

The Better Buildings Neighborhood View

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

From the U.S. Energy Department's Better Buildings Neighborhood Program



In This Issue

Let the Better Buildings Neighborhood Program Resource Directory Be Your Guide to Success
Better Buildings Innovators
Reports and Studies

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"[My house] was so uncomfortable I thought I would have to move. They gave me back my home."

-Linda Allen,
Bainbridge Island, Washington,
speaking of her house before
and after her home upgrade
through the RePower
Bainbridge program

Let the Better Buildings Neighborhood Program Resource Directory Be Your Guide to Success

Whether you are just launching a new energy efficiency upgrade program or looking for new ideas to enhance your existing efforts, the Better Buildings Neighborhood Program [Resource Directory](#) has a growing number of tools to help your program succeed. The Resource Directory contains guides and documents that detail strategies for driving demand, workforce development, and financing, in addition to technical tools and calculators. These essential resources are good starting points:

- The [DOE Guidelines for Home Energy Professionals](#) are voluntary national guiding principles to help expand the energy efficiency upgrade industry into a skilled and credentialed workforce.
- The [Clean Energy Finance Guide for Residential and Commercial Building Improvements \(Third Edition\)](#) contains a wealth of information to help state, local, and tribal governments use federal funds to jump start financing programs for energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades.
- [Driving Demand for Home Energy Improvements](#) provides program designers with strategies and lessons learned from successful programs to motivate consumers to complete energy efficiency upgrades in their homes and businesses.

The Resource Directory is regularly updated with new tools, so [visit the page](#) often.

Consumer Energy Tip

Looking for a low cost way to reduce heat from the sun in your home? Install window blinds. Highly reflective blinds can reduce heat gain by approximately 45% when they are completely closed and lowered on a sunny window.

Innovation Nation

[Energize Phoenix](#) and the mayor of Phoenix encouraged homeowners to "Go Green Like Your Grocer" by hosting an energy efficiency showcase at a neighborhood grocery store. The event highlighted the

Better Buildings Innovators

San Jose, California, Partners With Established Community Groups to Win Over Homeowners

When [Better Buildings Program San Jose \(BBPSJ\)](#) set out to encourage homeowners to install energy upgrades, the program joined forces with trusted

energy efficiency upgrades made by a local grocery store and how homeowners can save money and energy in their homes with help from program incentives.



Related Events

Excellence in Building Conference and Expo
September 25–27, 2012
Scottsdale, AZ

Affordable Comfort, Inc. (ACI) Mid Atlantic Home Performance Conference 2012
October 1–2, 2012
Pittsburgh, PA

ACI New England Home Performance Conference 2012
October 16–17, 2012
Springfield, MA

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

Greenbuild 2012
November 14–16, 2012
San Francisco, CA

community groups in order to accomplish its goals. Partnering with highly regarded community organizations enhanced the trustworthiness and visibility of the program and helped provide funding that reduced upgrade costs for homeowners.

To reduce program overhead costs, BBPSJ looked to local, well-known organizations that deliver important non-energy services in San Jose. Most Holy Trinity Catholic Church offered BBPSJ office space where staff could meet with homeowners, teach them more about the program, and schedule home energy assessments. The local Boys and Girls Clubhouse—a common location for residents to receive services such as child care and educational programming—offered BBPSJ space to hold its events.

To help low-income residents cover the cost of home energy evaluations and upgrades, BBPSJ staff created partnerships with organizations that were already offering free weatherization installations and energy efficiency upgrades and brought these services to San Jose residents. Pacific Gas and Electric's Moderate Income Direct Install program offers free home energy assessments and weatherization services to homeowners who qualify based on income. BBPSJ worked with Pacific Gas and Electric to allow all BBPSJ residents into the program. Pacific Gas and Electric's local contractor company, Quality Conservation Services, carries out the energy efficiency services. [Read more](#) to learn how BBPSJ developed these successful partnerships.

BBPSJ partnered with the following local organizations:

- Boys & Girls Club Smythe Clubhouse
- City of San Jose Housing Department (home repair assistance programs)
- Most Holy Trinity Catholic Church
- Quality Conservation Services
- Sacred Heart Community Service (Weatherization Assistance Program)
- San Jose State University

Reports and Studies

Learn More Ways City and State Governments Are Using QECBs

Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory has produced four new Qualified Energy Conservation Bond (QECB) Clean Energy Financing Policy Briefs to help explain the recent U.S. Department of Treasury and Internal Revenue Service QECB guidance and to highlight projects that have been financed through the bonds. The briefs focus on how municipalities have taken advantage of innovative financing to fund a range of energy conservation projects, such as energy-efficient street lighting, energy efficiency upgrades for city buildings, and renewable projects for privately owned buildings. Read the full set of briefs:

- [QECB Update: New Guidance From the U.S. Department of Treasury and Internal Revenue Service](#)
- [Using QECBs for Public Building Upgrades: Reducing Energy Bills in the City of Philadelphia](#)
- [Using QECBs for Street Lighting Upgrades: Lighting the Way to Lower Energy](#)

[Bills in San Diego](#)

- [Aggregating QECB Allocations and Using QECBs to Support the Private Sector: A Case Study on Massachusetts](#)

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