations to the energy efficiency community to foster growth in the market for financing (American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy [ACEEE], February 2014).
- [*Examining the Net Savings Issue: A National Survey of State Policies and Practices in the Evaluation of Ratepayer-Funded Energy Efficiency Programs*](#) summarizes ACEEE’s national survey results, state-by-state results on key variables, takeaways from interviews with national energy efficiency evaluation experts, profiles of some noteworthy states, and practical recommendations for how states should address various aspects related to net savings (ACEEE, January 2014).

Share The View

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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