



RESIDENTIAL NETWORK

Network View Newsletter

News From the Field

Motivate Energy Upgrades With New Network Incentives Toolkit

The Better Buildings Residential Network has developed a [Designing Incentives Toolkit](#) to help energy efficiency organizations design incentives that motivate potential customers to act by lowering the risk, decreasing the cost, or offering additional benefits with home energy upgrades. Many residential energy efficiency programs have found incentives to be an effective way to overcome market barriers, attract customer and contractor attention, and encourage homeowners to invest in assessments and upgrades.

This toolkit marks the second Residential Network Voluntary Initiative—which provides a forum for members to address shared challenges with solutions—and includes templates, tools, guides, and examples

Voluntary Initiatives Get Social—Take Part

The next Better Buildings Residential Network Voluntary Initiative will focus on leveraging messages for social media to effectively use these networks to encourage homeowners to undertake energy upgrades. Members are invited to participate in the creation of a Social Media Messaging Toolkit, which will provide ideas, templates, examples, and case studies related to social media messaging. Email [Better Buildings Residential Network Support](#) to get involved.

March 2015

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that use incentives to:

- Encourage homeowners to sign up for the program and move through the process quickly.
- Motivate homeowners to move beyond a home energy assessment.
- Increase the amount of energy savings achieved in each home.
- Support the development of the home performance industry in a new market.

Thank you to the Residential Network member volunteers who helped made this toolkit possible by providing resources, feedback, and review:

- Sean Bleything, [Vermont Energy Investment Corporation](#)
- Phillip Cameron, [Energy Conservation Works](#)
- Erendira Cruz, [Sustainable Living Center](#)
- Susan Davison, [Center for Sustainable Energy](#)
- Kathryn Eggers, [Elevate Energy](#)
- Erik Gilbert, [New York State Energy Research and Development Authority \(NYSERDA\)](#)
- Candace Gossen, [San Juan Islands Conservation District](#)
- Brian Henderson, [National Association of State Energy Officials](#)
- Barbara Hernesman, [CalCERTS, Inc.](#)
- Kimberly Loewen, [Elevate Energy](#)
- Don MacOdrum, [Home Performance Guild of Oregon](#)
- John Madden, [Light House Sustainable Building Centre](#)
- Tim Miller, [Clean Energy Works](#)
- Bill Mitchell, [NYSERDA](#)
- Craig Savage, [Building Media, Inc.](#)
- Jeremy Scharfenberg, [City of Columbia, Missouri](#)
- Jerry Schechter, [City of Kansas City, Missouri](#)
- Kevin Schleith, [Building Sustainable Solutions, LLC](#)
- Scott Tess, [City of Urbana, Illinois](#)

[Professionals Bring Expertise to the Network](#)

- [Spring Your Reading List Forward With New Reports and Blogs](#)



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 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.

- Dawn Hjelseth, [green|spaces](#)
- Zaheen Hussain, [GTECH Strategies](#)
- Ted Kidd, [Energy Efficiency Specialists](#)
- Toni Turnbull, [CalCERTS, Inc.](#)
- Michael Walton, [green|spaces](#)
- Kelsey Horton, [Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance](#)

Start using the [Designing Incentives Toolkit](#) today and [sign up](#)* to join the “Voluntary Initiative on Incentives: Toolkit Training Webinar” Peer Exchange Call on Thursday, March 26, at 12:30 p.m. Eastern.

New Better Buildings Summit Residential Sessions Engage Energy Professionals

This year’s U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) [Better Buildings Summit](#), taking place May 27 to 29, 2015, will be the first to engage the residential sector with [targeted sessions](#) for home performance professionals. Join us in Washington, D.C., to network with other Better Buildings Residential Network members and discuss a vision for the coming year, including how to overcome sector-specific challenges and tips to maximize the impact of the Residential Network’s energy-saving achievements. There will also be a Residential Network member and Georgetown University Energy Prize participant meet-up on Wednesday, May 27.



Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz welcomed participants to the 2014 Better Buildings Summit.

Speakers from Residential Network member organizations [American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy](#) (ACEEE), [Clean Energy Works](#), [Community Home Energy Retrofit Project](#), [Efficiency Maine](#), [Elevate Energy](#), [Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance](#), [green|spaces](#), [Local Energy Alliance Program](#), and [Michigan Saves](#) will help host the following residential sessions throughout the summit:

March 26

Voluntary Initiative on Incentives: Toolkit Training Webinar

12:30–2:00 PM EST

[Register now](#)

Fostering Behavior Change in the Energy Efficiency Market

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:

- February 26, 2015: [Incorporating Weather Data Into Energy Savings Calculations](#)
- February 26, 2015: [Generating Energy Efficiency Project Leads and Allocating Leads to Contractors](#)
- February 12, 2015: [Coordinating With Corporate and Institutional Affiliate Programs](#)
- February 12, 2015: [Financing Multifamily Energy Efficiency Upgrades](#)
- January 22, 2015: [Trends in Real Estate and Energy Efficiency](#)

