



**Better Buildings Residential Network Program  
Sustainability Peer Exchange Call Series:  
*Community Readiness Assessments***

***Call Slides and Discussion Summary***

December 5, 2013

# Agenda

- Call Logistics and Introductions
- Featured Participant
  - Jacob Corvidae, EcoWorks, Detroit, MI
- Discussion:
  - What are the benefits of assessing community readiness?
  - What information is important to know about a community?
  - What are strategies for gathering information?
- Future Call Topics

# Call Participants

EcoWorks (Detroit, MI)  
Efficiency Maine  
Efficient Windows Collaborative  
EMpower Devices  
Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance  
Home Performance Guild of OR  
Kansas City, MO  
Michigan Saves  
Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance  
Nexus Energy Center (Huntsville, AL)  
Spirit Foundation  
U.P. Green (MI)

# Discussion Summary

- Community readiness assessments are used to determine how ready a given community is for an energy efficiency program.
- Readiness assessment can:
  - Determine whether there will be sufficient community demand for an energy efficiency program.
  - Identify what is needed to make a community more ready for an energy efficiency program (e.g., building awareness, improving communications networks, etc.).
  - Identify what kind of program is most needed. For example, if a community does not know much about energy efficiency, getting residents to make a significant investment in home energy upgrades may be difficult; launching a program of basic energy awareness might be more appropriate.

# Discussion Summary

- EcoWorks in Detroit, MI has found that the following factors are good indicators of community readiness:
  - Robust communication networks (including traditional and social media)
  - Trusted local champions that can act as a liaison between a program and local residents
  - Awareness of energy benefits
  - Actions previously taken
  - Relevant demographics (e.g., higher income and education levels, home ownership, etc.)
- Other participants mentioned additional key factors:
  - Contractors who are already working in the home improvement market (one participant noted that a good contractor base can make a program successful even in rural or less densely populated areas)
  - Availability of incentives and complementary programs
  - Older housing stock

# Discussion Summary

- Community can be defined not just geographically—such as a neighborhood—but also as a social community such as a workplace, place of worship, business, or a school.
  - For example, Illinois Home Performance with ENERGY STAR leveraged an existing network of Chicago bungalow owners that had already developed a community around this type of residence
- The information collection process for assessing community readiness varies depending on how much information is available and how easy it is to collect
  - The SE Michigan Regional Energy Office gathers information directly from the community. The office does a targeted outreach effort and asks communities to apply to be selected for the program. As part of the application process, communities provide much of the information for readiness assessment. The office has found that providing some support for local staff can help communities with the application and information collection process.

# Resources

- The BetterBuildings program in Michigan developed an Energy Sweep Toolkit which includes lessons learned, sample materials that can be used, and more information on the concept of community readiness. It will be available here: [www.ecoworksdetroit.org](http://www.ecoworksdetroit.org)
- The Home Energy Affordability Loan (HEAL) program, an energy-based employee benefits program, could be useful for programs looking to assess the readiness of local businesses or corporations for employer-based energy efficiency programs. For more information, see: <http://www.clintonfoundation.org/clinton-presidential-center/about/heal>

# Resources

- Actioniirs ([www.actioniirs.com](http://www.actioniirs.com)) is a web tool that EcoWorks has been developing to encourage energy efficient behaviors; it can also be used to collect information for a community readiness assessment.
  - Users choose different actions suggested to them based on self-defined goals. For any action, users can click to get more information about it. They get a record of the actions they have taken.
  - Users can join different affiliate or community groups through the tool. The organizer of the community can view and assess high level data on the group, such as what motivates community members and aggregated demographic information. Data can provide an indication of whether a group is a good fit for an energy efficiency program.
  - The tool can serve as a “litmus test” to see if residents are interested in taking actions to improve energy efficiency.
  - The tool is free to use.





# ACTION **ii**RS



# Tailored to User Goals



**Self-Sufficient**



**More Money**



**Just**



**Healthy**



**Green**

# Dashboard design



## ACTIONS

- ▶ **Install Shower Head**  
by June 20  
✓ ✗ ?
- ▶ **Insulate Attic**  
by July 2  
✓ ✗ ?
- ▶ **Form Green Team**  
by Sept. 1  
✓ ✗ ?

