

The Better Buildings 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 Peer Exchange Calls held during winter 2014-15, with the call title and date listed. Full summaries of each call are available on the [Residential Network's Group on the Home Energy Pros website](#).*

- ▶ **Program Design and Customer Experience:** Consider requiring homeowners to meet minimum efficiency standards before receiving solar incentives. A poll conducted by the Center for Sustainable Energy showed that a homeowner's likelihood to install energy efficiency measures decreased after installing solar arrays. Also limit the size of solar systems, as oversized systems have high upkeep costs and future home efficiency upgrades can create overproduction and issues with the local utility grid.

- "Combining Solar and Home Performance Services," December 11, 2014

- ▶ **Marketing and Outreach:** Encourage homeowners to think about home performance maintenance as they do their cars. Preventative care for home systems (such as heating and cooling systems) can help avoid emergency situations. Because service calls and scheduled maintenance visits create an opportunity for contractors to market home performance services, the Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance created marketing materials that contractors could leave behind with homeowners.

- "Leveraging Service Calls and Emergency Repairs," November 13, 2014

- ▶ **Contractor Engagement and Workforce Development:** When homeowners were assigned a contractor based on the contractor's capacity, location, and the complexity of the upgrade, more homeowners completed the registration process.

- "Generating Energy Efficiency Project Leads and Allocating Leads to Contractors," February 26, 2015

- ▶ **Market Position and Business Models:** To improve the rate at which green multiple listing service (MLS) fields are completed, programs can offer green real estate classes, providing realtors continuing education units (CEUs) and a forum for them to discuss green MLS questions and high performance homes sales tips.

- "Trends in Real Estate and Energy Efficiency," January 22, 2015

- ▶ **Evaluation and Data Collection:** Weather normalization is important for accurately comparing the energy use of a home before and after upgrades. The Vermont Energy Investment Corporation (VEIC) markets efficiency opportunities to homeowners by using a model that eliminates variability due to weather changes and predicts how an upgrade will improve a home's energy use.

- "Incorporating Weather Data Into Energy Savings Calculations," February 26, 2015

Peer Exchange Calls are scheduled on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month from 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. and from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. Eastern. The schedule is announced on the Better Buildings Residential Network Group on the Home Energy Pros website and in the *Better Buildings Network View* newsletter.

Topics include:

- ▶ Contractor Engagement and Workforce Development
- ▶ Evaluation and Data Collection
- ▶ Financing
- ▶ Market Position and Business Models
- ▶ Marketing and Outreach
- ▶ Program Design and Customer Experience

Since the Residential Network launched in April 2013, it has hosted **81 calls with more than 1,850 attendees.**

For more information, contact bbresidentialnetwork@ee.doe.gov.

*DOE shares the items above as information, rather than endorsement.