



# RESIDENTIAL NETWORK

## Network View Newsletter

### News From the Field

#### Peer Exchange Call Takeaways Inspire New Lessons Learned Greatest Hits

A new [“Lessons Learned: Peer Exchange Calls” resource](#) summarizes top takeaways shared by Better Buildings Residential Network members, from tips to collaborating with utilities to cost-effective rebate models. The Residential Network hosts a series of Peer Exchange Calls for members to discuss similar needs and challenges, and to collectively identify effective strategies and useful resources. Following is a sample of lessons learned shared by members during various Peer Exchange Calls:



- To make collaboration with a utility easier, show how energy efficiency can solve a financial, public relations, or customer service problem for the utility.
- 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.
- Offer guided peer-to-peer learning opportunities for contractors, such as online discussions. These peer-sharing opportunities can make a big difference as a training component.

October 2014

#### In This Issue

- [Peer Exchange Calls Inspire New Lessons Learned Greatest Hits](#)
- [Register for Upcoming Peer Exchange Calls](#)
- [Residential Network Online Group Welcomes 100th Member](#)
- [Outlining Data Needs Optimizes Evaluation](#)
- [Efficiency Nova Scotia Releases Mobile App](#)
- [California Studies Solar and Energy Efficiency Link](#)
- [Vermont Member Adds Realty Division](#)
- [New Network Members](#)
- [Fall Forward With This Month's Reading List](#)



Read the [full document](#) for more lessons learned and [register\\*](#) for upcoming Peer Exchange Calls.

## Residential Network Online Group Welcomes 100th Member on Home Energy Pros

The [Better Buildings Residential Network Group\\*](#) on Home Energy Pros welcomed its 100th member on October 8, 2014, and has since grown to more than 100 members. The invitation-only online community of professionals provides Residential Network members access to:

- Peer Exchange Call schedule and summaries
- Discussion opportunities with energy efficiency programs and partners
- Resources and documents for home performance professionals

Residential Network members who have not yet signed up and would like access to these valuable resources are invited to [join the Residential Network Group](#) to participate. It's an easy, two-step process—[sign up](#) for Home Energy Pros, and then after receiving your confirmation email, click the “Join Better Buildings Residential Network” button. Thank you to everyone who has joined the Group, and we look forward to welcoming new faces to the conversation.

Not yet a Residential Network member? [Learn how to join.](#)

## Outlining Data Requirements Optimizes Tracking and Evaluation Efforts

Better Buildings Residential Network members that participated in the July 24, 2014, “[Data and Evaluation: Cost-Effective, Customer-Focused and Contractor-Focused Data Tracking Systems\\*](#)” Peer Exchange Call learned that outlining what they need in a data tracking and evaluation system at the beginning of a formal evaluation process helps prevent collecting unnecessary data. Here are a few other tips from the call:

- Consider using customized customer relationship management systems. They might require significant staff time and effort, but many programs found the investment worthwhile.
- Avoid complicated data analysis by using data fields and

## 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 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. [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](mailto:bbresidentialnetwork@ee.doe.gov).

### October 23

**Financing and Revenue:  
Crowd Funding: Enabling  
Small Investors to Help Fund  
Business Loans for Energy  
Efficiency Upgrades**

12:30–2:00 PM EDT

[Register now](#)

**Residential Network  
Voluntary Initiative on  
Partnerships: Toolkit  
Training Webinar**

3:00–4:30 PM EDT

validation rules (i.e., a database setting to prevent the entry of unwanted data) to avoid errors.

- Monitor your data regularly to make sure you are getting the most updated information out of the system.
- Design your data tracking and evaluation system with a clear strategy for testing your hypothesis.

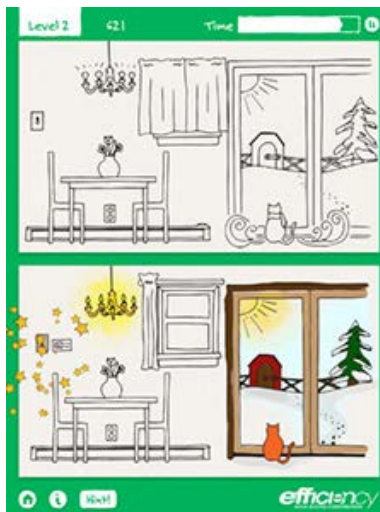
Get more tips like these by viewing the [Peer Exchange Call summary](#). Summaries from the October 9, 2014, Peer Exchange Calls—"Program Sustainability: Incorporating Energy Efficiency Into Disaster Recovery Efforts" and "Data and Evaluation: Making Evaluations Work for Your Program: Tips for Success"—will be posted soon on the [Residential Network Group](#)\* on Home Energy Pros.

