



RESIDENTIAL NETWORK

Network View Newsletter

News From the Field

Residential Network Members Impact More Than 42,000 Households in 2013

Eligible Better Buildings Residential Network members reported completing 27,563 home energy upgrades during 2013 as part of the Residential Network's first reporting cycle. In addition, 13 Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partners completed 12,166 home energy upgrades, and six Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® Sponsors completed 2,540 home energy upgrades, which are separated out to avoid double counting with those programs. In total, 42,269 households were improved by 47 eligible Residential Network member organizations during 2013. Members that joined after the reporting collection period will be counted in next year's reporting. Residential Network member upgrades were reported as part of the Residential Network's first annual call for upgrades and benefits, which occurred this summer.



As of September 30, 2014, the Residential Network consisted of 142 organizations throughout the United States and Canada.

In addition to home energy upgrades, Network members reported a variety of other benefits. Reported benefits varied among members. The [Southeast Energy Efficiency Alliance](#) reported estimated annual electricity savings of more than 5 million kilowatt-hours; estimated natural gas savings of 71,580 British therms; and \$653,245 estimated

December 2014

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annual cost savings. In New York, [PUSH \(People United for Sustainable Housing\) Buffalo](#) reported completing more than 200 home energy upgrades.

Other milestones reached by the Residential Network included:

- Welcoming 142 [members](#) as of September 30, 2014. This number includes 52 [Georgetown University Energy Prize](#) participants that joined the Residential Network in 2014.
- Holding 52 Peer Exchange Calls for nearly 1,000 participants who shared experiences and helped one another address challenges and consider new approaches across numerous leading-edge topic areas.
- Signing up more than 100 users to the [Better Buildings Residential Network Group](#)* on the Home Energy Pros website.
- Producing a [Partnerships Toolkit](#), as a result of the Residential Network's first Voluntary Initiative, which includes resources to help energy efficiency organizations engage in partnerships that leverage resources and strengthen their programs.
- Publishing 11 issues of this [newsletter](#), which is distributed to more than 1,600 recipients.
- Launching a [new website](#), which received 1,500 visits in just over two months.

Visit the [Residential Network website](#) to learn more about the program and its members.

New Lessons Learned Fact Sheet Builds on Peer Exchange Call Greatest Hits

The second "[Lessons Learned: Peer Exchange Calls](#)" [greatest hits fact sheet](#) summarizes top takeaways shared by Better Buildings Residential



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.

January 22

**Residential Energy Efficiency
Customer Service Best
Practices**
12:30–2:00 PM EST
[Register now](#)

Network members. 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 that members shared during fall 2014 Peer Exchange Calls:



- Water conservation combined with energy efficiency can help mitigate the split-incentive dynamic in multifamily situations. Building owners often pay for water use, while tenants pay for energy use, so measures to conserve both are attractive for both parties to implement.
- Although energy efficiency might not be at the top of homeowners' minds during disaster recovery, it is still a good time to encourage customers to incorporate energy efficiency into their rebuilding plans.
- When engaging faith-based organizations, boost participation by showing congregation members that fees related to their own home energy assessments will help low-income individuals.

Read the [full document](#) for more lessons learned.

Self-Assessment and Relationships Beyond the Point of Contact Play Key Roles in Partnerships

Better Buildings Residential Network members that participated in the October 23, 2014, "[Voluntary Initiative on Partnerships: Toolkit](#)

Trends in Real Estate and Energy Efficiency

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:

- October 23, 2014: [Voluntary Initiative on Partnerships: Toolkit Training Webinar](#)
- October 23, 2014: [Crowd Funding: Enabling Small Investors to Help Fund Business Loans for Energy Efficiency Upgrades](#)

Related Events

[ASHRAE 2015 Winter Conference](#)

January 24–28, 2015
 Chicago, IL

[Midwest Energy Solutions Conference](#)

January 28–30, 2015
 Chicago, IL

[ACI Northwest Regional Home](#)

[Training](#)™ webinar learned that setting clear and mutually understood expectations with partner organizations is essential, because commitments will likely be different with different groups (e.g., nonprofits, utilities, etc.). Other tips from the call included:

- Before approaching partners, use the toolkit's [self-assessment template](#) to help define how partners can help your organization achieve its goals and mission.
- Partnerships are not just between organizations but also between individuals; that said, it is helpful to cultivate multiple relationships with people in your partner organization in case of personnel shifts.

