

HES Innovation & Transformation Synopsis

In December 2013, the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) convened a conversation with stakeholders, the Home Energy Solutions (HES) Innovation & Transformation Workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to gather new ideas to improve HES for the participants, the vendors, and the ratepayers in general. The meeting's participants included vendors from both within and outside of the HES vendor network, utilities program administrators, representatives from the Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC), representatives of the Clean Energy Finance and Investment Authority, and members from interested associations and groups.

Comments were received on a wide range of topics. These topics included program design, data transparency, customer engagement, home energy labels, market transformation, quality assurance, and much more. To view all the written submitted comments visit the DEEP Energy Web Filings page at [http://www.dpuc.state.ct.us/DEEPEnergy.nsf/\\$EnergyView](http://www.dpuc.state.ct.us/DEEPEnergy.nsf/$EnergyView)

Below is a list of strategies and ideas that were collected on how to potentially improve the HES program in the short term:

1. Shifting or completely adopting the Mass Saves model by offering the audit and minor on-site measures at no cost and then following up with air sealing and insulation as add-on measures
2. Allowing for the purchase of HES "Gift Certificates" for people who would like to give a HES visit as a gift to friends and family
3. Promoting or mandating the use of a customer resource management database by HES vendors to better track their customer pipeline
4. Publicly displaying the results of the HES Vendor Scorecard to encourage higher scores and increase transparency to the consumers
5. Evaluate the acquisition cost associated with different forms of media and outreach to better spend marketing dollars
6. Evaluate any inconsistencies in the recommendation of insulation, a measure that is cost effective in a large percentage of homes. The recommendation rate of insulation could be observed by vendor, by town, and by service territory
7. Modifying or changing the HES Field Service Tool and software to produce more accurate data on cost-effective measures and generate more attractive presentations to the consumer
8. Establish a third party energy advisor who can independently advise consumers on efficiency measures
9. Simplify consumers' financing options for energy efficiency measures
10. Allow for Electronic signatures of property owners so that renters have one less barrier to entering HES
11. Target time of sale for home energy labeling to increase the awareness and importance of home performance
12. Evaluate the effects of increasing the rebates for add-on measures such as insulation
13. Develop a sliding incentive scale for consumers of different income levels

It is worth noting that the utilities have already implemented one of the recommendations that was offered by written comment. Recently the utilities expanded rebates to more cost-effective opportunities for insulation jobs (e.g. insulating basements).

Many comments that were received focused on issues that reached beyond the HES program. For instance many comments were submitted on how to foster the evolution of the entire residential energy performance industry in Connecticut. These comments will be the topic of future discussions as DEEP establishes the new Residential Energy Performance Roundtable series.

Residential Energy Performance Roundtable 2014

Many steps and decisions will be necessary to transform HES into a market-based industry. Similarly, many decisions that will need to be made will affect vendors outside of the HES program. As these policies are developed, DEEP would like to receive feedback and information from all stakeholders involved in the residential energy performance industry. For this reason, and in response to requests received during the workshop, it was concluded that holding future roundtable style discussions with interested parties throughout 2014 would be beneficial. If you would like to receive notice of those dates, please e-mail Debra Morrell at debra.morrell@ct.gov with "Residential Energy Performance Roundtable list" in the subject line.

DEEP plans to convene the roundtables on the second Wednesdays of alternating months from 8:00 to 10:00, generally at DEEP offices in New Britain.