

Low Income Workgroup
February 24, 2016
PNGC, 711 Halsey Street, Portland and by phone

Summary

After a recap of the November meeting, we had a round of sharing updates and achievements from around the region. New BPA staffer, Jess Kincaid was introduced and BPA provided an overview of new measures that will be coming out soon. Michael Mills from Oregon Solutions and Arthur Chaput at NeighborWorks Umpqua presented about their initiatives to solve the manufactured homes problem. Many manufactured homes in Oregon are in need up maintenance for health and safety reasons. If a home will be decommissioned, it is an opportunity to put a more energy efficient and long-lasting model in its place. There are some special programs to assist residents in Oregon with this and we discussed how that program may be accessible by others in the region. After a work session on creating materials for the region, we decided to move forward with creation of a Quick Start Guide for CAPs and Utilities. We brainstormed some ideas for content and had workgroup members sign up for sections. All sections are due to Summer Goodwin at BPA by end of day March 4. The draft guide will be used as a teaching tool at the Efficiency Exchange conference April 26-28 where there will be a breakout session on low income energy efficiency called [Low Income Energy Efficiency Cross-Fit: Get Fit in 75 minutes](#). BPA staff will work on assembling the tool. Once the tool is complete, it can be used at events and on websites as a tool to broaden the reach of the workgroup since many CAPs and utilities in the region do not participate in the workgroup at present. We ended with a discussion of the limiting factors for getting work done. Both CAPs and utilities have reasons for why more low income work isn't getting done. The workgroup members expressed appreciation for this open discussion. We made tentative plans to hold the next meeting the first week in June at Tacoma Power in Tacoma, Washington.

Attendees

In Person

Keith Kueny - CAPO
Steve Joel - HACSA
Jess Kincaid - BPA
Cyrus Collins, Columbia River PUD
Todd Blackman, Franklin PUD
Brian Fawcett, Clatskanie
Margaret Ryan - PNGC
Eugene Rosalie - NEEA
Jeremy Stewart - Tacoma
Donna Kinnaman - CAPECO
Kathy Grey - EWEB
Charlie Schifferdecker - EWEB
Casey Mitchell - CAT
Dena Hilde, BPA
Scott Leonard
Boyd Wilson - BPA
Sarah Moore - BPA

Carmen Kulp - CAT

Arthur Chaput - Neighborworks Umpqua
Michael Mills - OR Solutions
Paul Rich - ESG
Rojilio Cortez - MWVCAA
Shawn Collins - Energy Project
Carrie Nelson - BPA
Tom Cardy - Emerald PUD

By Telephone

Dan Elliott - OHCS
Wendy Gerlitz - NVEC
Michael Lubliner - WSU
Beth Vargus Duncan - OMEU
Pat Didion – Milton Freewater
Dan Kinnaman - Greys Harbor
Joe Collete - CSC

Deborah Peters, Okanogan
Linda Esparaza, Franklin PUD
Eric Miller, Benton REA
Ed Munson - Benton
Thomas Elzinga - Consumer's Power
Hans Berg - WADOC
Debbie DePetris - Clark

Elizabeth Osborne - WADOC/ NWPCC
Wid Ritchie –Idaho Falls
Christina Zamora - CAPAI
Brian D
Terry Mapes - BPA
Michael Lubliner, WSU

Recap of last meeting:

Discussion of low-income and hard to reach section of 7th Plan, Charlie Grist called in and shared this with us and asked for public comments.

