



# RESIDENTIAL NETWORK

## Newsletter

### News From the Field

#### Reorient Yourself With the Better Buildings Residential Network

Whether you are new to the Better Buildings Residential Network, new to your residential energy efficiency programs, or just looking for a refresher on what the Network has to offer, please join us this



Thursday, September 11, from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. Eastern for a Residential Network member orientation webinar. Hear about the Residential Network's origins and get the answers to your most frequently asked questions. We will also discuss how to best take advantage of the member tools and resources available to you in order to meet your energy efficiency program goals. There will be time to answer any additional questions you might have as well. [Register now\\*](#) to receive dial-in information.

#### Warm, Friendly Messaging Motivates Behavioral Change

Better Buildings Residential Network members that participated on a recent Peer Exchange Call learned that keeping their energy efficiency program's message warm, friendly, and personal helped promote behavioral change better than some other types of messaging. Here are a few other tips:

- Directly involve homeowners through do-it-yourself projects or

September 2014

#### In This Issue

- [Reorient Yourself With the Residential Network](#)
- [Register for Upcoming Peer Exchange Calls](#)
- [Send a Message That Motivates Change](#)
- [Real Estate Pros Learn High-Performance Homes](#)
- [Apply for Tribal Energy Program Funding](#)
- [Vermont Partnership Simplifies Loan Payments](#)
- [BC Hydro Helps Low-Income Families](#)
- [On-Bill Financing Brings More on Board](#)
- [Cities and Consultants Join Residential Network](#)
- [Recent Tools Delve Into Data and Evaluation](#)



energy efficiency demonstration homes to help them feel engaged.

- Make the residential upgrade process as simple as possible (e.g., fewer steps, less paperwork) to avoid an information-overload effect.
- Deliver messages multiple times. It takes several “hits” from different channels to drive behavioral change.
- Help homeowners overcome a tendency to procrastinate by setting a date and time to follow up with customers.

Get more tips like these by viewing the [“Incorporating Behavior Change Efforts Into Energy Efficiency Programs”](#) Peer Exchange Call summary—one of many resources available exclusively to Residential Network members.

## Oregon Members Promote High-Performance Homes to Portland Real Estate Pros

Two Portland, Oregon-based Better Buildings Residential Network members—the [City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability](#) and [Clean Energy Works](#) (CEW)—are supporting Earth Advantage’s Value It Green Home Tour. On September 9, 2014, more than 300 real estate professionals learned about the latest energy-efficient technologies for high-performance homes so they can better convey their value in the marketplace to home buyers.

“Home performance upgrades not only create healthier, safer, more comfortable places to live, but they also increase the value of our homes,” said Derek Smith, CEW chief executive officer. “This event is a fantastic way to explore how cutting-edge, high-performance homes are driving value in the Portland market.”



*Watch Portland real estate broker Teresa St. Martin discuss promoting high-performance homes in the market through the Value It Green Home Tour.*

## Upcoming Peer Exchange Calls\*

Residential Network members are invited to take part in these topical calls that are more discussion than webinar and serve as a forum to ask questions and bounce ideas off of peers. Members can access Peer Exchange Call registration links and past call summaries through announcement emails sent to Residential Network members or via the Residential Network Group on Home Energy Pros. [Sign in](#) to access the Residential Network Group. Non-members wishing to gain access to these valuable resources and many others are invited to [join](#) the Better Buildings Residential Network Group to participate in the online community on Home Energy Pros. To receive emails about upcoming calls, email [bbresidentialnetwork@ee.doe.gov](mailto:bbresidentialnetwork@ee.doe.gov).

### September 11

**Program Sustainability:  
Coordinating Energy Efficiency  
With Water Conservation  
Services**

12:30–2:00 PM EDT  
[Register now](#)

**Better Buildings Residential  
Network Orientation**

3:00–4:30 PM EDT  
[Register now](#)

### September 25

**Marketing and Outreach:  
Outreach to Faith-Based  
Organizations**

Since 2008, 40% of Portland homes have been ENERGY STAR® qualified, LEED® for Homes certified, or Earth Advantage Passive House certified. The high demand for green homes in the area has made it more important for Portland real estate professionals to fully understand the benefits of residential energy efficiency.

[Learn more](#) about the Earth Advantage Value It Green Home Tour.

