

The Better Buildings Neighborhood View

How energy efficiency is improving lives, neighborhoods, and the economy

From the Energy Department's Better Buildings Neighborhood Program



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"So far, so easy!"

-Sandy Jablonski, Phoenix homeowner receiving home energy upgrades from Energize Phoenix

Heat Up Your Program's Success with a Summer Conference

This summer, the Energy Department will host two conferences designed to accelerate success among programs that are helping to improve the energy efficiency of residential, public, and commercial buildings. Plan to attend one or both of these events to share your successes and learn about effective strategies other programs are using.

For programs focused on homes, [Residential Energy Efficiency Solutions: From Innovation to Market Transformation](#) will be held July 9 to 11, 2012, at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, Virginia. The [draft agenda](#) (PDF) features sessions on successful program innovations, lessons learned, and approaches that administrators and implementers of residential energy efficiency programs can use. Registration for this event is free, but reservations are required, so [sign up today](#). Special hotel rates of \$169 per night (per diem) are available if you [book your room](#) by June 18, 2012.

For the public and commercial building sectors, the [Better Buildings Summit for State and Local Communities](#) will take place June 26 and 27, 2012, at The Curtis Hotel in Denver, Colorado. This event will focus on working with public sector professionals to build sustainable programs for public commercial buildings. [View the draft agenda](#), which includes interactive sessions on topics such as portfolio-wide energy management, successful public-private collaborations, policy development, available technical assistance, and financing options. [Register today](#) for this free event. A [room block](#) with a set room rate of \$149 per night (per diem) will be available until June 4, 2012, or until the reservation block is sold out.

Consumer Energy Tip

As temperatures rise, consider installing a programmable thermostat. You can save about 10% per year on your cooling bill by turning your thermostat up 7°–10°F for 8 hours each day.

Innovation Nation

The doctor is in at Virginia's Local Energy Alliance Program (LEAP). LEAP's "house doctor," Guy Caroselli, is an expert on building science and energy efficiency who [hosts a weekly radio show](#), provides house advice at events, and [writes a blog](#) to address recurring issues for contractors and homeowners.

Neighborhood Outlook

Innovative Home Tours Help Homeowners Understand Energy Savings

The California Community Savings Initiative is providing an innovative way to learn about energy efficiency upgrades. The initiative—run by the



Related Events

Affordable Comfort Institute
California Home Performance
Conference 2012
June 5–6, 2012
Sacramento, CA

International Energy Program
Evaluation Conference
June 12–14, 2012
Rome, Italy

Better Buildings Summit for
State and Local Communities
June 26–27, 2012
Denver, CO

Residential Energy Efficiency
Solutions: From Innovation to
Market Transformation
July 9–11, 2012
Arlington, VA

2012 ACEEE Summer Study
on Energy Efficiency in
Buildings
August 12–17, 2012
Pacific Grove, CA

Affordable Comfort Institute
Mid Atlantic Home
Performance Conference
2012
October 1–2, 2012
Pittsburgh, PA

Affordable Comfort Institute
New England Home
Performance Conference
2012
October 15–17, 2012
Springfield, MA

Behavior, Energy and Climate
Change Conference
November 12–14, 2012
Sacramento, CA

[California Center for Sustainable Energy \(CCSE\)](#), a subgrantee of the Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partner in [Los Angeles County](#), and the City of Chula Vista, California—provides demonstration home tours of installed energy efficiency upgrades. During the tours, neighbors hear testimonials from demonstration homeowners and take a firsthand look at contractors' work. Not only do tour participants learn about their neighbors' experiences, but they can also ask questions of the contractors who installed the upgrades, then sign up for an energy assessment of their own home for less than \$50. Contractors were very pleased with the work that was generated from the tours. "This was one of the most cost effective tactics we've done," says Ken Justo of ASI Hastings Heating & Air. [Get the full story](#) on the Initiative's innovative home demonstrations.



A kitchen in a demonstration home features descriptive signs next to installed upgrades.

Driving Demand

Share Efficiency Tips With *Energy Savers* Guide

Did you know a room air conditioner that is too big for the area it is supposed to cool will perform less efficiently and less effectively than a smaller, properly sized unit? Find this energy-saving fact and others in the [Energy Department's *Energy Savers* booklet](#). The 44-page guide contains tips and resources to help homeowners reduce their energy use and bills. The guide can be [downloaded for free](#) or [ordered in bulk at a cost of \\$0.80 each](#). A Spanish-language version is also available for [download](#). The booklet can be distributed through program offices and events or used by contractors during energy assessments or upgrades. [Get your copy](#) to share with energy savers in your neighborhood today.



Help homeowners reduce their energy bills with tips and resources from the *Energy Savers* booklet.

Energy Efficiency Tools

Re-tuning Buildings' Operating Systems Saves

Making simple adjustments to automated settings can reduce overall energy use in commercial buildings by up to 20%. To help more commercial building owners recognize the benefits of these savings, the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) developed a methodology to re-tune a building's operating system. Learn about the methodology in a fact sheet, [Improve the Performance of Building Operations and Controls](#), from the Institute for Building Efficiency, or take [PNNL's interactive Building Re-Tuning training course](#).

New Guide Shows How to Assess the Property Value of Energy Efficiency

As real estate professionals grow more conscious of the impact of energy performance on the value of residential and commercial properties, appraisers need standardized methods to assess energy efficiency's value. The [Appraisal Institute](#) (AI) and the [Institute for Market Transformation](#) (IMT) released the second edition of [The Recognition of Energy Costs and Energy Performance in Real Property Valuation: Considerations and Resources for Appraisers](#) to address this need. The guide covers the effect that energy costs have on property income, the approach to assessing a building's energy, the value the market currently places on green buildings, and related topics. [Read the guide](#) to learn more and consider sharing it with your colleagues in the real estate sector.

Online Toolkit Offers One-Stop Technical Assistance Shop

The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE) provides resources for state and local governments to help them create energy-efficient policies and programs. These evolving resources have been consolidated and are now online in ACEEE's [State](#) and [Local](#) Technical Assistance Toolkits. For state governments, the toolkit contains new information on [on-bill financing programs](#) and [evaluation, measurement, and verification implementation](#). The local government toolkit provides guidance for [combined heat and power projects](#) as well as compiled resources on how to [lead by example](#) and [employ energy-efficient practices in government buildings](#). Take advantage of these great tools and [let ACEEE know](#) if there is a resource you would like to see added to its toolkits.

New Tool Maps Consumer Access to Utility Data

The Energy Department recently launched the [Utility Data Access Map tool](#) to provide consumers with better access to utility data. The tool's user-friendly maps show how utilities compare in terms of data availability in areas ranging from benchmarking to demand response and energy efficiency to frequency of data delivery. To date, more than 500 utilities have provided the Department with data for inclusion in the tool. After using the Utility Data Access Map to determine whether their utility shares consumer data, customers are then guided to the [Green Button](#), another online tool that allows utility customers to download their own detailed household or building energy usage information from their utility's website. See how your local utility stacks up; view the [Utility Data Access Map tool](#) today.

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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.