



RESIDENTIAL NETWORK

Network View Newsletter

News From the Field

2015 Starting as the Year of the Smart Home

The Consumer Electronics Show is the global stage where next-generation innovations are introduced to the marketplace, and 2015 was heralded by many attendees as the year of the “Smart Home.” Samsung, for example, started the new year by [vowing this month](#) at the 2015 Consumer Electronics Show to make 90% of its products Internet-enabled using platforms compatible with other products by 2017, with the final 10% enabled by 2020.



SmartThings CEO Alex Hawkinson with Samsung Electronics CEO B.K. Yoon at the 2015 Consumer Electronics Show. (Photo: James Martin/CNET)

Samsung acquired smart-home startup SmartThings in August 2014 to help with its push. SmartThings’ technology helps consumers control their appliances with their smartphones, smartwatches, and other devices, and has been viewed as key to Samsung’s smart-home efforts. Paving the way for easier home energy savings, for example, SmartThings recently unveiled the second generation of its [smart-home automation hub](#) that connects with sensors in a home to detect characteristics such as temperature.

“The energy savings can be 20% to 30% per month in a household. That adds up very quickly,” SmartThings Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Alex Hawkinson said.

January 2015

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Peer Exchange Calls*

Residential Network members are invited to take part in these

In early 2014, Google bought Nest for \$3.2 billion. This resulted in the mainstreaming of Nest's products with advertisements seen regularly on football games, for example. Also in 2014, Apple positioned itself for the smart-home market by launching Home Kit, which will allow the iPhone or iPad to become the remote control for an entire home.

[Read more](#) of Hawkinson's 2015 Consumer Electronics Show interview on the future of the smart home.

Revenue Source Diversification Critical to Program Sustainability

Better Buildings Residential Network members that participated in the December 11, 2014, "[Update on Revenue Strategies](#)" webinar learned that diversifying their organizations' energy upgrade offerings and funding sources is critical to program sustainability. Other tips from the call included:

- Expand your program's revenue streams through tax policies, property assessed clean energy (PACE) programs, and loans.
- Share your program's measurable impacts and customer testimonials to garner support from local leadership and potential funders.

Every Peer Exchange Call is summarized and archived on the Better Buildings Residential Network's online community on the Home Energy Pros website, which is an exclusive benefit to members.

Get more tips like the ones listed above by viewing the [Peer Exchange Call summary](#)*

Five Ways to Get the Most Out of Your Residential Network Membership

Make 2015 the year your organization realizes the full value from the Better Buildings Residential Network. Here are five ways you and all of your colleagues can reap the full benefits of Residential Network membership:

1. **Sign up for a Peer Exchange Call.** The Residential Network hosts a series of [Peer Exchange Calls](#)* for members to discuss similar needs and challenges. Call topics include program sustainability, workforce/business partners, financing and revenue, data and evaluation, multifamily/low-income housing,

topical calls that are more discussion than webinar and serve as a forum to ask questions and bounce ideas off 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 and many other valuable resources 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.

January 22

Residential Energy Efficiency Customer Service Best Practices

12:30–2:00 PM EST

[Register now](#)

Trends in Real Estate and Energy Efficiency

3:00–4:30 PM EST

[Register now](#)

Find the Latest Peer Exchange Call Summaries*

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

- December 11, 2014:

and marketing and outreach. [Sign up](#)* for an upcoming Peer Exchange Call, and [learn what others have discovered](#) by participating in this valuable forum.

- 2. Participate in a voluntary initiative.** Some Residential Network members have taken their engagement beyond Peer Exchange Call interactions by participating in voluntary initiatives, which are forums to address a common opportunity for energy efficiency programs. The first voluntary initiative developed a [Partnerships Toolkit](#) that contains resources to help energy efficiency organizations engage in partnerships that leverage resources and strengthen their programs, with templates and how-to steps. Read the “Voluntary Initiative on Partnerships: Toolkit Training Webinar” Peer Exchange Call [summary](#)* to learn more, and look for the next voluntary initiative in the coming weeks.
- 3. Suggest topics for Peer Exchange Calls and voluntary initiatives.** The Residential Network exists to serve the needs of its members, so we ask you to suggest topics that can help address challenges and realize opportunities. We like to ask what is keeping members up at night, since it will likely be keeping others up at night as well. Member suggestions have been the basis for voluntary initiatives concerning partnerships and incentives, as well as the inspiration for numerous Peer Exchange Call topics. Email your call and initiative suggestions to [Better Buildings Residential Network Support](#).
- 4. Start a conversation on Home Energy Pros.** This invitation-only online community of professionals is the perfect way to engage with fellow Residential Network members—no conference fees or airfare required. Simply reply to an [open discussion](#)* or add a [new topic](#)* to engage the more than 100 Group members and discover professional solutions. If your organization has not yet signed up for the Residential Network Group on Home Energy Pros, [learn how easy it is to join](#).
- 5. Invite colleagues and partners to join the Residential Network.** All staff in a member organization are eligible to participate in Peer Exchange Calls and voluntary initiatives, suggest call and initiative topics, participate in the online community on Home Energy Pros, and more. The Residential Network is a big tent for energy efficiency programs—share the benefits of membership with other organizations you work with that meet Residential Network membership criteria.