## DOE Tribal Energy Program Announces Funding Opportunity

The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE's) Deployment of Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency Projects on Tribal Lands Grants has announced that up to \$7 million in funding is available for eligible Native American tribes, tribal energy resource development organizations, and tribal consortia in two topic areas:

- Installation of clean energy and energy efficiency retrofit projects for tribal buildings
- Deployment of clean energy systems on a community scale

Projects selected for this opportunity will aim to reduce energy costs and increase energy security of Indian tribes and tribal members. The deadline for applications is **October 2, 2014**.

[Learn more](#) about how to apply.

### Funding Considers Urban Climate Impacts

Bloomberg Philanthropies will award \$45 million in competitive grants to help U.S. cities create teams that use data and other tools to develop innovative solutions to complex urban problems such as climate change impacts. [Innovation Delivery Grant program awards](#) are available for up to \$1 million for a three-year period. The foundation expects to select 10 to 15 cities to be named by the end of 2014. Applications are due **October 6, 2014**.

12:30–2:00 PM EDT

[Register now](#)

### Multifamily/Low-Income Housing: Energy-Efficient, Cost-effective Affordable Housing

3:00–4:30 PM EDT

[Register now](#)

### Find the Latest Peer Exchange Call Summaries\*

Residential Network members can now [access summaries](#) from the following calls:

- June 26, 2014: [Stakeholder Mapping: Learn How to Identify Leaders, Target Audiences, and Gaps in Your Outreach](#)
- July 10, 2014: [Incorporating Behavior Change Efforts Into Energy Efficiency Programs](#)
- July 24, 2014: [Effective Loan Program Design and Integration With Contractors](#)
- July 24, 2014: [Cost-Effective, Customer-Focused and Contractor-Focused Data Tracking Systems](#)

### Related Events

[Solar Energy Industries Association's "The PowerSaver Program: Loans for Homeowners Who Want to Install Solar" Webinar](#)

September 11, 2014

1:00–2:00 PM EDT

## Financing Solutions

### NeighborWorks Simplifies Energy Efficiency Loan Payments in Vermont With On-Bill Option

Paying for energy improvements just got easier in the Green Mountain State.

Customers of Vermont utility Green Mountain Power (GMP) can now repay home energy efficiency loans on their monthly electric bills, thanks to Better Buildings Residential Network member [NeighborWorks of Western Vermont](#)'s (NWWVT's) partnership with GMP.



*The Borkowski family took advantage of on-bill payments to improve their home's comfort.*

Marrying GMP's billing system with NWWVT's revolving loan fund, the on-bill service allows GMP customers to affordably finance home energy upgrades with low-interest NWWVT loans. Products include loans for as much as \$15,000 with terms up to 10 years. Financing can be used for thermal and electric efficiency measures, renewable energy, and other services that advance the State of Vermont's energy plan.

"It doesn't get any easier. We have adequate capital, a simple loan application, and an affordable loan product that customers can now repay on their electric bill," NWWVT Executive Director Ludy Biddle said.

GMP customers Mark and Sara Borkowski recently used the bill repayment program to finance a new heat pump hot water heater, weatherization improvements, and two air source heat pumps for heating and cooling each floor of their Rutland, Vermont, home.

"Like many Vermonters, we live in an older home and really wanted to make it more efficient, use less energy, and save money," Mark

#### [Consortium for Energy Efficiency Industry Partners Meeting](#)

September 17–18, 2014  
Salt Lake City, UT

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

September 23, 2014  
Salt Lake City, UT

#### [SEE Action's "Energy Efficiency Measure Cost Studies" Webinar](#)

September 24, 2014  
2:00–3:30 PM EDT

#### [8th Annual Rocky Mountain Utility Efficiency Exchange](#)

September 24–26, 2014  
Aspen, CO

#### [EcoDistricts Summit](#)

September 24–26, 2014  
Washington, DC

#### [SEE Action's "Community-Based Social Marketing" Webinar](#)

September 25, 2014  
4:00–5:30 PM EDT

#### [2014 ACI New England Regional Home Performance Conference](#)

October 15–16, 2014  
Springfield, MA

#### [American Public Power Association Customer Connections Conference](#)

October 26–29, 2014  
Jacksonville, FL

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

November 16–18, 2014  
San Francisco, CA

Borkowski said. "Having the option to repay for these great improvements on our GMP bill over time made it affordable and possible to make these exciting changes to our home."

[Read more](#) about the Borkowskis' financing success story.

## Program Design and Customer Experience Solutions

### BC Hydro Brings Energy Savings to More Low-Income Families in British Columbia

The number of British Columbia, Canada, households eligible for Better Buildings Residential Network member [BC Hydro's Energy Conservation Assistance Program](#) (ECAP) just doubled. British Columbia Energy Minister Bill Bennett recently announced an increase in the low-income qualification cutoff for BC Hydro's free home energy-saving kits and assessments. A family of four earning up to \$57,200 per year can now qualify, up from the previous \$44,000 threshold. The expansion aims to reduce the impact of rising electricity costs in Canada.