- Staged Upgrade Initiative: Getting the Most Out of Every Improvement
- Scaling Residential Energy Efficiency Programs
- Solving the Problems of Residential Energy Efficiency Programs: The Mastermind Session
- Incentives: What Gets Homeowners to Move, What Not So Much
- Leveraging the Real Estate Industry to Increase Energy Efficiency Upgrades
- Engaging the Homeowner to Learn About Energy Efficiency

[Learn more](#) and [register](#) for the Better Buildings Summit by May 3 to take advantage of discounted hotel rates.

Engage Real Estate Agents to Increase High-Performance Homes' Value Visibility

Busy real estate agents sometimes view completing green Multiple Listing Service (MLS) fields as as time spent away from selling homes. Better Buildings Residential Network members that participated on the January 22 "[Trends in Real Estate and Energy Efficiency](#)"" Peer Exchange Call learned that offering green real estate classes that provide continuing education units incentivizes agents to take the trainings and provides a forum to improve the rate at which green MLS fields are completed. Here are a few other tips from the call:

- Real estate agents know how to sell homes using visible aspects (e.g., granite countertops), but energy efficiency is an invisible, intangible selling point. Reframe energy-saving concepts when engaging agents by highlighting the direct benefit, such as reduced utility costs.
- Highlight the concept that as utility rates and energy usage increase, so does consumer demand for high-performance homes; there is increasing opportunity for real estate agents to market energy efficiency as a premium.
- Use analogies to convert energy usage (e.g., kilowatt-hours) to more tangible metrics (e.g., power used to operate an appliance).

Related Events

[DOE's "Demonstration of the Better Buildings Residential Program Solution Center" Webinar](#)

April 1, 2015
3:00–4:00 PM EDT

[Home Performance with ENERGY STAR Partner Meeting](#)

May 4, 2015
New Orleans, LA

[2015 ACI National Home Performance Conference and Trade Show](#)

May 4–7, 2015
New Orleans, LA

[DOE's Better Buildings Summit](#)

May 27–29, 2015
Washington, DC

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

August 4–6, 2015
Buffalo, NY

Home Energy Pros Spotlight*

[Join the conversation](#) on Home Energy Pros, where members are discussing the Better Buildings Summit as an opportunity to network with residential energy efficiency professionals.

Get more tips like these by viewing the [Peer Exchange Call summary](#)*

Join a Better Buildings Residential Program Solution Center Demonstration

Hundreds of users have already accessed the [Better Buildings Residential Program Solution Center](#).

Join DOE's live Solution Center demonstration on April 1, 2015, from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. Eastern for a guided tour of the resources, step-by-step instructions, and proven approaches you could be missing. This free, one-of-a-kind tool can help

programs quickly adopt tester innovations, minimize trial and error, and achieve success throughout a program's stages. The Solution Center is applicable to a wide range of energy efficiency program administrators, businesses involved in the energy efficiency industry, and other market actors.

[Register for the webinar](#) to learn how to use the tool and how the Solution Center can help you design, implement, market, support, and evaluate residential energy efficiency programs. If you are unable to attend the webinar, you can explore the Solution Center on your own time using this previous demonstration [presentation](#) and [video recording](#).

Better Buildings Neighborhood Program Releases Building Upgrade Data

The Better Buildings Neighborhood Program is pleased to release [building upgrade-level data](#) on single-family homes upgraded through partner programs between July 1, 2010, and September 30, 2013.



Secretary Moniz #TheDress Debate SolvesWith LEDs



U.S. Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz used #TheDress debate on Twitter to [promote](#) the energy-efficient benefits of light-emitting diode bulbs by tweeting "It's brown and blue. Good lighting is everything."

Quotable

"Efficiency Maine's trade allies are instrumental in helping Mainers access cost-effective energy efficiency. They are the drivers of the growing energy efficiency industry in Maine."

— Anne Stephenson, director of communications for Better Buildings Residential Network member [Efficiency Maine](#), in [honoring](#) Maine contractor Evergreen Home Performance for its contributions to Efficiency Maine's residential programs

*Accessing Home Energy Pros

Non-Members of the Residential Network: The [Better Buildings Residential Network Group on Home Energy Pros](#) is open

These data, reported to DOE by program partners on a quarterly basis, encompasses 75,110 buildings and is the largest dataset of its kind to be made publicly available. Interested researchers can find information about energy efficiency measures installed, estimated energy savings, upgrade cost, loan amount, and time from energy assessment to upgrade completion, by Better Buildings partner programs.

