

News From the Field

Tailor Your Social Media Marketing With New Network Toolkit

The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE's) Better Buildings Residential Network has developed a [Social Media Toolkit](#) to help residential energy efficiency programs assess and determine the best social media platforms for their programs to engage

potential home energy upgrade customers by building brand awareness. Thinking beyond the one-way conversation of traditional publishing and achieving a two-way dynamic using social media networks allows your program to determine what potential customers value, so your marketing efforts can be tailored more effectively.



This toolkit is the third Residential Network Voluntary Member Initiative—which provides a forum for members to address shared challenges with solutions—and includes tools, resources, and examples to help your residential energy efficiency program:

- Select social media platform(s) based on your organization's goals and time availability.
- Learn the dos and don'ts of social media to avoid common pitfalls that can end up backfiring.
- Hear from other programs that are already utilizing social media so as not to reinvent the wheel.

DOE would like to thank the Residential Network member volunteers who helped made this toolkit possible by providing resources, feedback, and review:

- Charles Adair, [Duke Carbon Offsets Initiative](#)
- Jennifer Cole, [Duke University](#)
- Susan Davison, [Center for Sustainable Energy](#)
- Cory Downs, [City of Chula Vista, Conservation Section](#)
- Keith Epstein, [South Burlington Energy Committee](#)
- Jeff Fish, [City of Sunnyvale, California](#)
- Kelsey Horton, [Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance](#)

July/August 2015

In This Issue

- [New Toolkit to Tailor Your Social Media Marketing](#)
- [Register for Upcoming Peer Exchange Calls](#)
- [New Lessons Learned Expand Peer Exchange Call Greatest Hits](#)
- [California Member Taps Into July 4th Seasonal Event](#)
- [Crowdsourcing Initiative Seeks Problems to Solve](#)
- [Gain Easier Access to Residential Energy Best Practices](#)
- [Network Welcomes Public Utilities, Home Developers](#)
- [Catch Up on the Latest Residential Reads](#)

JOIN THE RESIDENTIAL NETWORK »

Peer Exchange Calls

Non-members wishing to gain access to these topical calls and many other valuable resources are invited to [join the Better Buildings Residential Network](#) to participate.

July 23

Think Again! A Fresh Look at Home Performance Business Models and Service Offerings
12:30–2:00 PM EDT

Hit the Road: Lessons From

- Marjorie Isaacson, [Elevate Energy](#)
- Gina Mathias, [City of Takoma Park, Maryland](#)
- Ryan Miller, [North Carolina Building Performance Association](#)
- Joshua Moore, [Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance](#)
- Sharon Pearson, [The Oberlin Project](#)
- Lorelei Penera, [City of Chula Vista, Conservation Section](#)
- Issac Smith, [Center for Energy and Environment \(CEE\)](#)
- Hannah Strong, [CEE](#)
- Stephanie Swanson, [Clean Energy Works](#)
- Peter Swinton, [District of Columbia Sustainable Energy Utility](#)
- Jacqueline Wiese, [Elevate Energy](#)

Start using the [Social Media Toolkit](#) today to learn how to create, curate, and share your program's content and grow your marketing networks.

New Lessons Learned Expand Peer Exchange Call Greatest Hits

The third [Lessons Learned: Peer Exchange Calls](#) “greatest hits” fact sheet summarizes top takeaways shared by Better Buildings Residential 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 winter 2014-15 Peer Exchange Calls:

- **Marketing and Outreach:** Encourage homeowners to think about home performance maintenance as they do their cars. Preventative care for home systems (e.g., heating and cooling systems) can help avoid emergency situations, and scheduled maintenance visits create an opportunity for contractors to market home performance services.
- **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.
- **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 real estate agents continuing education units and a forum for them to discuss green MLS questions and high-performance homes sales tips.

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

California Member Marches in July 4th Parade to Promote Home Energy Upgrades

Residential Network member [Community Home Energy Retrofit Project](#) (CHERP) marched in the Claremont, California, Independence Day parade on July 4, 2015, to raise community awareness of home

Applying a National Campaign to a Local Context
3:00–4:30 PM EDT

August 13

Assessments: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly
12:30–2:00 PM EDT

Tailored Marketing for Low-Income and Under-represented Population Segments
3:00–4:30 PM EDT

August 20

Staged Upgrade Initiative Program Design
3:00–4:30 PM EDT

August 27

Peer Exchange Calls will be taking a summer break. We look forward to regrouping on September 10.