## Efficiency Nova Scotia Releases Energy Efficiency Mobile App

Better Buildings Residential Network member [Efficiency Nova Scotia](#) recently released Spot it!—an energy efficiency game app for mobile devices. The app features 13 levels where players are challenged to spot the difference between efficient and inefficient rooms in a typical household. Differences are explained at the end of each level.

Efficiency Nova Scotia released the app in conjunction with its summer road tour that visited more than 20 communities, during which Spot it! had its first trial run with fifth and sixth graders at an interactive science museum.

"Our ultimate goal is to help make energy efficiency normal behavior,"



[Register now](#)

### November 13

#### Program Sustainability: Combining Solar and Home Performance Services

12:30–2:00 PM EST

[Register now](#)

#### Marketing and Outreach: Leveraging Service Calls and Emergency Repairs for Energy Efficiency Marketing

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:

- September 11, 2014: [Better Buildings Residential Network Orientation](#)
- September 11, 2014: [Coordinating Energy Efficiency With Water Conservation Service](#)
- August 14, 2014: [Home Performance Training & Mentoring: Lessons and Resources](#)
- August 14, 2014: [Program Sustainability Mastermind Format: Connecting the Dots Between the Real Estate Market and Residential Energy Efficiency Featuring Rich Dooley of Arlington County](#)

said Leanne Hachey, Efficiency Nova Scotia's director of communications and stakeholder relations. "One way to do that is to teach our children how to use energy better so they can share that knowledge with their families. Spot it! is a way to speak to kids about energy and efficiency in a way that's relevant to them."

[Learn more](#) about Spot it! or download the app for free [on iTunes](#).

## California Member Connects Solar Adoption With Energy Upgrades

Studies on the connection between solar adoption and energy upgrades by Better Buildings Residential Network member [Center for Sustainable Energy](#) (CSE) in California are helping solar companies realize that partnering with local energy efficiency programs can help turn potential competition into an addition to their business.



According to CSE, data from 2,350 San Diego-area residents who participated in the California Solar Initiative rebate program show that future solar adopters may be an ideal market segment for making more comprehensive energy upgrades. Results showed that solar customers feel deeper energy efficiency upgrades offer more than just cost savings. Other factors related to home comfort, health, and safety can provide the opportunity to engage these customers in taking additional energy measures.

"Consideration should be given to integrating solar into energy efficiency programs and framing solar as a component of a comprehensive home energy upgrade," said Ria Langheim, CSE research analyst. "This may help future solar customers to explore the full range of energy efficiency options, as well as encourage contractors to offer both energy efficiency and solar installation services."

[Virginia](#)

### Related Events

[American Public Power Association Customer Connections Conference](#)

October 26–29, 2014  
Jacksonville, FL

[2014 Southeast Energy Efficiency Alliance Annual Conference](#)

November 5–7, 2014  
Atlanta, GA

[ACEEE Intelligent Efficiency Conference](#)

November 16–18, 2014  
San Francisco, CA

[2014 Behavior, Energy and Climate Change Conference](#)

December 7–10, 2014  
Washington, DC

### Peer Exchange Calls Share Lessons Learned

[Join the conversation](#) on Home Energy Pros, where we are discussing lessons learned shared by members during various Peer Exchange Calls.

### Last Call for Incentives Tool Kit Participation

Residential Network members were recently invited to help shape the Network's Incentives Tool Kit that will provide

[Learn more](#) about CSE's research, and join us for an upcoming "Program Sustainability: Combining Solar and Home Performance Services\*" Peer Exchange Call on November 13, 2014, to explore this topic further.

## Program Design and Customer Experience Solutions

### Vermont Member Helps House Hunters Come Home to Energy Savings

Better Buildings Residential Network member [NeighborWorks of Western Vermont](#) (NWWVT) has added a realty division and hired a licensed real estate broker to fill a niche in the marketplace for first-time homebuyers looking for affordable, energy-efficient properties to call home.



"We've had homebuyer education counseling and a lending program that helps people who might not otherwise qualify for commercial mortgage lending, but there was the gap between finding the house and finding the *right* house," NWWVT Executive Director Ludy Biddle said.

