



RESIDENTIAL NETWORK

Newsletter

Browse the New Better Buildings Residential Network Website

We invite you to visit the new [Better Buildings Residential Network website](#) launched on July 14, 2014. Visitors can find everything from how to [join](#) the Residential Network to the [benefits](#) of becoming a member. Following are a few highlights:



- Upcoming Peer Exchange Call information is listed on our [Home page](#).
- Our [Resources page](#), devoted to materials such as program newsletters and the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE's) *Guide for Program Benchmarking*, provides a one-stop shop for the latest announcements and tools available to members.
- Visitors can also find [information about joining](#) the online Residential Network Group on the Home Energy Pros website and registration information for upcoming [conferences and webinars](#).
- The [Members section](#) hosts a map and list that will be routinely updated to reflect the Residential Network's growth throughout the United States and Canada.

Check the site regularly for more tools, including case studies and other publications that showcase our members' commitments to accelerating the pace of home energy upgrades. Visit the [Residential Network website](#) to learn more.

You Are Invited: Take Part in Developing the Residential Network Partnership Tool Kit

Better Buildings Residential Network members looking to engage in partnerships that leverage resources and strengthen their programs are invited to participate in a short-term initiative to shape a Residential Network Partnership Tool Kit. Participating members will provide feedback on partnership tools and materials that will help them grow the market for home energy upgrades. Benefits to participating in Tool Kit development include:

July 2014

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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

- Shaping a Partnership Tool Kit that suits your needs, as well as others
- Receiving recognition for participating
- Opportunities to be featured in materials
- Training on how to use the Partnership Tool Kit

Participation consists of:

- Meeting other participants on a brief call to kick off development of the Partnership Tool Kit
- Reviewing and providing input on the drafting of the Tool Kit
- Sharing news of the Partnership Tool Kit's creation

To participate, email [Better Buildings Residential Network Support](#) by **Wednesday, August 6.**

Peer Exchange Calls Help Residential Network Members Work With Utilities and Multifamily Models

The summary for the June 12 Peer Exchange Call, "[Collaborating With Utilities on Residential Energy Efficiency*](#)," is now available to view on the Better Buildings Residential Network Group on Home Energy Pros. During the call, Liz Robinson of the Energy Coordinating Agency of Philadelphia explained how it is easier for programs to collaborate with a utility if the program can show how energy efficiency can solve a financial, public relations, or customer service problem for the utility.

The June 26 call summary for "[Cost-Effective Modeling and Savings Projections for Multifamily Projects*](#)" is also available. In this discussion, Brian Kennedy of Residential Network member Austin Energy discussed how point-based systems for determining rebates based on typical combinations of energy upgrade measures can be a cost-effective alternative to full modeling projections for multifamily properties.

[Register*](#) for upcoming Peer Exchange Calls to learn more tips like these. Suggest topics that will help your work by emailing bbresidentialnetwork@ee.doe.gov.

Residential Network Members Collaborate on Energy Efficiency Policy Development

The City of Kansas City, Missouri, a Better Buildings Residential Network member, [announced](#) in June 2014 its plans to



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. To receive emails about upcoming calls email bbresidentialnetwork@ee.doe.gov. [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.

August 14

Program Sustainability: Mastermind: A Program (TBD) Challenge Will Receive Advice From Call Participants

12:30–2:00 PM EDT
[Register now](#)

Workforce and Business Partners: Home Performance Training and Mentoring: Resources and Program Experiences

3:00–4:30 PM EDT
[Register now](#)

The Peer Exchange Call schedule will be taking a summer break on August 28, 2014. Our regular call schedule will resume in September.

Find the Latest Peer Exchange Call Summaries*

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

- May 22, 2014: [Benefits](#)

participate in the [City Energy Project](#) (CEP), which is a national effort designed to develop a set of policies and programs through energy benchmarking that improve energy efficiency in buildings. CEP is supported in part by fellow Residential Network member the Institute for Market Transformation. Kansas City is one of 10 U.S. cities participating, joined by Atlanta; Boston; Chicago; Denver, also a Residential Network member; Houston; Los Angeles; Philadelphia; Salt Lake City; and Orlando, Florida. Through the City Energy Project, each city will hire a local subject-matter expert who will help put its energy efficiency plan into practice. The project is envisioned to last three to four years, during which time cities' progress will be regularly measured to see how target goals are achieved.

[Learn more about how](#) Kansas City and the Institute for Market Transformation are taking part in this effort.