September 10

Mastermind: Program TBD
12:30–2:00 PM EDT

The Other 15%: Expanding Energy Efficiency to Rural Populations
3:00–4:30 PM EDT

September 24

Audience Segmentation and Analysis Strategies for Targeted Marketing
12:30–2:00 PM EDT

Find the Latest Peer Exchange Call Summaries*

[Review summaries](#) from the following calls:

- June 18, 2015:
[Staged Upgrades as a Strategy for Residential Energy Efficiency](#)
- June 11, 2015:
[Shark Tank: Residential Energy Efficiency Edition](#)

Send Us Your Quiz

energy upgrades. An email campaign sent prior to the parade invited residents to participate and gave those who RSVP'd the [opportunity to sign-up](#) to receive information concerning upcoming CHERP workshops.



Photos: Lindsay McCord

Crowdsourcing Initiative Seeks Buildings-Related Problems to Solve

Calling all building technology innovators! DOE's Building Technologies Office is partnering with the successful SunShot Catalyst crowdsourcing initiative to identify and solve problems related to software development, data, and/or automation. In the first "Ideation" phase of the initiative, those working in the building technology arena are invited to submit problem statements describing challenges that need to be overcome in order to promote better engagement with building occupants and to improve the ability to balance building energy and occupant comfort objectives. In addition to submitting problem statements, participants are invited to vote and comment on ideas that have already been submitted. [Browse](#) buildings-related statements that have been submitted.

Individuals who submit a problem statement will have a chance to win a \$1,000 cash prize! So what are you waiting for? [Submit](#) your problem statement by completing the following:

- List a title and description of the problem statement.
- Make sure that "Ideation" is selected in the Campaign drop-down box.
- Use the "Buildings" tag for your problem statement.
- Add up to five URL links to the idea (optional).

Competition phases following the [Ideation phase](#) will focus on developing products that address submitted problem statements, and contestants will have a chance at up to \$1,000,000 in total prizes.

For more information about this initiative and complete contest rules, visit the [SunShot Catalyst website](#).

Residential Energy Efficiency Solutions

New Features Provide Easier Access to

Questions

The Residential Network is developing an online residential energy efficiency quiz. Does your organization have multiple-choice quiz questions you think would be good additions? [Email us](#) your ideas.

Related Events

[DOE's "Put New Tools and Content on the Building America Solution Center to Work for You" Webinar](#)

July 22, 2015

3:00–4:30 PM EDT

[Home Performance with ENERGY STAR \(HPwES\) "HPXML Implementation: Possibilities and Experiences" Webinar](#)

Join members of the HPwES team and other industry leaders to discuss the implementation of HPXML, which is a standardized data format that can reduce costs as well as paperwork.

August 5, 2015

2:00–3:30 PM EDT

[International Energy Program Evaluation Conference](#)

August 11–13, 2015

Long Beach, CA

[2015 North Carolina Building Performance Conference](#)

September 1–3, 2015

Wilmington, NC

[2015 ACI Mid-Atlantic Regional Home Performance Conference](#)

October 20–21, 2015

Cherry Hill, NJ

[2015 Southeast Energy Efficiency Alliance \(SEEA\) and Association of Energy Services Professionals \(AESP\) Southeast Conference](#)

October 28–30, 2015

Atlanta, GA

Have an event you want

Residential Energy Efficiency Best Practices

New features have been added to the [Better Building Residential Program Solution Center](#) to improve your access to specific topics and resources:

- **Shortcuts:** Shortcuts link to handbooks that provide answers to commonly asked questions. July shortcuts are:
 - [How do I research the energy efficiency potential in my community?](#)
 - [How do I recruit contractors?](#)
 - [Do I need to offer financing?](#)
- **Quick Links:** Quick Links are key topics that many residential energy efficiency programs need to address. By selecting a Quick Link, users see a curated list of resources related to the topic, including case studies, presentations, tools, calculators, templates, and more. The Solution Center features nearly 50 Quick Links ranging from [Energy Advisors](#) and [Loan Underwriting](#) to [Quality Assurance](#).
- **Proven Practices:** The Solution Center now includes regular posts about proven practices for residential energy efficiency. The first 'Proven Practices' post is listed below.

