Implementing Energy Efficiency Programs in Rural America

Briefing Series: Rural Communities, Climate, and COVID-19 Recovery

June 16, 2020

Materials will be available at: www.eesi.org/061620rural

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Improving Energy Efficiency in Existing Homes using On-bill Financing

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HELP MY HOUSE BASICS

1. Convenient
   – On-bill repayment (2010 S.C. law)
   – Improves comfort and energy savings

2. Consistent Quality
   – Trained, qualified BPI contractors
   – Co-op manages QA, QC

3. Affordable Financing
   – Low-interest loan tied to the meter; Transfers if home sells
   – No money down, no credit checks required
**Fast-Payback Improvements**

- Seal and insulate home & duct work
- Replace electric furnaces w/heat pumps
- Repair or replace older heat pumps
Origins: The HMH Pilot (2011)

- Research effort by Central Electric Power, our G&T
- Testing the program model
- 8 of 20 S.C. co-ops, including Santee
- 125 homes
RESULTS: AVERAGE HMH PILOT HOME

• Reduced energy use by more than 30%

• Saved participants more than $200/yr. after loan payments

• Immediately more comfortable

• Had a happy homeowner (Participant survey, 2012)
  – 96% as satisfied or more satisfied with co-op
  – 90% say comfort has improved in home
  – 90% satisfied with post-retrofit electric bills
SEC’s Help My House Program

- 289 homes weatherized
- Used SEC Funds & REDLG-funding
- $2.8 million in loans made
- Average loan amount = $9,900
- Loan default rate = 0%
HELP MY HOUSE IN 2020

- Santee one of 7 S.C. co-ops awarded the first Rural Energy Savings Program loan (RUS)
  - RESP modeled in part on Help My House
- $13 million total; $2.5 million for Santee
- Selling carbon offsets to Duke University
HMH During COVID-19

• Had to shut the program down March 18th
• Restarted the program on June 15th
  – With limited services
  – Focusing on HVAC and duct work
  – Delaying testing until safe
• Currently have 47 homes on a waiting list
• Our contractors are ready to go!
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Established in 1916, NCBA CLUSA is the oldest and largest U.S. national association for cooperatives—representing all co-op sectors:

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Cooperatives today...

- U.S. co-ops provide nearly **2 million jobs** and create more than **$75 billion in annual wages** with a **revenue of $650 billion**.

- Food co-ops **reinvest in their communities** an average of **14% more** than conventional grocers.

- Nearly a million of the nation’s farmers belong to a co-op, accounting for **55% of total US agriculture sales**.

- There are **3 million co-ops globally**. Their members account for **12% of the world’s population**.
Benefits of Cooperative Ownership

• Meeting a need that private markets and government services are not meeting

• Higher survival rates and greater commitment to community
  • Spurs further local economic development and growth

• Gives people who use and benefit from the good or service to have a voice and reap the profits it creates
Co-ops invest in their members & community

• Rural Energy Savings Program
  • Pilot program in 2010
  • Reauthorized in 2018 Farm bill
    • 20-year loans at zero percent interest rates
    • Energy efficient improvements; can be paid back through on-bill financing
Co-ops helping a post-COVID economy

• Opportunity to re-build a more stable and sustainable economy
  • Co-ops as a succession plan for existing businesses
  • Housing
  • Bridging the rural divide
    • Energy
    • Broadband
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