Jeremy Stewart presentation of Tacoma DHP program

Workgroup Prioritization exercise - steering committee continues to work on the list generated and putting together products that the workgroup might use to broaden the reach

Round robin of developments and announcements to share:

- Steve - HACSA heat crisis program added three additional utilities to include some BPA utility customers
- Todd – Franklin PUD In-house program for qualifying people and a loan program. Continue to contract with local CAP agency
- Jeremy Stewart - Expanding multifamily program to include direct install lighting, hoping to scale back windows program
- Hans – WA state WZ+ health program starting up, will be able to report progress and savings in the future
- Mike Lubliner - working with Labor and industries starting to explore access to database for alteration permits for manufactured homes. More mini-splits going into manufactured housing in the state.
- Donna - CAPECO expanding staff to do more work in their service area, elected to expand to hire a second auditor to access BPA utility funds and Cascade Gas funds.
- Eugene - will be a session at EFX specifically focusing on rural communities. A significant piece of working with rural communities is working with low-income.
- Paul - work with 27 BPA utilities on EE programs. A focus in this rate period is the low-income measures. There are good intentions, but there aren't enough contractors to fulfill the measures in some rural areas. Working to convince contractors to participate. The \$3,800 cap for DHPs in these areas can be an issue.
- Steve - works with some of Paul's utilities, use same contractor in a small area. Going to coordinate the jobs with the contractor. Wasn't an official meeting to discuss, just happened informally after Oregon Network meeting.

Steve - Oregon meetings low-income are split so they have agency only meetings and meetings with utilities at different time in the meetings.

- WA - also has the low-income coordinators meetings and round tables. Not sure whether commerce would be interested in adding utilities to the meeting.

Hans (WA) - may be able to take a look at it. Utility may not find value in it. But, could look into creating opportunities.

Next Steps: follow up on potential to create opportunities

2. Update from BPA – Sarah Moore

Sarah introduced Jess Kincaid the new existing and new homes program manager.

Residential Sector BPA Implementation Manual Update

Will be released April 1. New measures:

- Insulated Exterior door for standard and low income – multifamily
- Ductless Heat Pumps - removed note about voltage on Qualified Products List. Was originally there to ensure quality of units installed during the pilot phase, but not needed with new spec for a higher efficiency. Change should bring down product cost. But added specification for DHP use of a vacuum pump and a dedicated electrical circuit - in code in OR and WA already. Vacuum pump will be on the checklist for field procedures.
- In October increasing manufactured homes duct sealing payment to match single family
- Minor tweaks to weatherization specifications

Other items in process, but not guaranteed to be added at a specific date:

- Efficient Storm Windows - will be developing a spec ahead of National Fenestration Rating Council Currently no Energy Star rating, but they are developing one. May be able to make applicable to multifamily.
- heat pump water heater - Tier 3 (default settings)
- High Efficiency Clothes Dryers
- Thermostatic Shower Valves - suspends flow when hot water hits the valve, can turn on again when ready to use. Reminder that they're a big measure in the 7th Power Plan.
- Question - when the hot water hits it does it completely shut off the water? No - it shifts to a really restricted flow (Evolve shower head given as an example)

Sarah Moore requested Cost Data to support low-income measures, actual costs, equipment and install.

Most interested in collecting data on:

- Ductless heat pumps
- Heat Pump Water Heaters
- Insulated Exterior Doors

Next Steps: Need documentations of costs by Nov/Dec 2016. Looking for all installations, not low-income specifically. Would like itemized costs to the extent possible. Provided the data you can, actual costs itemized.

3. Presentations on Manufactured Homes Decommissioning

Michael Mills, Oregon Solutions - State of OR collaborative governance model that includes mediation and conflict resolution and helps communities accomplish community priorities. Working on housing and EE issues, interesting in sharing information on projects.

Process: ask Governor to designate as an OR Solutions project, start project - time varies.

Initiate project, and sign declaration of cooperation. Come back together at end and look at whether goals were met and give a boost to make project successful.

Managing project in Springfield to create a template to manage a community mobile home park closure. Goal is to streamline the process so it's easier for city staff to manage the process.

Question - has the organization worked with CAP's to help on various low-income projects? Not that they're aware of on housing issues, but yes on accessible food and health areas. CAP's would like to work with them on this; they are a resource because they're already in the parks and have relationships. There was also a comment on how these are good projects to pair with the healthy homes and Wx.

Lents Neighborhood in Portland - 400 homes that are in the flood plane and have high insurance rates as a result. Trying to reduce the number of houses in the flood plane through raising houses, filling in, moving heat sources out of basements.