[Update on Revenue Strategies](#)

- December 11, 2014: [Combining Solar and Home Performance Services](#)
- November 19, 2014: [Leveraging Service Calls and Emergency Repairs for Energy Efficiency Marketing](#)

Related Events

[Get to Know AFC First Financial PowerSaver Webinar](#)

January 22, 2015

4:00–5:00 PM EST

[ASHRAE 2015 Winter Conference](#)

January 24–28, 2015

Chicago, IL

[Get to Know SunWest Financial PowerSaver Webinar](#)

January 27, 2015

4:00–5:00 PM EST

[Midwest Energy Solutions Conference](#)

January 28–30, 2015

Chicago, IL

[ACI Northwest Regional Home Performance Conference](#)

February 2–3, 2015

Seattle, WA

[National Association of State Energy Officials \(NASEO\) Energy Policy Outlook Conference](#)

February 3–6, 2015

Washington, DC

[Association of Energy Services Professionals 2015 National](#)

Visit the [Residential Network website](#) to learn more.

Minnesota Member Lists the Twin Cities' First Energy Fit Certified Home

A home purchased and upgraded by Better Buildings Residential Network member the [Center for Energy and Environment](#) (CEE) made headlines as the first "Energy Fit" certified home listed on the Minnesota



Multiple Listing Service for residential real estate. CEE upgraded the 1,774-square-foot house, built in 1952, with a high-efficiency furnace and water heater, attic insulation, and energy-efficient lighting to earn the program's Energy Fit Homes certification.

CEE, in partnership with Neighborhood Energy Connection in St. Paul, Minnesota, created the Energy Fit Homes certification program in February 2014 specifically for older homes. An Energy Fit Homes assessor evaluates eligible homes for energy-efficient and performance [requirements](#).

The home's listing agent, Coldwell Banker Burnet's Bruce Erickson, expects the designation to make houses in the Twin Cities more marketable.

"Many homebuyers consider the cost of heating and cooling when buying a new house, and this can impact the sale price of the home, as well as the time spent on the market," Erickson said. "It can also allow sellers to get recognition [from home buyers] for improvements made to the home."

[Learn more](#) about CEE's Energy Fit Home program.

Census Data Show Homeowners Are Investing in Energy Efficiency

Nearly a quarter of all

Conference and Expo

February 9–12, 2015
Lake Buena Vista, FL

[Energy Center of Wisconsin's Better Buildings: Better Business Illinois Conference](#)

February 26–27, 2015
Rosemont, IL

[Energy Center of Wisconsin's Better Buildings: Better Business Wisconsin Conference](#)

March 11–13, 2015
Wisconsin Dells, WI

[Association of Energy Engineers Globalcon](#)

March 17–18, 2015
Philadelphia, PA

[U.S. Department of Energy Better Buildings Summit](#)

May 27–29, 2015
Washington, DC

Make SMARTer Resolutions for 2015



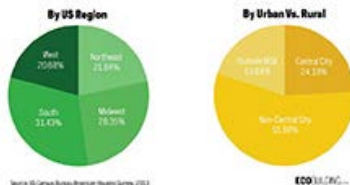
[Join the conversation](#) on Home Energy Pros, where we are discussing the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy's [SMART goal-setting framework](#) for successful New Year's resolutions. Share your organization's resolutions and

homeowners across the country that made a home improvement between 2011 and 2013 completed at least one energy efficiency project, according to a new U.S. Census Bureau American Housing Survey. More than 5 million American homes, or 75% of those surveyed, completed projects without a financial incentive or tax credit, indicating the potential to save money on utility costs or comfort, for example, might offer enough incentive to move homeowners to complete energy upgrade projects.

The South took the lead among U.S. regions, with 2.2 million southern homeowners making an energy efficiency improvement. Census data also showed the bulk of energy efficiency projects were made in suburban communities of metropolitan areas, but less so in urban areas.

[Learn more](#) about the U.S. Census Bureau American Housing Survey findings.

Percent of Homes with Energy Efficiency Improvements



[Enlarge the graph](#) to review the percent of U.S. homes that made energy efficiency improvements between 2011 and 2013 by region, as well as in urban versus rural areas.

