



The Better Buildings Neighborhood View

December 2013

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"Just as we need a hat and boots in cold weather, my house needed insulation in the attic and basement to keep it warm."

-Mary Beth Kass, a homeowner who received a home energy upgrade through [Energize Bedford](#) (New York)

Read more of the [growing number of testimonials](#) from satisfied customers of Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partners.

Consumer Energy Tip

Looking for ways to brighten up your basement this winter without traditional incandescent bulbs? Consider installing energy efficient compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) in your basement lighting fixtures. Light

Neighborhood View to Become Network View

The coming new year will mark new beginnings for the *The Better Buildings Neighborhood View* newsletter, which will transform into *The Better Buildings Network View* starting in January 2014. The name change is consistent with the Better Buildings Neighborhood Program winding down while U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) expands the community of energy efficiency programs and partners invited to share their experiences with one another through the [Better Buildings Residential Network](#). The Residential Network connects energy efficiency programs and partners to share best practices and learn from one another to build upon the many successes of the Better Buildings Neighborhood Program.

Since April 2013, [more than 55 organizations](#) have committed to the Network's mission by becoming members. Already, Better Buildings Residential Network members are seeing success. The Alliance to Save Energy recently recognized Pennsylvania's Keystone Home Energy Loan Program with its 2013 Andromeda Star of Energy Efficiency award. The loan program is powered by Better Buildings Residential Network member, [AFC First](#), and is a Philadelphia [EnergyWorks](#) partner.

Better Buildings Residential Network membership is open to all organizations that are committed to accelerating the pace of energy upgrades in American homes. Members receive:

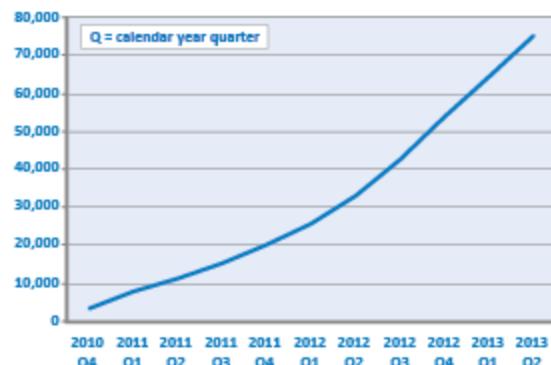
- Invitations to monthly topical calls (e.g., driving demand, evaluation and data collection, financing)
- Tools, templates, resources, and proven solutions shared by members
- Newsletter and other updates on residential energy efficiency trends
- Opportunities to be featured in media, case studies, and lessons learned materials
- Optional program benchmarking (*coming in 2014*)

Have something you would like to contribute to *The Better Buildings Network View*? Interested in learning more or becoming a member? Send an email to [Residential Network support](#).

New Numbers Illustrate Partners' Nationwide Impact

[Recent data](#) demonstrate the deep impact Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partners are making across the country. At the end of June 2013, partners had collectively upgraded 75,268 homes and 81.7 million square feet of commercial building space. Preliminary data through September 2013 indicate that partners will exceed their overall target

Residential Building Upgrades Performed Since Program Launch*



of completing 100,000 home upgrades by the end of 2013. Indicators of market transformation reported at the Better Buildings Neighborhood Program workshop

emitting diodes, or LEDs, are also a good option. When compared to incandescent bulbs, LEDs are known to deliver a higher quality of light, could last 25 times as long, and use even less energy than CFLs. Find out more tips like these in DOE's blog post, "[Taking on Scary Basements.](#)"



Related Events

[DOE "Preliminary Energy Savings Impact Evaluation of Better Buildings Neighborhood Program"](#)

[Webinar](#)

December 18, 2013

3:00–4:30 PM EST

[Midwest Energy Solutions Conference](#)

January 14–16, 2014

Chicago, IL

[Consortium for Energy Efficiency 2014 Winter Program Meeting](#)

January 15–16, 2014

Berkeley, CA

[ASHRAE 2014 Winter Conference](#)

January 18–22, 2014

New York, NY

[Association of Energy Services Professionals 24th Annual Conference](#)

January 27–30, 2014

San Diego, CA

[2014 National Symposium on Market Transformation](#)

March 30–April 1, 2014

Baltimore, MD

in April 2013 provided a closer look into how partners have driven demand for these energy upgrades. Following is a recap of some partners' reflections on what techniques have worked best for their programs:

- Using a boots-on-the-ground approach, [Energy Impact Illinois](#) (EI2) held more than 650 [house parties](#) with 3,110 people in attendance. At these events, friends and family are invited to watch EI2 field staff and a contractor demonstrate energy-efficient concepts and conduct a free assessment in the host's home, after which guests are encouraged to sign up for their own assessment and upgrade. As a result, nearly 1,000 house party participants completed energy upgrades through EI2, and an additional 540 attendees signed up for a house party of their own.
- More than 8,000 homes were air sealed as of September 30, 2013, thanks to [Efficiency Maine](#)'s limited-time air sealing campaign. The promotion's impact was recently featured as part of a [comprehensive report](#) evaluating Efficiency Maine's various residential energy efficiency programs.