+ **New Actions**



**25%**  
of the way to your goal:  
more self-sufficient  
Actions planned to 40%

**1,385**  
points

If Beatrix can do this,  
so can I. Now Go!



## FRIENDS

Friends on Actioniirs  
■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■  
[Invite More](#)

What your friends are doing:

- + **Committed:**  
Install Showerhead
- ✓ **Done:**  
Install Showerhead
- ✓ **Done:**  
Install Showerhead
- + **Committed:**  
Enroll an Actioniir ▼

**PROFILE**

**Indigo Corvidae**  
[Answer more questions](#)  
[Edit Profile](#)  
[Logout](#)

**AFFILIATES**

<span>■</span> Beaumont Hospital	1,245,705 pts.
<span>■</span> N. Southfield	36,650 pts.
<span>■</span> Steiner Family	9,480 pts.

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

▲ **Global** 7,384,600,215 pts.  
**Like keeping \$3 million in local economy**  
**7,042 Actioniirs and growing**

**MORE**

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# Actions



## ACTIONS

### CURRENT

- ▶ Install Shower Head  
by June 20
- ▶ Insulate Attic  
by July 2
- ▶ Form Green Team  
by Sept. 1

◀ DASHBOARD

### NEXT UP

- ▶ High Efficiency Dishwasher
- ▶ Insulate Walls
- ▶ Join Neighborhood Listserv

### ? ▶ High Efficiency Dishwasher

"THE New Digital Age" is a startlingly clear and provocative blueprint for technocratic imperialism, from two of its leading witch doctors, Eric Schmidt and Jared Cohen, who construct a new idiom for United States global

#### RESOURCES

- Energy Star Dishwashers
- WaterSense Dishwashers
- Washing Dishes without a Dishwasher



◀ BACK

### DONE!

- ▶ Install Efficient Toilet
- ▶ Get Energy Audit
- ▶ Send letter to Mayor
- ▶ Remove toxic cleaners
- ▶ Get 5 more Actioniirs
- ▶ Test for Lead
- ▶ Get 5 more Actioniirs
- ▶ Get 5 more Actioniirs

▶ MORE



# Affiliates



Michigan IPL

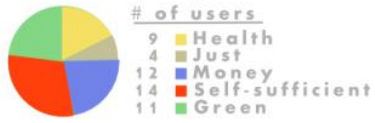


## OVERVIEW

**Users: 50**

**% of community: 12**

**Goals:**



**Points: 253,210**

**✔ Actions completed: 241**

**⊕ Actions committed: 156**

ACTIONS  
PROGRESS  
DESCRIBE



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# Affiliates



## OVERVIEW ACTIONS

Users--completed each action ✓  
Users--currently committed to each action +  
Users--past commitments, now completed ✓  
Users--completed or currently committed ✓+

Michigan IPL



## PROGRESS DESCRIBE



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# Affiliates



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## OVERVIEW ACTIONS

### Users--completed each action

- 10 ▶ Install Efficient Toilet
- 10 ▶ Get Energy Audit
- 9 ▶ Send letter to Mayor
- 9 ▶ Remove toxic cleaners
- 6 ▶ Get 5 more Actioniirs
- 3 ▶ Test for Lead
- 2 ▶ Get 5 more Actioniirs
- 1 ▶ Install Efficient Toilet
- 1 ▶ Get Energy Audit
- 1 ▶ Send letter to Mayor
- 1 ▶ Remove toxic cleaners

### Users--currently committed to each action

### Users--past commitments, now completed

Users--completed or currently committed



# For Phones too...





From  
**Notion**



**Action**

# Future Call Topics

- Call Topics for 2014
  - Coordinating Energy Efficiency with Disaster Resiliency
  - Local Government Energy Efficiency Program Business Models
  - Mastermind Session (looking for volunteers!)
  - Providing Services for Utilities
  - Complementary Energy and Health Services

*Please email other suggested topics to  
[peerexchange@rossstrategic.com](mailto:peerexchange@rossstrategic.com)*