Program Design and Customer Experience Solutions

Efficiency Maine Delivers a Warmer Winter With Weatherization

Maine resident Bob Dixon did not hold out much hope that this winter would be any warmer than past years. He knew the 42-year-old home he and his wife owned was not well insulated and steadily



tips for how others can set similar goals.

Tweet Energy Efficiency Resolutions Using #BBResNet

DOE's Better Buildings Initiative is [asking its Twitter followers](#) what commitments they are making to save energy in their facilities and buildings in 2015. Tweet [@BetterBldgsDOE](#) your answers using the #BBResNet hashtag to get the conversation started with your fellow Residential Network members.

New Video Features Weatherization Benefits



The [DOE Weatherization Assistance Program](#) (WAP) released a new video showcasing its success and the program's recent evolution through the Guidelines for Home Energy Professionals project. [Watch](#) the video, "Raising the Bar Within the Weatherization and Home Performance Industry," to learn more.

losing heat.

Bob Dixon smiles knowing he won't be cold in his home this winter, thanks to Efficiency Maine's program.

"Even with the heat turned up, we couldn't get warm.

When the furnace died in May, it was condemned by the repair guy, and we were worried," Dixon said.

But after participating in a collaborative weatherization program between Better Buildings Residential Network member [Efficiency Maine](#), Freeport Community Services, and the Town of Freeport, Maine, Dixon and his wife are enjoying a warmer winter and lower energy bills thanks to new insulation and air sealing. Program staff also helped the Dixons find a state program that helped them obtain a brand new furnace just in time for the winter chill.

"It is so nice to feel warm—my feet don't freeze anymore," Dixon said. "I didn't know if we would qualify, but I'm so glad we did."

More than 50 weatherization projects have been completed for Maine residents in need, and the program's success has already resulted in access to additional state and county funds.

[Learn more](#) about Efficiency Maine's collaborative effort to weatherize homes in the Pine Tree State, and find more program design and customer experience solutions in the [Better Buildings Residential Program Solution Center](#), which is a repository for key lessons, resources, and knowledge collected from the experience of residential energy efficiency programs.

Meet the Members

Residential Network Kicks Off New Year With New, Diverse Members

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

- The [City of Sunnyvale](#), California, a Georgetown University Energy Prize participant, offers residents incentives for home energy upgrades through Energy Upgrade California.
- The [Duke Carbon Offsets Initiative](#) is an effort based on Duke

Quotable

"For all residential and business utility consumers, and those involved in the energy efficiency industry in the Tucson area, 2015 should be a great year. The newly approved programs under the Tucson Electric Power (TEP) energy efficiency plan will provide more energy and cost savings to TEP customers than ever before—and are likely to spur new retrofit projects and even more local job growth in Arizona."

— Heather Szymanski, executive director of Efficiency First Arizona, in an *Arizona Daily Star* [opinion-editorial](#)

*Accessing Home Energy Pros

Non-Members of the Residential Network:

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

University's goal to reach climate neutrality by 2024. The initiative is developing a strategy for meeting the university's goals in a way that provides environmental, economic, and societal benefits beyond the benefits of greenhouse gas emission reductions.

- [Energy Efficiency Specialists](#) provides energy assessments to homeowners in New York and connects them with energy improvement contractors to complete cost-effective upgrades.
- The [San Juan Islands Conservation District](#), a Georgetown University Energy Prize participant in Washington State, helps landowners conserve natural resources by providing free services, project cost-share funding, and technical assistance. The organization is committed to conserving and enhancing natural resources in the San Juan Islands for farming, wildlife, public health, forestry, recreation, and residential uses.
- The [Yale Community Carbon Fund](#) is a joint project of the Office of Sustainability and the Center for Business and Environment at Yale University to support local carbon mitigation projects that go beyond the immediate campus. The fund invests donations in ways that enable low-income residents or organizations in New Haven, Connecticut, to become more energy efficient and save money.

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

invited to join the Better Buildings Residential Network Group to participate in the online 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.

Resource Corner

Warm Up to Winter News and Reports

- [Insights From Smart Meters: Identifying Specific Actions, Behaviors, and Characteristics That Drive Savings in Behavior-Based Programs](#) examines a Home Energy Report program that uses smart meter data to analyze specific actions, behaviors, and characteristics that drive energy savings in a behavior-based program (State and Local Energy Efficiency Action Network [SEE Action], December 2014).
- ["The Better Buildings Residential Program Solution Center Offers a Wealth of Information for the Industry"](#) discusses how

lessons learned by more than 40 state and local government partners participating in the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE's) Better Buildings Neighborhood Program created the [Solution Center](#), a one-stop shop for home energy professionals (*Home Energy* magazine, January 2015).

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](#).

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