Get more tips like these by viewing the [Peer Exchange Call summary](#) and exploring the [Partnerships Toolkit](#).

Local Energy Alliance Program Launches Carbon Credit Initiative

The [Local Energy Alliance Program](#) (LEAP), a Virginia-based Better Buildings Residential Network member, recently [announced](#) the launch of its Save a Ton Program. The new initiative allows companies and individuals to buy carbon credits to offset their carbon footprint while also supporting LEAP's mission to bring home energy upgrades to low-income communities. LEAP has completed a rigorous process to verify the reduction of 996 tons of greenhouse gas emissions achieved through home energy upgrades. These reductions have been quantified as carbon credits through the Voluntary Carbon Standard (VCS).

According to LEAP, the initial round of carbon credits is equal to taking 133 homes off the grid for a year, or 203 cars off the road. The credits were created as part of LEAP's Weatherization Innovation Pilot Program (WIPP) that upgraded 830 low-income, multifamily units in



[Watch](#) LEAP Executive Director Cynthia Adams' local television news interview about the new Save a Ton Program.

[Performance Conference](#)

February 2–3, 2015
Seattle, WA

[Association of Energy Services Professionals 2015 National Conference and Expo](#)

February 9–12, 2015
Lake Buena Vista, FL

[Energy Center of Wisconsin's Better Buildings: Better Business Illinois Conference](#)

February 26–27, 2015
Rosemont, Illinois

[Energy Center of Wisconsin's Better Buildings: Better Business Wisconsin Conference](#)

March 11–13, 2015
Wisconsin Dells, Illinois

[DOE's Better Buildings Summit](#)

May 27–29, 2015
Washington, DC

Share Your Lessons Learned on Home Energy Pros

[Join the conversation](#) on Home Energy Pros, where we are discussing the second, new "Lessons Learned: Peer Exchange Calls" greatest hits resource. Tell us what you think of this new resource and if you have any lessons learned to share.

Better Buildings Tweets Summit Hotel and Agenda Details

just three years. WIPP's success led to hundreds of thousands of dollars in energy cost savings for low-income households, and a portion of the WIPP projects were selected for inclusion in LEAP's Save a Ton Program.

"Our single-family and multifamily home energy improvement projects have already generated critical cost savings for residents and tenants. They've also saved energy and limited pollution right here in Virginia, and now companies and individuals can support more carbon reductions in their own community backyard by purchasing carbon credits from LEAP," said LEAP Executive Director Cynthia Adams.

[Learn more](#) about LEAP's new Save a Ton Program.

Vermont Member Hosts Homeowner Roundtable

Better Buildings Residential Network member

[NeighborWorks of Western Vermont](#) (NWWVT)

recently hosted a "[Road Map to Efficiency](#)" regional energy roundtable to offer tools, resources, and support to homeowners, energy committees, and interested community members.

Presenters from Green Mountain Power, New England Grassroots Fund, Vermont Climate Energy Action Network, and Vermont Energy Education Program led an open discussion on obtaining construction management for energy efficiency projects, on-bill repayment for residential efficiency projects, advice for starting an energy committee, and ideas for spurring action in communities.

"We want to empower community members and energy committees to confidently navigate their 'road map' to energy efficiency," NWWVT Communications Director Mary Lamson said. "Roundtables are an easy way to get a lot of information on an array of topics in a one-stop-shop setting."

[Learn more](#) about NWWVT.



Better Buildings took to Twitter to announce the [agenda at-a-glance](#), as well as [hotel room block availability](#) for the [2015 Better Buildings Summit](#).

Follow [@BetterBldgsDOE](#) and [#BBSummit2015](#) on Twitter for the latest summit updates.

Spread the Energy-Saving Holiday Cheer



DOE's [latest blog](#) has everything your customers need to make this their greenest holiday season yet, from energy-efficient decor to holiday party heating tips. Spread the holiday cheer by sharing these [energy-saving tips](#) on Twitter, Facebook, or in your organization's newsletter.

Quotable

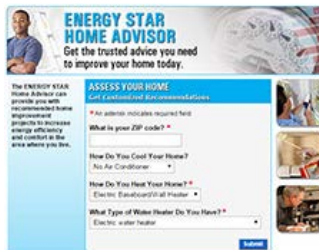
"I receive notice of the outstanding information sessions that the Better Buildings Residential Network

DOE and EPA Announce New ENERGY STAR Home Advisor

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) launched the

[ENERGY STAR® Home Advisor](#), an online tool designed to help

Americans save money and energy by improving the energy efficiency of their homes through recommended, customized, and prioritized home improvement projects.



“When homeowners take advantage of this important tool and increase the energy efficiency of their homes, many families will notice savings on energy bills and improvements in the comfort of their homes,” EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy said.

The ENERGY STAR Home Advisor guides homeowners through a do-it-yourself energy assessment to create an ENERGY STAR home profile. Based on the newly created profile, the tool provides customized, prioritized recommendations for improvements. From these recommendations, users can create their own to-do lists of projects and update their home profiles over time as they make improvements. The home profiles can also be printed and used as a marketing advantage when homeowners sell their homes.

[Learn more](#) about the ENERGY STAR Home Advisor tool.

provides and participate in as many of them as I can. Thanks for making this excellent network possible!”

– John Terborgh of [Efficiency Vermont](#), a Residential Network member, on the usefulness of Peer Exchange Calls

*Accessing Home Energy Pros

Non-Members of the Residential Network:

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

Program Design and Customer Experience Solutions

Clean Energy Works Taps Smart Market to Help Homeowners Beat the “Brrr” and Save

Better Buildings Residential Network member [Clean Energy Works](#) (CEW) is giving away “smart” thermostats to the first 500 homeowners who sign up for a free 100-point performance check of their homes by the end of December 2014 and complete two energy efficiency upgrade measures by the end of February 2015. Eligible upgrade measures include additional insulation, double-pane windows, and high-efficiency furnaces and hot water heaters.



Marshall Runkel adjusts the Nest Learning Thermostat that optimizes the energy upgrades he is making to his North Portland home. Photo: Jonathan House

The promotion is part of CEW's [pilot project with Nest](#), the creator of the Nest Learning Thermostat™, to give homeowners better control of energy savings and comfort. While most homes are left at one temperature day and night, the Nest thermostat learns homeowners' schedules and preferences to program itself. The smart model turns to an energy-efficient “away” temperature when homeowners are gone.

“Now I've got a smart thermostat programming my furnace,” said Marshall Runkel, a former Portland, Oregon, home performance contractor and current CEW staff member. Runkel, who has already taken advantage of the deal, said the thermostat mastered his family's routines within a few months.

[Learn more](#) about CEW.

Meet the Members

Local Governments Give Boost to Residential Network

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

- In the [City of Urbana, Illinois](#), 45 businesses participated in the Ameren Illinois Utilities ActOnEnergy program in 2013, resulting in more than 2 million kilowatt-hours of annual energy savings.
- [Bates County, Missouri](#), is home to an 11,000-panel solar farm that generates 10% of the Town of Butler, Missouri's power needs.
- The [City of Aspen, Colorado, Utilities and Environmental Initiatives](#) help residents reach their energy efficiency goals through rebates, incentives, and energy assessment programs.
- The [Town of Blacksburg, Virginia](#), has signed the U.S. Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement to commit to reducing greenhouse gas emissions within the community.
- The [City of Takoma Park, Maryland](#), is one of 52 quarterfinalists competing in the Georgetown University Energy Prize to earn \$5 million to support local energy efficiency programs.

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

Resource Corner

Read the Latest News and Reports

- "[Another Reason to Be Thankful](#)" covers Better Buildings Residential Network member Efficiency Maine's rebates that are available to homeowners who hire the program's registered contractors to undertake eligible efficiency improvements (*Boothbay Register*, November 2014).

- “[#AskEnergySaver: Weatherization](#)” shares answers to consumers’ top home heating and cooling questions, from attic ventilation advice to window caulking tips (DOE, November 2014).
- “[Congratulations to the Home Performance with ENERGY STAR Housing Innovation Award Winners](#)” highlights the participating contractors DOE recognized for excelling in the areas of sales and marketing, industry leadership, high energy savings, and customer relations (*Home Energy* magazine, November 2014).
- “[Watts in a Drop of Water: Savings at the Water-Energy Nexus](#)” draws from existing data to develop national energy savings estimates associated with water savings, including energy used in water delivery, heating, and treatment (American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy [ACEEE], November 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.

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/bbrn