ECAP provides qualified low-income BC Hydro residential account holders with a free home energy assessment; installation of energy-saving products by a qualified contractor; and personalized energy efficiency advice to help create a more comfortable home. ECAP participants also receive free [energy-saving kits](#) containing compact fluorescent light bulbs, weather stripping, refrigerator and freezer



*British Columbia Energy Minister Bill Bennett, British Columbia 35th Premier Christy Clark, and BC Hydro's Gary Hamer and Joanna Sofield demonstrate the Energy-Saving Kit. (Photo: Sally MacDonald/Cranbrook Daily Townsman)*

*Early-bird registration ends  
September 16, 2014.*

### Keep Kitchen Energy Savings Cool on Social Media



[Join the conversation](#) on Home Energy Pros, where we are sharing how three Better Buildings Residential Network members are using social media to inspire conservation in the kitchen with energy-reducing refrigeration tips.

### National Hispanic Heritage Month: September 15–October 15, 2014

In honor of National Hispanic Heritage Month, the *Network View* salutes all Americans of Hispanic background working in the field of residential energy efficiency. Congress first authorized the occasion in 1968, which celebrates the histories, cultures, and contributions of Americans whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America. The event begins on September 15 because it

thermometers, and high-efficiency showerheads. Custom kits with substitutions such as faucet aerators or window film are available based on customers' needs described in their application.

Other BC Hydro incentives not based on income include a rebate program for insulation, draft-proof measures, heat pumps, and water heaters.

[Learn more](#) about the recent regulatory changes expanding BC Hydro's low-income customer base.

## Stories From the Neighborhood

### On-Bill Financing Brings Lenders and Homeowners on Board

Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partner and Residential Network member [Clean Energy Works](#) (CEW) partnered with Craft3, a nonprofit community development financial institution, to offer low-interest, on-bill financing



for home performance upgrades in Oregon. The partnership allowed CEW to create a level of demand for loan products that sparked the interest of other financial institutions, even without the program's incentives. More than 3,200 home energy upgrades were facilitated over a three-year period as a result.

CEW and Craft3 in December 2013 completed a groundbreaking \$21 million loan portfolio sale from its residential program to the secondary market, which will provide the necessary liquidity for program sustainability. Following is an abridged transcript of interviews with CEW Vice President of Strategy and Market Development Scot Davidson, CEW Chief Financial Officer Shirley Cyr, CEW Director of Marketing Stephanie Swanson, and Craft3

marks the anniversary of independence of five Latin American countries (i.e., Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua).

### School Families on Energy Savings With DOE's Energy Action Checklist



With kids heading back to school and October's [Energy Action Month](#) soon upon us, Residential Network members can use DOE's [energy action checklist for kids](#) to engage families on the energy-saving benefits of home energy upgrades.



"This change represents our transition to serving a wider role as market transformers and implementers of change in helping the nation reach its

Executive Vice President Adam Zimmerman.

### **How did on-bill financing help lower barriers to entry and drive demand?**

*Swanson (CEW):* On-bill financing was a real game-changer with regards to accessibility and affordability of upgrades. Homeowners might have had reservations when presented with project costs, but when coupled with rebates and on-bill repayment, a \$12,000 project cost suddenly becomes a very reasonable monthly payment, somewhere between \$35 and \$100 a month. People plan their home finances in terms of monthly payments, and on-bill financing brings the affordability of upgrades into focus.

### **How did CEW recruit financial partners?**

*Cyr:* We approached Craft3 in the early stages of our program and found that as a community development financial institution, it shared our mission and was willing to participate in the program as a lender. We also successfully approached Umpqua Bank about participating, as it had a green lending program that was likewise compatible with our program. Outside of the Portland, Oregon, market, we focused on recruiting community credit unions, whose focus is on growing their members. This was really successful, and the result was that other lenders learned about the program and started asking us about participating.

### **What motivated lenders to participate in the program?**

*Zimmerman:* During the recession in the late 2000s, we found that banks were not lending and construction projects for small contractors were drying up. For Craft3, our mission as an organization is to create community resilience, by supporting programs that create employment and consumers that make choices that strengthen communities.