Nexus Energy Center Raises Funds for Energy-Saving Tiny Home

Nexus Energy Center, a Huntsville, Alabama-based Better Buildings Residential Network member, is trying to raise \$5,000 through a crowd-funding effort to build the city's first tiny, energy-efficient home. The idea was inspired by a Nexus Energy Center volunteer who approached Executive Director Ruchi Singhal in winter 2013 with a video of eco-friendly, tiny-house developments in New York City.



"When he showed me that video, it was really inspiring because it's talking about how you can transform spaces," Singhal said.

Nexus Energy Center's "TRES (Tiny, Renewable, and Environmentally Sustainable) Project: The Greenest Tiny Home in Alabama" campaign was launched soon thereafter. With the help of such organizations as the U.S. Green Building Council of Alabama, Nexus plans to construct an energy-efficient, 250-square-foot demonstration home to educate students and home performance contractors about energy efficiency and renewable energy strategies and technologies.

Frustrated by what Nexus Energy Center Project Team Leader Daniel Tait called "the prevailing myth that high performance also has to be high cost," program staff hopes the tiny space will motivate more people to think about upgrading their homes to be more energy efficient.

[of Better Buildings Residential Network Reporting](#)

- June 12, 2014: [Collaborating With Utilities on Residential Energy Efficiency](#)
- June 12, 2014: [Engaging Efficiency First Chapters and Other Trade Associations in Energy Efficiency Programs](#)
- June 26, 2014: [Cost-Effective Modeling and Savings Projections for Multifamily Projects](#)

Related Events

[2014 ACEEE Summer Study on Energy Efficiency in Buildings](#)

August 17–22, 2014
Pacific Grove, CA

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

September 23, 2014
Washington, DC

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

October 15–16, 2014
Springfield, MA

[ACEEE Intelligent Efficiency Conference](#)

November 16–18, 2014
San Francisco, CA

Home Energy Pros Spotlight*

Teach Homeowners How to Keep Cool With DOE's New Cooling Infographic

[Join the conversation](#) on Home Energy Pros, where we are sharing DOE's new ["Energy](#)

[Learn more](#) about Nexus Energy Center's TRES Project.

New Energy-Saving Residential Building Standards Open Doors for California Contractors

Updated California building standards requiring stricter energy savings for new residential buildings, and additions and alterations to existing residential buildings has created new leads for local home performance contractors. The [2013 Building Energy Efficiency Standards](#) that went into effect July 1, 2014, intend to reduce energy consumption in single-family and multifamily residential buildings by 25 percent compared to the 2008 standards. [Revised codes](#) describe requirements for additions and alterations to residential buildings and address energy-saving specifics related to lighting, space heating and cooling, ventilation, and water heating.

"[These standards] are a critical piece of any strategy for California to reach our emission reduction targets in 2020 and beyond," said Andrew McAllister, commissioner of the California Energy Commission.

The California Energy Commission developed the [California Building Energy Code Compliance](#) (CBECC) software as a free, open-source program that models residential and nonresidential buildings to provide a better understanding of what is required for buildings to achieve compliance.

[Read more](#) about the 2013 Building Energy Efficiency Standards.

Financing Solutions

Efficiency Maine's PowerSaver Loans Remove Financing Barrier to Home Energy Efficiency

By offering [U.S. Federal Housing Administration \(FHA\) PowerSaver loans](#),

Better Buildings Residential Network member Efficiency Maine is helping make

home energy upgrades a reality for customers. PowerSaver loans are low-interest, long-term loans with no fees that can be used for energy efficiency improvements. Consumer incentives of as much as \$1,500 are also available, depending upon the scope of work. Annual energy savings often exceed the cost of monthly loan payments in the first year.



[Saver 101: Home Cooling" infographic](#) you can use to educate homeowners on maintaining a comfortable home during hot temperatures.



DOE's Updated Energy Saver Guide Features New Tips for Customers



DOE recently updated its *Energy Saver: Tips on Saving Money and Energy at Home* guide with updated statistics and recommendations for 2014. Residential Network members can use these new and refined energy savings tips in their outreach materials and on social media to promote energy efficiency upgrades to their customers. [Download](#) the new guide or order hard copies in bulk to distribute.

Austin Energy Dials Down Home Energy Use Via Customers' Smart Phones

Efficiency Maine's most popular loan projects include home energy assessments, air sealing, insulation, high-efficiency boiler or furnaces, ENERGY STAR® qualified appliances, water heaters, windows, doors, pellet stoves, wood stoves, and ductless heat pumps. AFC First, the program's PowerSaver lender and fellow Residential Network member, has approved \$1.7 million in PowerSaver loans to nearly 150 Efficiency Maine customers to date.

[Read more](#) about Efficiency Maine's financing solutions.

Smart-E Loans Provide Limited-Time Discount Bundle for Connecticut Home Energy Upgrades

Better Buildings Residential Network member Clean Energy Finance and Investment Authority (CEFIA) is offering a



limited-time bundle promotion with discounted interest rates to make home energy upgrades more affordable for Connecticut residents. [Smart-E loan bundles](#) are available in five-, seven-, 10- or 12-year terms at rates as low as 2.75% for residents who undertake more than one energy efficiency improvement. Examples of qualifying energy efficiency improvements include converting from oil to natural gas or adding insulation.

"Smart-E loans provide homeowners with an opportunity to finance more than 40 energy improvements that can result in positive cash flow savings in the first month," said CEFIA President and Chief Executive Officer Bryan Garcia. "Approximately 150 Connecticut residents already have taken advantage of Smart-E loan options over the past year, and more and more homeowners are seeking these loans to upgrade their homes."

[Learn more](#) about CEFIA's limited-time Smart-E home energy loan bundle.

Meet the Members

Residential Network Flourishes With New Members This Summer

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



Residential Network member Austin Energy used summer's [unpredictable weather patterns](#) as an opportunity to remind Austin, Texas, residents of its Power PartnerSM Thermostat incentive. Customers can receive an \$85 rebate for one of several "smart" thermostats that they can control remotely from a smart phone, if they also allow Austin Energy access. When the demand for electricity is highest, Austin Energy schedules events that modify rebate participants' thermostat settings to use less energy. Customers can opt out at any time using their thermostat or through their thermostat's Web portal. [Learn more](#) about Austin Energy's smart thermostat rebate.

"Clean Energy Works Oregon got the initial revenue going by generating a bunch of home weatherization projects. It helped us prove our case to investors and helped us raise \$2.6 million in private capital. Now we have 80 dealers in 34 states and three provinces in Canada. I'd like to believe we would have prevailed without the support, but it has been instrumental to our growth."

—Indow Windows CEO Sam Pardue, regarding Residential Network member Clean Energy Works Oregon's pivotal role in its success to deliver [more energy-efficient window upgrades](#).

- [Building Media, Inc.](#) develops practical online training programs for the residential and commercial building industry.
- The [Energy Center of Wisconsin](#) promotes sustainability and energy solutions through research, program design, and hands-on demonstration in buildings nationwide.
- [Energy Conservation Associates](#) manages Project Warm, which provides free weatherization services for homeowners and renters in the Louisville, Kentucky, metropolitan area.
- The [HUB Energy Group](#) in Cincinnati, Ohio, provides energy efficiency solutions for residential and commercial customers, including energy assessments, sustainability plans or road maps, and guidance on which measures are best suited to the customer's needs and budget.
- The [International Center for Appropriate and Sustainable Technology](#) is a nonprofit organization that focuses on solutions for underserved communities, including financing for energy and renewable upgrades.
- [Light House Sustainable Building Centre](#) is a nonprofit organization providing research, advisory, and project management expertise for sustainable building projects across the residential, institutional, commercial, and industrial sectors in Canada.

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

Resource Corner

New Resources Explore the Importance of Saving Energy and How to Get There

From residential energy efficiency program successes to policy actions needed to sustain such success, following are the latest blogs, policy briefs, and white papers exploring the importance—and financial benefits—of saving energy.

- [Benchmarking Job Creation in the Southeast](#) analyzes how every \$1 million dollars invested in the Southeast's energy efficiency sector from 2010 to 2013 resulted in the creation of more than 17 jobs (Southeast Energy Efficiency Alliance, June 2014).
- "[Better Buildings Neighborhood Program Partners Upgrade 100,000 Buildings. Save Homeowners and Businesses \\$730 Million on Energy Bills](#)" summarizes the accomplishments of Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partners over the past four years (*Home Energy* magazine blog, May 2014).

*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 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.

- “[Energy Efficiency Policies for Local Communities](#)” recommends steps Congress and the Federal Executive Branch should take to motivate investment in energy efficiency at the local level (American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy [ACEEE], July 2014).
- “[Gauging ‘Readiness’ Helps Make a Clean Sweep in Michigan Communities](#)” explores the “readiness scale” BetterBuildings for Michigan, a Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partner, developed to determine whether certain neighborhoods in the state were ready to implement energy efficiency upgrades (*Home Energy* magazine blog, June 2014).
- “[Saving Energy With Neighborly Behavior: Energy Efficiency for Multifamily Renters and Homebuyers](#)” analyzes the key features of existing energy efficiency tenant engagement programs, programs aimed at improving the energy efficiency behavior of multifamily building residents, and suggests ways to improve behaviors (ACEEE, May 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.

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