Not aware of similar programs in ID or MT, but they may be there. (Note to workgroup: if you know of any, please let BPA know.)

Margaret Ryan - invited the group to learn about the OR model and see if it is possible to expand around the state. Trying to introduce people to see if there is a way for the groups to work together. Particularly interested in leverage of funding to create movement. There has been discussion about utilizing USDA loan dollars at rural utilities to sponsor the projects.

Eugene - what is the scope of this discussion, parks closing or individual homes that can't be rehabbed efficiently? Rehome is the latter, Oregon Solutions is the former.

Their website has information on all the projects. Summer will post information on the BPA webpage as well.

Arthur Chaput, NeighborWorks Umpqua: ReHome Oregon manufactured Housing Upgrade Initiative. Aim to develop a financing model that would allow them to replace a few manufactured homes, and then scale up. Also rehabbing mobile homes for health and safety issues.

Started in Curry County. 3,800 families lived in MH, mostly owned by the government. 30% have serious health impacts attributable to them including respiratory problems, holes in floors, accessibility problems, homes are expensive to heat (53% more per square foot)

Running a CDBG rehab project to help fund this. Replacements have to own the land currently, but hoping to find a way to change that. Goal is to move the needle on health, safety and well being. Energy and weather tightness is the goal. Some projects include High Performance Manufactured Home program. Huge electric bill reduction. Goal is for the energy savings for the clients to offset the increase in the mortgage payment.

Unexpected costs - nearly every project has required septic and well replacement. And, energy savings haven't materialized for everyone. Looking to find a way to identify high users as a potential focus.

Specifications changed to be water and air proof, real slab and quality siding and roofing. Durable skirting a must to prevent pest intrusion. Prefer a DHP in every home.

Measure life? Still working that out, they're not as durable as they expected. Mike Lubliner- working to get weather barriers into Code. Expecting weather resistant barriers to be part of the requirement in the near future.

Still working to build trust with customers so that they move from application to actually replacing. Many people are reluctant to take on debt. The hope is that as they finish replacements there will be more trust.

Because NeighborWorks is using real estate not chattel loans, they're able to get a much better interest rate. Funding through multiple mechanisms. Because it's real estate, the taxes can go up but in Curry County not an issue because the taxes are very low.

Surveying potential participants to determine what they may be able to pay in monthly bill increase in order to participate in the program. As a result they're learning that the market may be smaller than they thought.

[Rural Utility Service EE and Conservation Loan Program](#), loan fund with approx. \$2m available to areas with less than 20,000 people. Loans can be used for anything that saves or produces energy. Think there may be an opportunity for one of the utilities to apply for the funds and work with partners to set this up, possibly with on-bill financing.

Rehab program will rehab about 25 homes.

Has a pretty good relationship with local CAP. Started to weave the programs together. About 75% of their rehab projects have involved Oregon Coast Community Action Agency

Next Steps: Arthur is asking for a partner in exploration on the rural utility loan service project

Michael Mills - interested in looking at this opportunity as well as other potential opportunities including identifying vacancies in parks and replacing homes with more efficient homes.

4. **Work Session** - Hosted by NEEA, BPA, and Council, "Low-Income EE Crossfit: Get Fit in 75 Minutes" Session is on April 26 from 10:45 - 12. **breakout session at Efficiency Exchange**

Format: Goal is to assist folks who want to learn how to get their efficiency program off the ground. Get an overview of how CAPs and Utilities work and which funds can be utilized. Then will break into presenters from each state.

Trainer - try to assess the needs of the participants that come to their table. Talk about things that could be tried, contracts set up, income verification and other start-up portions.

Looked at April meeting from last year to start preparing materials on how utility funding flows. Carrie's paperwork on the how the grant program works. Potentially creating a quick-start guide with some overlapping materials and some that are different.

Will have a person from each state available to present

Question: what materials would need to be included? These would be used for state specific training time.