*Davidson (CEW):* There is a pretty significant relationship between mission alignment and success. This was the case for Craft3 and CEW, but also for finding a way to work together with our other lenders. For example, our largest commercial lender has a marketing interest in green lending, and mission alignment with the credit unions we worked with came from their nature of having a high service orientation to their members.

ambitious sustainable energy and greenhouse gas emission goals. Our sights are set on accelerating the transition to clean energy by changing the old energy models because they simply don't work anymore. A more sustainable energy future is in the best interest of the preservation of our country, and the world as a whole."

– Center for Sustainable Energy Executive Director Len Hering on [dropping "California"](#) from the Residential Network member's name, which was formerly California Center for Sustainable Energy

## **\*Accessing Home Energy Pros**

### **Non-Residential Network Members:**

The [Better Buildings Residential Network Group on Home Energy Pros](#) is open exclusively to Residential Network members. To join the Residential Network, complete a [membership form](#).

### **Residential Network Members:**

Residential Network members that are already Home Energy Pros Group members must [sign in](#) to view the associated links in this newsletter.

Members who have not yet signed up and seek access to these valuable resources are invited to join the Better Buildings Residential Network Group to participate in the online

Cyr: Lenders also saw this as a way of acquiring customers, and they were encouraged by the fact that we ensure good results for homeowners by completing a quality inspection at the end of each project. The quality of the loans, which had low default rates, was another factor that motivated lender participation.

[Read](#) the full Focus Series interview with CEW and Craft 3.

community on Home Energy Pros. It's an easy, two-step process—[sign up](#) for Home Energy Pros, and then after receiving your confirmation email, request to join the Residential Network Group.

## Meet the Members

### Cities and Consultants Join the Residential Network

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

- The [City of San Mateo, California](#), partnered with the Pacific Gas and Electric Company to launch San Mateo Energy Watch, which strives to reduce the city's carbon footprint through its array of energy services.
- [SRS Consulting Engineers, Inc.](#), is a consulting firm providing engineering and green building services. Its specialty is

#### Prize Participants Connect in Peer-Sharing Opportunity\*

The Residential Network thanks the Georgetown University Energy Prize (GUEP) participants that joined our August 14, 2014, Peer Exchange Call featuring Rich Dooley from GUEP participant and new Residential Network member organization Arlington County, Virginia, Government. Call participants are invited to keep the conversation going via the [Residential Network group](#) on Home Energy Pros. [Share](#) your thoughts on the question, "How can energy efficiency programs and the real estate market communicate the benefits of home energy upgrades more effectively?"

working on sustainability solutions within the multifamily sector.

- [Madison Environmental Group, LLC](#), is an interdisciplinary research and consulting company based in Madison, Wisconsin, offering services in two primary categories: build green and live green.
- The [City of Fremont, California](#), is working to inspire energy efficiency improvements through a citywide energy challenge offering homeowners energy analysis tools and installation rebates.
- The [City of Winter Park, Florida, Building, Permitting, and Sustainability](#) program provides management, development, and monitoring services for the city's Sustainability Action Plan promoting energy efficiency, renewable energy, and green building.

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

## Resource Corner

---

### Recently Released Tools Reiterate Importance to Measurement, Evaluation, and Adjustment

Whether it is tracking success or analyzing growth potential, these reports explore three areas of interest shared by successful energy efficiency programs: accomplishments, opportunities, and lessons learned.

- [Better Buildings Neighborhood Program Summary of Reported Data From July 1, 2010–September 30, 2013](#) presents a summary of accomplishments reported by organizations awarded federal financial assistance through DOE's Better Buildings Neighborhood Program, as featured on the July 9, 2014, [webcast](#) (DOE's Better Buildings Neighborhood Program, June 2014).

- [Energy Efficiency Finance Programs: Use Case Analysis to Define Data Needs and Guidelines](#) reviews existing practices for energy efficiency financing program data collection and identifies high-priority needs toward the establishment of common data collection practices for energy efficiency lending (State and Local Energy Efficiency Action Network [SEE Action], July 2014).
- “[Lessons From Energy Efficiency Advisors: Getting Homeowners on Board With Home Performance](#)” reflects on common homeowner participation barriers from the perspective of Bay Area Regional Energy Network’s third-party implementer of energy advising services (*Home Energy* magazine blog, July 2014).

## Share The View

---

Forward this email to colleagues or encourage them to sign up to receive each issue by sending their name, organization, and 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.

You are receiving this email from DOE’s Better Buildings Residential Network. If you would like to unsubscribe, please contact [Better Buildings Residential Network Support](#).

U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, DC 20585

[betterbuildings.energy.gov/bbn](http://betterbuildings.energy.gov/bbn)