

PMC-ND

(1.08.09.13)

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY  
OFFICE OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY  
NEPA DETERMINATION**

**RECIPIENT:** Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships (NEEP)**STATE:** MA

**PROJECT TITLE:** Advanced Building Construction: Guidance & Technical Assistance

<b>Funding Opportunity Announcement Number</b>	<b>Procurement Instrument Number</b>	<b>NEPA Control Number</b>	<b>CID Number</b>
DE-FOA-0002099	DE-EE0009084	GFO-0009084-001	GO9084

**Based on my review of the information concerning the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (authorized under DOE Policy 451.1), I have made the following determination:**

**CX, EA, EIS APPENDIX AND NUMBER:**

Description:

**A9 Information gathering, analysis, and dissemination** Information gathering (including, but not limited to, literature surveys, inventories, site visits, and audits), data analysis (including, but not limited to, computer modeling), document preparation (including, but not limited to, conceptual design, feasibility studies, and analytical energy supply and demand studies), and information dissemination (including, but not limited to, document publication and distribution, and classroom training and informational programs), but not including site characterization or environmental monitoring. (See also B3.1 of appendix B to this subpart.)

**A11 Technical advice and assistance to organizations** Technical advice and planning assistance to international, national, state, and local organizations.

Rationale for determination:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to provide funding to Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships (NEEP) to develop and streamline the energy code inspection process for prefabricated home construction. NEEP would further develop a standardized DOE field research methodology to include best practices for off-site and prefabricated construction methods. NEEP would also research and develop guidance on the performance of virtual inspections. As part of the project, NEEP would perform on-site visits to facilities that manufacture prefabricated components/modules in order to collect data on the performance of routine operations.

The project would be completed over three Budget Periods (BPs), with a Go/No-Go Decision Point in between each BP. BP1 activities would focus on industry research and development of pathways for improving code compliance and to stimulate the adoption of prefabricated buildings and homes. Proposed project activities for this period would be limited to stakeholder engagement (e.g. industry outreach, surveys) and data analysis/research. BP2 would focus on the development of technical resources and best practices for manufacturing prefabricated components and for off-site manufacturing, as well as the development and standardization of the virtual inspection processes. Proposed project activities would be limited to stakeholder engagement, development of educational/technical materials (e.g. diagrams, fact sheets, videos), and development of protocols and guidance for virtual inspections. BP3 would focus on stakeholder engagement and information sharing. Proposed project activities would include dissemination of information/results (e.g. via participation in conferences, workshops, webinars, etc.) and a pilot test of the virtual inspection standards/protocols developed previously.

NEEP would visit approximately 1 -2 manufacturing facilities that regularly produce prefabricated housing components and/or engage in off-site manufacturing, in order to perform the pilot test of virtual inspections described above. The exact locations for the site visits have not been selected, but would be selected after the project has begun, in coordination with industry stakeholders. The site visits would likely take place at locations within the states of VT, ME, NY, PA, IN or MO. Work activities to be performed during the site visits would be limited to observational data collection and reporting, using a DOE standard field research methodology. NEEP would not install any equipment at these site locations.

All project activities would be coordinated by NEEP. Project research, development, and stakeholder coordination and engagement activities would be performed at NEEP's office in Lexington, MA and at the office of its project

partner, Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (MEEA) in Chicago, IL. No facility modifications, construction of new facilities, ground disturbing activities or changes, to the use, mission, or operation of existing facilities would be required for any of the project activities. Likewise, no additional permits or authorizations would be required.

No significant health or safety hazards are anticipated for the performance of project work. Data collection would be performed by individuals trained in construction site safety, who would adhere to the established health and safety policies and procedures of each site location. NEEP and MEEA would observe all applicable Federal, state, and local health, safety, and environmental regulations.

## NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a final NEPA determination.

Notes:

Building Technologies Office

This NEPA determination does not require a tailored NEPA provision.

Review completed by Jonathan Hartman on 05/13/2020

## FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATIONS

The proposed action (or the part of the proposal defined in the Rationale above) fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix A or B to 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D. To fit within the classes of actions listed in 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B, a proposal must be one that would not: (1) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders; (2) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators), but the proposal may include categorically excluded waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment actions or facilities; (3) disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases; (4) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources, including, but not limited to, those listed in paragraph B(4) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B; (5) involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species, unless the proposed activity would be contained or confined in a manner designed and operated to prevent unauthorized release into the environment and conducted in accordance with applicable requirements, such as those listed in paragraph B(5) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B.

There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal.

The proposed action has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion. This proposal is not connected to other actions with potentially significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1)), is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)), and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211 concerning limitations on actions during preparation of an environmental impact statement.

The proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

## SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature:



Casey Strickland

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: 5/13/2020

## FIELD OFFICE MANAGER DETERMINATION

- Field Office Manager review not required  
 Field Office Manager review required

## BASED ON MY REVIEW I CONCUR WITH THE DETERMINATION OF THE NCO :

Field Office Manager's Signature:

Field Office Manager

Date: