

May 2011

Behavior Based Energy Efficiency Programs

What are behavior based energy efficiency Programs?

Behavior based energy efficiency programs focus on energy savings resulting from changes in individual or organizational behavior and decision-making. Examples of behavior based energy efficiency programs include

- Providing residential end-users with information on their energy use, comparisons with usage by others, goal setting, rewards and additional tactics that encourage efficient energy use.
- Assisting commercial end-users to benchmark their building(s) energy use and improve operating performance through building or equipment tune-ups and changes to O&M routines.

Background

Behavior based energy efficiency programs are growing in prominence around the country and represent a source of energy savings beyond traditional utility programs focused on encouraging adoption of EE technology. There is a substantial body of knowledge and experience associated with behavior change that is rooted in the social sciences. Waste management, healthcare and transportation industries have been applying behavior based approaches for some time. Utilities and others in the energy industry are now using it as a means for encouraging energy savings. While the promise of behavior based energy efficiency programs (in terms of energy savings) is significant, there is much to be learned about effective strategies and tactics to motivate consumers, energy savings persistence, and effective methods to evaluate the energy savings.

BPA is initiating a behavior change strategy which aims to enable, validate and increase the amount and

persistence of energy savings achieved through behavior based energy efficiency programs in the Northwest. BPA has initiated a regular meeting for customers to share information about behavior based programs. BPA will be examining best practices, using its evaluated custom program offering to encourage regional behavior based energy efficiency program activities and issuing a funding opportunity announcement for innovative behavior based energy efficiency pilot programs.

BPA's Objectives

- Monitor and assess national and regional behavior based energy efficiency programs and activities, identify and promote use of best practices.
- Create policies that help build program infrastructure that all Northwest public utilities can use to operate behavior based energy efficiency programs and achieve related energy savings.
- Collaborate with Northwest public utilities and market partners to implement and evaluate innovative behavior based energy efficiency pilot programs.

To learn more about behavior based energy efficiency programs visit www.bpa.gov/energy/n/behavior

Future Funding Opportunity

There is much to be learned about strategies and tactics that can best motivate behavior based energy efficiency for various target markets, as well as effective methods for validating energy savings and tracking persistence of savings over time. This summer BPA will release a funding opportunity

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announcement for innovative behavior based energy efficiency pilots. Resulting awards will partner with regional public utilities to test innovative behavior based energy efficiency approaches with promising, yet uncertain, benefits in terms of energy savings. These pilots may be independent of, or leverage, utility advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) investments.

BPA intends to make two to four awards with a total BPA contribution of up to \$300,000 per year to its public utility customers for competitively selected pilots. Proposed pilot programs may operate from one to three years, transitioning to use of BPA's evaluated custom program track to obtain further BPA support, if appropriate. Public utility customers may team up with other customers in a joint application, and include market partners as part of the proposal. Applications will be evaluated on the merits of the design features to be tested (innovation), sponsor commitment (utility staff, market partners, cost share), and the potential benefits to the region (energy savings, scalability). Pilots may include basic behavior-based program design elements, such as energy use feedback, benchmarking or comparisons, but must also employ additional innovative design features that encourage greater levels of customer engagement and greater levels of energy savings.

The funding opportunity announcement will be made through the BPA mailings, the BPA EE weekly announcements, and on the BPA EE behavior based energy efficiency webpage at www.bpa.gov/energy/n/behavior. Stay tuned.