This data release is part of DOE's Open Energy Information initiative to modernize government information resources and make them open and machine readable. This initiative facilitates data access to empower the energy community. Please contact [Dale Hoffmeyer](#) if you have any questions about the data.

Financing Solutions

PowerSaver Loan Upcoming Deadline Can Entice Homeowners to Act Fast for Savings

Programs can encourage homeowners who might be on the fence about whether to invest in energy upgrades to take advantage of the May 4, 2015, U.S. Federal Housing Administration's PowerSaver loan application deadline. PowerSaver, a low-interest loan pilot program supported by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), helps homeowners finance energy-saving home improvement projects to optimize home performance by:



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.

- Replacing doors and windows
- Upgrading hot water systems and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning units
- Installing renewable energy systems (e.g., solar panels, small wind power systems)
- Upgrading a whole home through the Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® program
- Improving energy efficiency as part of a major renovation (e.g., as part of a home purchase or refinancing).

Interested homeowners should act soon, since May 4 is the last day to submit a loan application to a [lender for the program](#).

[Learn how](#) to find a PowerSaver lender to get started. Explore more [financing solutions](#) in the Better Buildings Residential Program Solution Center.

Fannie Mae Discounts Loans for Energy-Efficient Multifamily Properties

Energy-efficient multifamily buildings can cash in on more than just energy savings through Fannie Mae's [new multifamily loans](#). Multifamily rental properties consisting of five or more units that are otherwise eligible for a purchase or refinance loan and certified by a recognized energy standard (e.g., ENERGY STAR, LEED®, Enterprise Green Communities®) are eligible to apply for a discount. Approved properties are given 10 basis points* off of finance



charges on loans secured by apartment buildings with certified energy efficiency standards. If the property is subsidized affordable housing, it could also obtain the 10-basis-point discount on loans to make energy efficiency-related repairs and improvements using Fannie Mae's Green Preservation or M-PIRE (Multifamily Property Improvements to Reduce Energy) loans.

To demonstrate what 10 basis points means in real money, Fannie Mae provided the following example: If the market interest rate is 4% on a multifamily loan, the rate with the new discount would be 3.9%. On a \$10 million loan with a 30-year amortization, the property owner would save \$95,000 in interest payments over a 10-year term. These savings are in addition to the reduced utility and operating costs property owners will achieve through efficient equipment and energy upgrades.

[Learn more](#) about Fannie Mae's new multifamily loan product and find more multifamily resources in the [Better Buildings Residential Program Solution Center](#).

**A basis point is a unit equal to one hundredth of a percentage point. Basis points in the financial industry denote a rate change in a financial product, or the difference between two interest rates.*

Meet the Members

Building Performance Professionals and Others Bring Their Expertise to the Residential Network

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

- [North Carolina Building Performance Association](#) is a nonprofit trade association of professionals seeking to improve the energy performance of North Carolina homes through marketing, workforce development, consumer education, and more.

- [Building Performance Institute](#) develops standards for energy efficiency assessment and upgrade work using a consensus-based process to create professional certifications for home performance professionals and organizations.
- [Neil Kelly Co.](#) is a green remodeling company based in Portland, Oregon, and Seattle, Washington, that specializes in custom home design and remodeling; energy-efficiency home upgrades; and solar panel sale, design, and installation in residential neighborhoods.
- [North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association](#) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the creation of clean energy jobs, economic opportunities, and affordable energy for residential North Carolina residents through public policy and market development.
- [EnergyCheckup, a service of GeoPraxis, Inc.](#), is an online home energy rating provider that delivers a variety of residential energy and inspection services, such as training for real estate agents and customized energy software to meet local utilities' needs.

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

Spring Your Reading List Forward With New Reports and Blogs

Catch up on the latest news and reports ranging from how energy efficiency affects homebuyers' purchasing decisions to making energy savings fun for all involved:

- [An Early Look at Energy Efficiency and Contributory Value](#) examines how residential properties' energy-efficient elements affected homebuyers' purchasing decisions in the greater Denver, Colorado, metropolitan area (Colorado Energy Office, February 2015).

- [Accessing Secondary Markets as a Capital Source for Energy Efficiency Finance Programs: Program Design Considerations for Policymakers and Administrators](#) analyzes past secondary market transactions of energy efficiency loans and discusses their key stakeholders, primary program objectives, and key takeaways for future energy efficiency deployment strategies (State and Local Energy Efficiency Action Network, February 2015).
- [Gamified Energy Efficiency Programs](#) reviews the characteristics of game-like, energy-saving initiatives and how they are used to motivate local consumers to reduce energy consumption (ACEEE, February 2015).
- “[Why We Don't Have to Choose Between Energy Efficiency Programs and Market-Driven Solutions](#)” is the first in a three-part series in which ACEEE investigates the best applications for energy efficiency programs and market-driven solutions in scaling the development of energy productivity (ACEEE, February 2015).

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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