Based on a [formal, independent evaluation](#) released in November 2013, Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partners helped home and business owners save more than 1.3 million MMBTu of source energy* during the program's first two years (through June 2012). The analysis also calculated a total positive net impact of more than \$655 million from these partner activities. To learn more about partners' progress and study methodology, join the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory evaluation team for a [webinar](#) on Wednesday, December 18, 2013, at 3:00 p.m. Eastern.

**Source energy savings represent the sum of the savings at the home or business (e.g., site savings) and the savings from the energy not having to be extracted, converted, and transmitted to the home or business due to the energy efficiency project.*

Better Buildings Innovators

The following is a snapshot from the fourth Focus Series interview the Better Buildings Neighborhood Program has conducted with its partners to document successful program strategies and lessons learned.

In the City of Brotherly Love, Sharing Know-How Leads to Long-Term Success

Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partner [EnergyWorks](#) has made a point of sharing information and lessons learned with local utility Philadelphia Gas Works (PGW). In developing its energy conservation programs, PGW, a city-owned utility, is using EnergyWorks' data and know-how to continue to drive residential energy efficiency upgrades in the city. Following are some highlights from the November 2013 Focus Series about EnergyWorks with Katherine Gajewski, director of sustainability for the City of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Elliott Gold, manager of energy efficiency programs for PGW.

Q: Why was it important to share information with local utilities?

By the end of the program, we had identified a successful formula of marketing, outreach, and contractor interface, and we wanted our lessons learned to be useful in the future. The utilities could take the lessons we had learned and the elements we had found to be successful, and incorporate them into their own programs.

Q: What lessons did EnergyWorks learn from collaborating with its utility?.

- Be mindful of creating consistency in your marketplace. Utilities are an essential partner in making connections that are important for building education and awareness among customers in your area.
- Online advertising works. EnergyWorks switched from regional rail advertising to online ads and "found the sweet spot" in reaching the target market. This insight has informed PGW's marketing efforts. It is possible to correlate a

smart, strategic marketing program with increased uptake by selling energy efficiency like you would sell any other product.

- Get the message right. It is challenging to get customers to do something they aren't required to do, using money they don't necessarily want to spend on energy efficiency improvements. Instead, PGW is selling the idea of being healthy and comfortable inside your home, using the message that energy efficiency improvements are not a luxury—they're a necessity. In other words, when a car breaks down, you invest money and repair it. If something's broken in your house, that's also non-discretionary—you have to fix it.

[Read the full Focus Series interview](#) to learn about how this relationship has helped EnergyWorks drive demand for energy upgrades.

Financing

Cincinnati, Ohio, Forms Partnership to Finance More Commercial Energy Upgrades

The [Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance](#) (GCEA), a Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partner, and the Port of Greater Cincinnati Development Authority have created a financial partnership to enable more energy efficiency improvements in commercial real estate. The partnership is providing Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) loans to help companies fund their energy projects. Already, the program has a pipeline of 20 projects involving 570,000 square feet of commercial real estate where \$50 million in energy upgrades are being reviewed for potential financing. In addition to PACE, GCEA and the Port Authority are planning to develop a set of energy-related economic development programs that enable commercial property owners to find the best way to finance energy upgrades. [Find out more](#) about the partnership.

USDA Loan Program Encourages Rural Energy Efficiency

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack recently announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will take new steps to save consumers money on their energy bills in partnership with rural electric cooperatives. USDA plans to provide rural electric cooperatives and utilities up to \$250 million to lend to business and residential customers for energy efficiency improvements and renewable energy systems. In addition to energy assessments, the loans can be used to finance energy efficiency upgrades for heating, lighting, and insulation, as well as conversions to more efficiency or renewable energy sources. [Learn more](#) about this funding initiative.

Innovation Nation

Energy Smart Medallions Help Colorado Residents Promote Home Upgrades

The [Energy Smart Program](#) created a way for Pitkin County, Colorado, homeowners to show off their energy upgrades. Homeowners can mount their Energy Smart Home medallion anywhere from in the mechanical room to near the front entrance to show they have completed energy upgrades. This summer, the Community Office for Resource Efficiency received approval to use Pitkin County



Renewable Energy Mitigation Program funds to support Energy Smart operations and rebates through 2015, which will give more homeowners the chance to earn these medallions.

Stories From the Neighborhood

Clean Energy Works Oregon Receives \$5 Million Award From Oregon Legislature

Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partner [Clean Energy Works Oregon](#) (CEWO) received a \$5 million award from the Oregon legislature to support its home performance upgrade program. The funding was approved with bipartisan support for CEWO's continuing role in creating jobs and saving energy for Oregon communities. Governor John Kitzhaber expressed his commitment to working with CEWO to pursue additional funding options. In a statement released by his office, the governor called CEWO a "critical component" of the state's [10-year energy plan](#). Furthermore, he pledged to ensure that CEWO has the financial resources necessary to scale its business model. Read more about the funding for CEWO in the [governor's statement](#).

