

# The Weatherization *PLUS* Newsletter

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## Top Story

### Future Green Jobs

#### VP Biden Announces Next Steps for Recovery Through Retrofit

EOS staff attended Vice President Biden's November 9 announcement of the next steps in the Recovery Through Retrofit strategy of the Administration Middle-Income Task Force. ([Watch the video](#) or [read the report](#).) The VP and Secretaries Chu, Solis and Donovan together outlined three dramatic policy initiatives designed to lower the three major barriers to consumer purchases of whole-house energy retrofits: access to reliable energy information, accessible affordable financing, and consumer confidence in the retrofit workforce.

If successful, these will change the low private demand for whole-house energy retrofit and thereby change the future job prospects for the ARRA workers Weatherization has trained.

**1. A New Home Energy Scorecard** will offer clear and reliable home energy information. It is intended as a prototype for a home rating label like an appliance efficiency label that will be accepted by the housing market and influence home prices. It will be required for the financing initiative described below. The label uses results from the true MAJOR innovation: an online auditing tool that is an update of the LBNL audit in use by EPA Home Performance with Energy Star. See the tool at <http://homeenergyscore.lbl.gov/>. The project will be tested [in ten areas](#). The Home Energy Scorecard will be available next summer to organizations wanting to test-drive the product.

**2. HUD's New FHA Power Saver Loan Program** will offer easy access to affordable home retrofit financing without requiring a second mortgage or high-cost unsecured loan. ([See a PDF on Power Saver](#).) The loan product will be test-piloted for two years beginning in early 2011, and it can be offered by many types of lenders.

It includes FHA mortgage insurance covering 90% of loan and low interest financing for credit-worthy homeowners. The loan must be invested in energy improvements indicated by the Home Energy Scorecard tool and delivered by trained contractors.

**3. New Work Guidelines and Protocols for the Energy**



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### Weatherization Day 2010



October 30, 2010 was Weatherization Day, a chance to highlight and celebrate the success of the ARRA Weatherization Assistance Program. DOE Secretary Steven Chu marked the event by congratulating the Weatherization network on its upgrades to 245,000 low-income homes with Recovery Act funds so far and [posting a great video on the DOE blog](#) of Weatherization work in Wilkes-Barre, PA. Congratulations to Gene Brady and the team at the Commission for Economic Opportunity (CEO) on receiving this recognition!

Check out some of the media coverage Weatherization Day received across the country: [Alabama](#), [Oklahoma](#), [Kentucky \(2\)](#), [Florida](#), [Hawaii](#), [Nebraska](#), [New York](#), [Washington](#).

**Retrofit Workforce** are a familiar topic to Weatherizers by now. The work undertaken by the DOE staff with W.A.P. trainers and others leading the home performance field will become an (informal) industry standard. The initiative:

- Mainstreams (to the general homebuilder market) the newly released-for-comment National Residential Retrofit Guidelines (which are not certification standards) and
- Introduces as a part of energy services training the Healthy Home work practices included in EPA's new draft protocols.

**Weatherization's experts should read the materials with care and offer input to the federal policy development.**

Which of the proposals in these documents would make good W.A.P. work regulations? Please copy EOS ([eoswapplus@opportunitystudies.org](mailto:eoswapplus@opportunitystudies.org)) with your input.

Comments on [DOE's "Workforce Guidelines for Home Energy Upgrades"](#) due by 01/11/2011.

Comments on [EPA's "Healthy Indoor Environment Protocols for Home Energy Upgrades"](#) due by 12/09/2010.

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## DOE Weatherization Leaders Suggest What to Expect Next

At the National Community Action Foundation (NCAF) Energy Programs Conference October 25-27, Robert Adams, the W.A.P. Team Leader for the Office of Weatherization and Intergovernmental Programs (OWIP) spoke to a packed audience about emerging W.A.P. developments. His most important points for everyone on the front lines of delivery:

