



The Small Town Energy Program
For University Park

What is STEP-UP?

A 3-year grant from the U.S. Department of Energy to the Town Of University Park, Maryland (August, 2010 through July, 2013)

“To create a model community energy transformation program that serves as a roadmap for other small towns across the U.S.”



Why Small Towns?



- 80% of the US population lives in only 350 metro areas;
- But within those metro areas, more than 50% live in jurisdictions of less than 25,000 people.
- The average jurisdiction in the US is only 6,200.

(Wendell Cox, New Geography, 9-2008)

STEP-UP Goals

- Improve energy efficiency by 20% in 20% of homes in UP;
- Use grant funds to launch energy saving programs in neighboring communities;
 - College Heights Estates
 - Riverdale Park
 - Hyattsville
- Create a toolkit to be downloaded by any small town wanting to implement a program



How Does STEP-UP Work?



1. The *Energy Coach* helps homeowners every step of the way with trusted, independent expertise.
2. Only pre-qualified contractors are used in STEP-UP. All standards aligned with state & utility programs.

How Does STEP-UP Work?



3. Through STEP-UP, homeowners can access attractive financing for their home energy improvements.

- Sandy Spring Bank
- Maryland Clean Energy Center
- Department of Housing and Community Development



How Does STEP-UP Work?



4. Upon completion of each project, a mandatory test-out and an optional QA inspection ensure that the job was done right.

How Does STEP-UP Work?



5. The *Energy Coach* helps homeowners access existing rebates and incentives.

Incentive For	Homeowner	Rebates	Source
Audit	\$100	\$300	Pepco, STEP-UP
Home Energy Improvements	Varies by home	Average 60% of project	Pepco, STEP-UP, MEA, tax credit

Why Does STEP-UP Work?



1. Lowers *information* barriers by using only trusted and familiar community sources;
 - Newsletter, list serves
 - Town events
 - STEP-UP house parties
 - School program
 - Yard signs
 - Neighbors!
2. Lowers *transaction* barriers – Energy Coach;
3. Lowers *financial* barriers – financing & incentives.

STEP-UP Outcomes: 1 Year

- **23%** of UP households have signed up for the program (213);
- **16%** of UP households have had home assessments (150);
- **11%** of UP homes have completed efficiency upgrades (101).



Household Impact: 1 Year



- Energy reduction: 15% average per year
- Utility bill reduction: \$375 average per year
- Average cost of audit & improvements: \$3,860
- Average rebates received* : \$2,335
- Average net out-of-pocket costs: \$1,525
- Simple payback: 4.1 years, or 25% ROI

Source: STEP-UP program records

*Rebates from STEP-UP, Maryland Energy Administration and Pepco. Does not include potential Federal Tax Credit

Program Impact: 1 Year



- Electricity: 61,250 kWh
- Natural Gas: 7,514 Therms
- Fuel Oil: 1,427 Gallons

- Reduction in greenhouse gases: 100 tons

Sources: BEACON modeled savings from Home Performance with ENERGY STAR audits
GHG calculation: http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/emissions/ind_assumptions.html

Economic Impact: 1 Year



- Grant expenditure: \$300,000
- Leveraged private investment: \$400,000
- Contracting firms engaged on project: 39
- Full-time jobs created or retained: 9

Next Steps



1. Develop letters of understanding with College Heights Estates, Hyattsville, Riverdale Park;
2. Re-brand the program for these communities;
3. Aim for a late Spring / early Summer launch;
4. Run funded program for 1 year, working with advisory committees from each community.



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