- For group discussion
- Funding flow for utility programs

Task responsibility: BPA

- Guide for Utilities (Wid Ritchie) and CAPs (Steve)

- Glossary
- Contact list - utility list on one side, CAPs on the other of the regular participants in the work group (BPA)

- Best practices
- Value that the low-income programs bring to utilities
- High bills
- Customer contact

- One-Page case study for how they launched the program - utility that recently started (Northern Wasco PUD, Columbia Power)

- How they got board approval
- How they mapped out a plan with CAP
- How they completed the first house
(Margaret, Boyd/Travis, Keith, Paul, Donna, Shawn)

- How to bill under the utility program (completed already April 20 materials)
- Look at a comparison - Several will provide: Donna, Margaret, Paul

- Income eligibility/ Clarity around difference between agencies income levels
- BPA/ utility income guideline different than some states
- Ask state agency to do a one-pager on how the state does income differently

Task responsibility: Keith, Christina, Hans,

- Include a couple letters to CAPs from appreciative Clients

Task responsibility: Carrie will organize

Next Steps: send your parts to Summer Goodwin at BPA.

5. Discussion: What are the limiting factors to getting work done?

Shawn Collins, The Energy Project, asked for a conversation about best practices for utilities and CAPs working together, what the characteristics of the programs are and areas where there isn't a lot of work happening so we can better leverage the efforts.

Todd - local CAP has expressed concern about bottle neck about getting third party QA for their work (federal quality control inspector) right now there is a limited number of inspectors and it's creating a problem while they identify people who can go through the training. The auditor has to be a different person than the inspector now.

But, Oregon does it differently and allows the auditor to be the inspector.

Cyrus - local CAP paid for the utility to do the audits so that they alleviate this need. Must be BPI certified and have necessary work experience. This has opened things up for them. There still are time constraints but it is a great option.

Keith - because it's a new regulation they're trying to train up, but it really impacts the rural agencies that don't have as much staff to train up.

Sarah - This is an issue through the DOE fund, but not the BPA utility fund. Can the CAP work with the utility to share the projects? There are different mechanisms to serve the homes.

Shawn - the utility costs can't cover all the repairs, having dollars available for repairs would help with this.

Boyd - some utilities are not getting cooperation with the CAP agency. Want to find a way to make sure the funding is kept with their local ratepayers. This occurs when CAPs don't have enough staff to help a utility serve those customers.

Kathy - is the utility making clear the amount of funding available?

Boyd - it has been disclosed and the CAP can only use X percent of that.

Eugene - Cowlitz would take the people low on the wait list for the CAP and would serve them.

Keith - it is up to the CAP and the local utility to determine how clients that aren't going to be served can utilize resources such as through the local utility.

Shawn - what are the specific reasons in each instance? Is it deferred maintenance, low staffing, other? CAP adds value by addressing other health and safety issues.

Casey - there is reluctance with caps that can't spend the money. Could put the CAP in touch with their peers to learn how to do it well. There are some that haven't figured out the tricks to make work, but there are ways to do it.

Steve - at least three of the utilities offer some admin money which helps.

Kathy - CAP agencies know there are customers in need that may never get served because they aren't high on the priority list and they give those customers to the utility.

Boyd - like the information sharing aspect.

Todd - is it true that if a CAP agency works in a home they can't revisit?

Keith - depends on the funding resource.

Todd - so there is an opportunity for the utility to go back and pick up the home

Keith - could create a partnership to have the utility serve some/ cap the others

Eugene - fiscal year allocations of funding can impact the spend rate.

Keith - could share the state rules with the utilities for the utilities to comment on them when they are in the draft form.

Summer - could post on Conduit when the state plans come up.

Cyrus - the funding sources are eye opening, they are complicated.

Steve - all the CAPs and all the Utilities are different. They operate differently.

Next steps: Include some of this information in the Quick Start Guide

Once we have the materials we can determine how to take them to a wider audience to remove the barriers.

6. Wrap up and next steps

Tacoma Power is willing to host next meeting in early June. Jess Kincaid (BPA) will be calling CAPs for the assessment that BPA is conducting.

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