Visit the [Better Buildings Residential Program Solution Center](#) to explore these new features and [submit resources](#) to share with others.

Proven Practices Spotlight

Q: How can we jump-start our outreach to get better results?

A: Make upgrade benefits visible by [showcasing completed projects and actual results](#).



Visit the [Better Buildings Residential Program Solution Center](#) to learn more.

Meet the Members

Residential Network Welcomes Public Utilities,

featured? Email the details to [Better Buildings Residential Network Support](#).

Home Energy Pros Spotlight*

[Join the conversation](#) on Home Energy Pros where members are discussing the new "Lessons Learned: Peer Exchange Calls No. 3" tool.

Social Media Spotlight



As summer temperatures rise, homeowners are cranking up the air conditioners to stay cool. Air conditioners use about 5% of all the electricity produced in the United States, costing homeowners more than \$11 billion per year in energy costs. Help your Twitter followers and Facebook friends beat the heat efficiently by sharing DOE's [home cooling infographic](#) with your social media network.

Quotable



"The difference was immediately noticeable. The upstairs was unbearable in the summer, and we would often sleep downstairs because it was so hot. But now the temperature is much more even throughout the house. Our house truly feels like a home."

Home Developers

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



- [Consumers Energy](#) is an electric and natural gas utility serving millions of Michigan residents that helps homeowners save energy and money through rebates and energy-efficient products.
- [Entergy Texas](#) distributes clean power throughout Southeast Texas and encourages residential energy customers to reduce energy consumption through home energy upgrades.
- [Potomac Edison](#) is an electric utility regulated by FirstEnergy Corporation, which offers a wide range of energy and energy-related services and products to Maryland and West Virginia residents.
- [Long Island Power Authority](#) in New York provides a number of clean energy projects to help support energy efficiency and renewable energy in the community.
- [FSL Home Improvement](#) is committed to improving Arizona home performance by providing training, consulting, and program development/administration in the residential energy sector.

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

– Brian and Sara Catlett, who undertook home energy upgrades through Residential Network member [Michigan Saves](#)

*Accessing Home Energy Pros

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](#).

Resource Corner

Catch Up on the Latest Residential Energy Briefings and Reports

Soaking up some rays this summer? Soak in the newest residential energy efficiency reads while you are at it:

- [Beyond Carrots for Utilities: A National Review of Performance Incentives for Energy Efficiency](#) is part one of a three-part study on utility business models for energy efficiency that utilize performance incentives to achieve cost and energy savings (American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy [ACEEE], June 2015).
- “[Creating an Effective Marketing Plan for Your Home Performance Business](#)” provides effective tips for home energy performance companies to inform customers of their offerings and promote energy efficiency (*Home Energy* magazine blog, June 2015).
- [Energy Efficiency in the United States: 35 Years and Counting](#)

examines progress made in energy efficiency since the conception of ACEEE in 1980 and discusses future opportunities to further reduce energy use in the United States (ACEEE, June 2015).

- [Everyone Benefits: Practices and Recommendations for Utility System Benefits of Energy Efficiency](#) explores the wide range of energy efficiency benefits within electric utility systems, describes how they are quantified by program administrators, and recommends improvements in analyzing cost-effectiveness screening (ACEEE, June 2015).
- [Multiple Benefits of Multifamily Energy Efficiency for Cost-Effectiveness Screening](#) focuses on the impacts of energy efficiency beyond energy savings and highlights multifamily programs that promote energy efficiency to achieve reduced maintenance and improved health and comfort (ACEEE, June 2015).
- [Program Design Lessons Learned \(Volume 1\)](#) draws on the insights DOE has gathered from its more than four years of administering the State Energy-Efficient Appliance Rebate Program (SEEARP) provides tips for designing and running an effective consumer-focused appliance rebate program (DOE's SEARP, June 2015).
- ["The Real Women of Home Performance"](#) is an informative blog series highlighting how women in the home performance industry are shaping market transformation, education, networking, and support (*Home Energy* magazine blog, June 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.

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](#).

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