- **More praise.** In general, the program is recognized by DOE and the White House to be the ARRA success story they hoped for. The congratulations are heartfelt. However, some concerns about maintaining the pace and, more importantly, about quality assurance and fraud prevention persist.
- **More inspections.** A contract for Federal technical monitors has been signed with a national corporation (TBA soon!) whose workers will be responsible for inspecting about 30,000 completed units on behalf of and in coordination with the federal Project officers. Adams assured the audience that W.A.P. training will be required before these experienced general home inspectors go to the field. Their visits, therefore, are a few weeks away.
- **New funding formula.** FY 2011 "regular" funds will not be delivered entirely according to the previous state formula. Instead, a distribution formula will include 1) a base grant for every state and 2) a performance bonus based on each state's rate of expenditure of both ARRA and

Are you a new W.A.P. worker or contractor? Tell us *YOUR personal W.A.P. story* at [our survey page](#), and we will build a national network of successful W.A.P. recruits.

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“regular” FY 2009 and FY 2010 appropriations combined. Some states will finish ARRA production in calendar 2011 and a few of those will have spent out regular funds as well. (Final 2011 funding levels may be established during the “lame-duck” Congressional session that opens today.)

- **(Almost) No fundable call-backs.** Adams announced that a formal program notice will soon reconfirm the inflexible DOE legal opinion that no DOE funds can reimburse work added after a unit has been declared completed by the local agency. He described one cumbersome and difficult work-around:

A unit previously reported as “complete” could be delisted in a retroactive amendment of the report for the period in which it was listed and reimbursed. An amended state report, minus the units and their direct and indirect funds would be submitted to DOE, then the unit would be reported in the later, post-call-back report as complete, along with the “interim” payments made previously and any payments reimbursing the additional work called for by the inspector. Of course, no measure or work could be reimbursed twice.

Adams committed to addressing the issue when DOE overhauls the W.A.P. regulation – a major process that may take up to a year. Adams affirmed DOE is aware of the time required for local Weatherization agencies to respond to separate state and federal monitoring inspections as well as the growing time gap between the local inspection and the potential federal and/or state inspections of a unit. The post-completion “call-back” ruling may be even more onerous if that time lapse lengthens.

- **New rules (eventually).** The forthcoming DOE review of, and change to, the W.A.P. rules has the potential to reshape the program. The formula, the S.I.R., and local agency access to the state’s funding are all prescribed by **10.CFR.440**. What should change? Send us your thoughts to share in future editions of the *Weatherization PLUS Newsletter*.

Ms. LeAnn Oliver, the newly appointed permanent OWIP Director, spoke at the conference, her first event with W.A.P. network organizations, and expressed her enthusiasm at taking the reins of the program at this moment of well-deserved celebration. For Ms. Oliver’s bio, [click here](#).

## Learning Opportunities

The Technical Assistance Program (TAP) is part of State Energy Program (SEP) and Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG), and it’s relevant to the future energy markets

for W.A.P. Agencies' services and workers.

**TAP Webinar: Quantifying the Impact of State Policies on Clean Energy Development**

*November 17, 3:00 pm EST*

At this Webinar, you will hear about the State of the States project at the DOE National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), which looks at the growth of clean energy development that coincides with the implementation of specific state policies.

**[Click here for more info and to register.](#)**

**More Upcoming TAP Webinars:**

*Energy Efficiency Rebate Programs 101 - November 15*

*Negotiating and Entering Into an ESPC - November 18*

*Community Renewables Projects - November 30*

*Defining and Establishing the Role of a Sustainability Manager - December 2*

*Building Actionable Climate Action Plans - December 6*

Visit the **[TAP Solution Center](#)** and the **[TAP Blog](#)**.

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The **Newsletter of Economic Opportunity Studies' Weatherization PLUS Leveraging Partnership Project** brings timely information about developments that expand the Weatherization Assistance Program to help your organization take advantage of emerging opportunities. Visit the **[Weatherization PLUS portal](#)** for more information.

**Why You Are Receiving This Email**

Your name is on a list of federal and state Weatherization Program contacts from WAP conference attendance records. Of course, you may unsubscribe (see below). However, we hope you will help us add the names and addresses of all who may be interested. Our promise: 1) We do not share our list, and, 2) The newsletter will be sent only when there is useful material for weatherizers.

Specific questions? Opinions? Subjects we should cover in the future? Email us at: **[energy\\_leveraging\\_news@opportunitystudies.org](mailto:energy_leveraging_news@opportunitystudies.org)**

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