



# GREATER ENERGY EFFICIENCY: HOME PERFORMANCE WITH ENERGY STAR

Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® is one of the new home energy efficiency services to be further developed and expanded by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the new Partnerships for Home Energy Efficiency. This service is offered by qualified home improvement contractors who can provide whole house solutions to high energy bills and uncomfortable homes. Supported by local sponsors, the contractors offering this service will do a comprehensive review of the home that includes its heating and cooling system, windows, insulation levels, and the flow of air into and out of the house. Based on these reviews, the contractors will offer solutions for fixing comfort problems and addressing high energy bills. They may also undertake the needed renovations. This integrated, comprehensive approach is based on industry best practices. Once the home improvements are completed, the contractor's work will be reviewed by the third-party sponsor to ensure a quality job.

Home Performance with ENERGY STAR is currently offered in 12 states with growing success (see page 2 for examples of leading programs). Under this joint initiative, Home Performance with ENERGY STAR will expand to more states. In addition, the Agencies will work to standardize protocols for contractors' whole house audits as well as technician certification and expand quality assurance mechanisms to support the program nationally. Home Performance with ENERGY STAR will be considered as a potential model for low income housing.

## NEAR-TERM MILESTONES

- ▶ The 12 active states or metropolitan areas in 2005 are New York, Wisconsin, California, Massachusetts, Missouri, Austin (TX), Atlanta (GA), Idaho, New Jersey, Colorado, Rhode Island, and Vermont
- ▶ Quality assurance mechanisms to be developed for organizations interested in fielding their own home contractors in 2006
- ▶ Support for the Building Performance Institute in developing technician certification standards nationally
- ▶ Testing Home Performance with ENERGY STAR as a delivery model for affordable housing

## Benefits to Homeowners



Homeowners taking advantage of Home Performance with ENERGY STAR will have a new service available to them as they

consider making improvements to their homes, no matter whether they wish to address comfort issues, reduce high energy bills, or remodel. This new service is identified by the distinctive ENERGY STAR label—the government-backed symbol for energy efficiency. It provides homeowners access to home professionals who

- ▶ are trained and qualified to apply industry best practices in diagnosing home energy issues and identifying home energy efficiency opportunities,
- ▶ can perform the work that homeowners decide to undertake or recommend other certified contractors,
- ▶ can provide access to easy-to-use financing in some cases, and
- ▶ will have the work quality verified by an independent third party.

With this new service, homeowners can have fewer winter drafts and cooler, more comfortable rooms during summer heat waves while saving money on their energy bills. Contractors and homeowners in the current program report total energy savings of 25 percent to 50 percent.

## Benefits to Contractors

Contractors offering Home Performance with ENERGY STAR can

- ▶ differentiate themselves to homeowners as businesses providing comprehensive home energy solutions and quality work, and
- ▶ expand their businesses to include all aspects of energy efficiency improvements.

This comprehensive service can mean larger jobs and potentially higher margins, although it may require learning new skills or teaming up with sub-contractors. To support these contractors, EPA, DOE and HUD are

- ▶ funding the Building Performance Institute (BPI) to expand its technician certification and contractor accreditation program nationally,
- ▶ developing contractor protocols to audit and improve a home, and
- ▶ educating homeowners about the benefits of energy efficiency and Home Performance with ENERGY STAR.

## Benefits to Energy Efficiency Program Sponsors

Utilities, state and local governments, and others that implement energy efficiency programs as a means of providing clean, low-cost reliable energy are finding Home Performance with ENERGY STAR a cost-effective program. Under the initiative, the Agencies will document and promote this program as a cost-effective approach for energy efficiency in the residential sector. The three federal Agencies will also consider Home Performance with ENERGY STAR as a delivery model for bringing energy efficiency to low income communities through efforts with HUD-related housing.

## For More Information

For more information, please see the *Partnerships for Home Energy Efficiency* summary document and visit [www.energystar.gov/homeperformance](http://www.energystar.gov/homeperformance).

### LEADERS IN HOME PERFORMANCE WITH ENERGY STAR

#### NEW YORK

The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority has helped improve the efficiency of more than 8,000 homes through its Home Performance with ENERGY STAR program. Homeowners have reaped substantial savings, and the market has accepted a comprehensive, building science-based approach to improving homes. Homeowners are willing to pay for real solutions, backed by quality assurance, so contractors are able to sustain robust businesses based on delivering reliable information and quality work.

#### WISCONSIN

The Wisconsin Focus on Energy program has shown that remodeling contractors can be convinced of the value of bringing in third-party home performance consultants to provide recommendations for, and independent validation of the quality of, energy and comfort-related home improvements. Wisconsin helped improve more than 1,000 homes in 2004 under Home Performance with ENERGY STAR.

#### AUSTIN, TEXAS

Austin Energy is enhancing its residential program by helping contractors qualify for certification by the Building Performance Institute (BPI), thus establishing a recognizable credential for quality home energy-related improvements. Austin's use of BPI serves as a national model for technician certification and contractor accreditation, lending technicians credibility with homeowners in the market for retrofits. In 2004, Austin Energy's Home Performance with ENERGY STAR program helped improve 1,350 homes.

#### CALIFORNIA

In a project funded by the California Public Utility Commission, the California Building Performance Contractors Association has shown that contractors can successfully deliver services that embrace home performance contracting principles and practices, even in the absence of special homeowner or contractor incentives or rebates. This bolsters the immediate viability of the approach on a national scale, recognizing that the federal, state, and utility support for such a program can help bring the approach to market more quickly. This Home Performance with ENERGY STAR project based in the San Francisco Bay Area is anticipated to improve more than 1,200 homes in 2005.