NWWVT currently has a [small inventory](#) of previously foreclosed Vermont Housing Finance Agency properties for sale that have had energy efficiency upgrades. Some homes' titles have covenants that will keep them perpetually affordable for the next buyer. NWWVT will also accept private-sector listings to give potential buyers access to a greater number of homes for sale.

explanations, templates, examples, and case studies related to incentives. Several members have already signed up to participate, but those still interested are encouraged to email [Better Buildings Residential Network Support](#) by **close of business Thursday, October 17, 2014**.

### Burritos Break Down Energy Consumption in New DOE Infographic

DOE's new [energy consumption infographic](#) trades British thermal units for burritos in an effort to illustrate annual energy consumption in more relatable terms. Additional equivalencies from sticks of dynamite to *Back to the Future* film references expand on the graphic's interactive state-specific breakdown based on energy data from 2012. Residential Network members can share the infographic on Facebook and Twitter to promote Energy Action Month in October.

Biddle doesn't regard the new service as competition for the area's real estate agents. "We think we are filling an important niche that is underserved. Selling homes that have been up for sale a long time should help expand the market activity, not shrink it," she said.

[Learn more](#) about NWWVT's new real estate strategy, and listen to Biddle's recent [National Public Radio interview](#) about the program's efforts to weatherize old New England homes.

## Meet the Members

### New Network Development Corporation, City, Contractor, and Nonprofit Members

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

- The [North Pole Economic Development Corporation](#) works to catalyze employment opportunities and facilitate sustainable growth in North Pole, Alaska.
- [The Oberlin Project](#) is a collaboration among Oberlin, Ohio; Oberlin College; and other partners to improve the resilience, prosperity, and sustainability of the local community.
- Nonprofit organization [green|spaces](#) promotes sustainability in and around Chattanooga, Tennessee, through educational and technical trainings intended to improve the region.
- A division of TDS Custom Construction, [TDS Home Performance](#) in Madison, Wisconsin, serves as a one-stop shop for creating comfortable, energy-efficient homes.
- The [City of Bellingham, Washington](#), joined nonprofit partners



### Homes "Button Up" Air Leaks for Vermont Video Contest



November 1, 2014, is [Button Up Vermont Day](#), a statewide weatherization effort co-sponsored by Residential Network member NWWVT. To celebrate, Vermont residents are encouraged to submit [short videos](#) by **October 19** that inspire viewers to take action to lower their heating costs this winter. Videos should highlight some of the ways air leaks waste energy and motivate viewers to "button up" leaks. These and other tips will be

and a local utility to launch the Whatcom Energy Challenge, a comprehensive effort to save energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

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

## Resource Corner

### Fall Forward With This Month's Reading List

From the future of home energy upgrades to utility energy efficiency programs' lessons learned, add these latest articles, white papers, and reports to your fall reading list:

- “[From Energy Audits to Home Performance](#)” discusses the evolution of the residential energy efficiency industry in honor of Residential Network member *Home Energy* magazine's 30th anniversary (*Home Energy* magazine, August 2014).
- “[Government Works: Federal Agency Actions on Energy Efficiency](#)” examines four sets of recent and prospective federal actions on energy efficiency, including appliance standards and select housing policies, that could collectively save Americans \$2.6 trillion in energy costs (American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy [ACEEE], September 2014).
- [Housing Archetype Analysis for Home Energy-Efficient Retrofit in the Great Lakes Region](#) explores prevalent housing archetypes within the Great Lakes region that offer high potential for energy upgrade uptake based on numbers of similar houses and their characteristics (DOE's Building America program, September 2014).
- [Successful Practices in Combined Gas and Electric Utility Energy Efficiency Programs](#) shares lessons learned from 16 combined natural gas and electric energy efficiency programs and describes their organization and structure, performance, and motivations for collaboration (ACEEE, August 2014).

shared on Twitter using the hashtag #ButtonUpVTDay. Follow [@NeighborWorksVT](#) on Twitter.



“Our own Efficiency Maine Trust has been doing a great job helping homeowners, manufacturers, and commercial users save energy for heating, cooling, lighting, and machinery. Seemingly small steps, have resulted in both revenue savings and lower carbon emissions.”

– Maine State Representative Deane Rykerson on Residential Network member [Efficiency Maine](#)

### \*Accessing Home Energy Pros

#### Non-Residential Network Members:

The [Better Buildings Residential Network Group on Home Energy Pros](#) is open exclusively to Residential

## 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.

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, click the “Join Better Buildings Residential Network” button.

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](#).

**U.S. Department of Energy**  
1000 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, DC 20585

[betterbuildings.energy.gov/bbm](http://betterbuildings.energy.gov/bbm)