RePower Kitsap Helps S.T.A.R. Program Gain Momentum in Washington

REALTORS® in western Washington have been lining up to attend the Sustainability Training for Accredited Real Estate Professionals (S.T.A.R.) offered in Kitsap County by [Earth](#)



[Advantage](#) through [RePower Kitsap](#). The free, accredited S.T.A.R. course—sponsored in partnership with the RePower program, [DOE's Better Buildings Neighborhood Program](#), [Washington State University \(WSU\) Energy Program](#), and [Conservation Services Group](#)—prepares real estate professionals to market and sell new and remodeled "green" homes. After taking the two-day course, which includes visits to two energy-efficient homes, real estate professionals are able to identify which features and building products provide greater energy and water efficiency and create a healthier living environment for their clients. The course was nudged into the spotlight this year by the Kitsap County Association of REALTORS® (KCAR). RePower cultivated a partnership with KCAR, which began promoting the S.T.A.R. course to its membership. Based on the high level of interest expressed by REALTORS® in Kitsap County, an additional class was scheduled, only to fill up in just a few hours. [Learn how](#) this partnership is working to change the marketplace in Kitsap County.

Beyond Better Buildings

DOE Collaborates With Georgetown University for Community Competition

DOE and Georgetown University [signed a Memorandum of Understanding](#) (MOU) in September to collaborate on the [Georgetown University Energy Prize](#), a competition to



encourage innovative, replicable, and scalable approaches to reduce energy use in communities across the United States. Aimed at increasing the number of municipalities, utilities, and individuals working to save energy in their homes and communities, the MOU supports President Obama's Climate Action Plan by pursuing energy efficiency projects that reduce

greenhouse gases and save consumers money.

DOE will invite all participants in the collaborative challenge to join the [Better Buildings Residential Network](#) for the opportunity to learn and share lessons learned and technical knowledge with other organizations and communities working to become more energy efficient. Although the competition doesn't officially launch until February 2014, interested communities can get started by reviewing the competition's [rules and timeline](#) and submitting a [Letter of Intent](#) to compete. Check out DOE's [recent webinar](#) to find out more about the Georgetown University Energy Prize and follow the competition on Twitter ([@GUEnergyPrize](#)).

Tools to Create Better Buildings

Gain Tools to Enhance Your Program's Evaluation, Measurement, and Verification Efforts

The [State and Local Energy Efficiency Action Network](#) (SEE Action) has compiled tools and resources for energy efficiency program managers seeking guidance on evaluation, measurement, and verification. The [Evaluation, Measurement, and Verification \(EM&V\) Resource Portal](#) includes regional resources, information on EM&V training and certification, and resources related to EM&V concepts and standards. [Check out the portal](#) to find helpful resources for your program.

Submit Feedback to Help Improve the Building Technologies Office's Prioritization Tool

DOE's Building Technologies Office (BTO) is [soliciting comments on its Prioritization Tool](#). BTO developed the tool to improve its programmatic decision making by providing an objective framework for most energy-saving measures and scenarios. BTO requests that energy professionals provide comments and information related to the Prioritization Tool in order to improve the tool's accuracy and applicability for technology planning. [Provide your comments](#) on the tool by December 24, 2013.

Reports Reading List

From home energy upgrade program design to state energy initiative evaluations, these recent reports can help programs find success:

- [Cryptic Barriers to Energy Efficiency](#) digs deep into the commonly known roadblocks to energy efficiency by presenting case studies on these barriers and offering policy suggestions to overcome them (American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy [ACEEE], August 2013).
- [Energy Audits and Retro-Commissioning: State and Local Policy Design Guide and Sample Policy Language](#) provides resources to draft, enact, and implement policies addressing energy-related assessments of or improvements to existing commercial and public buildings (SEE Action, July 2013).
- [Energy Efficiency Program Typology and Data Metrics: Enabling Multi-State Analyses Through the Use of Common Terminology](#) discusses energy efficiency program categories and definitions, which are based primarily on review of several years of annual reports from 108 program administrators in 31 states for approximately 1,900 unique programs (Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, August 2013).
- [Financing for Multi-Tenant Building Efficiency: Why This Market Is Underserved and What Can Be Done to Reach It](#) addresses how, despite growth in other

energy efficiency markets, the multifamily sector has been harder to reach (ACEEE, July 2013).

- [On-Bill Programs That Advance Multifamily Energy Efficiency](#) explains how programs can help overcome common barriers to achieving energy savings in multifamily buildings by allowing customers to repay the cost of energy efficiency improvements through their utility bills (Green For All and the National Housing Trust, September 2013).
- [The 2013 State Energy Efficiency Scorecard](#) ranks states on their policy and program efforts; documents best practices; and provides recommendations for ways in which states can improve their energy efficiency performance (ACEEE, November 2013).
- [Unlocking the Value of an Energy-Efficient Home: A Blueprint to Make Energy Efficiency Improvements Visible in the Real Estate Market](#) outlines seven steps the energy efficiency industry should take to realize the value of efficiency in the real estate market (CNT Energy and National Home Performance Council, August 2013).

Share the View

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Have something you'd like to contribute to *The Better Buildings Neighborhood View*? Send an email to [Better Buildings Neighborhood Program Support](#) to submit your idea.

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