

SESSION 9B

LOW-INCOME WEATHERIZATION: MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER, STILL ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENTS

Moderator: Dan York, ACEEE

PAPERS:

How One State Pursued Improvements in its Weatherization Program

Jim Mapp, Wisconsin Division of Energy Services

Barbara Smith, Wisconsin Division of Energy Services

Assessing and Comparing the Results of a Meter Analysis and Blower Door Test of Weatherization Programs - - Is the Expense of the Blower Door Test Worth It?

Johna Roth, TecMarket Works

Sherry McCormack, Empire District Electric Company

Pete Jacobs, Building Metrics

Nick Hall, TecMarket Works

Assessment of a Low-Income Weatherization Program as a Carbon-Reduction Program

Don Hynek, Wisconsin Division of Energy Services

SESSION SUMMARY:

This session examines several topics related to improving and expanding the benefits of the Low-Income Weatherization Program. The papers range from a broad and wide-ranging review of program improvements in a leading state, to a critical examination of one particular weatherization tool (blower doors), to a conceptual assessment of the potential of the Low-Income Weatherization Program as a carbon reduction strategy.

The first paper, “How One State Pursued Improvements in its Weatherization Program”, presents a sweeping review of how one leading state (Wisconsin) has engaged in ongoing research and program improvement in its Low-Income Weatherization Program. The paper presents an impressive litany of adjustments and enhancements that have been made in program measures and procedures, and should be of interest to anyone involved in the field of low-income weatherization.

The second paper, “Assessing and Comparing the Results of a Meter Analysis and Blower Door Test of Weatherization Programs - - Is the Expense of the Blower Door Test Worth It?”, focuses on one specific weatherization tool (blower doors) and raises the challenging question: what do we really know about the relative net costs and savings associated with requiring the use of this measure in low-income weatherization service delivery? Despite a literature search and informal survey of industry experts, the paper is unable to provide definitive answers, but does challenge the evaluation community to conduct additional research on this issue.

Finally, the third paper, “Assessment of a Low-Income Weatherization Program as a Carbon-Reduction Program”, provides an intriguing examination and discussion of the potential for the Low-Income Weatherization Program to serve as a viable carbon-reduction strategy. The results of this assessment are encouraging, and should be of interest to policymakers as well as those involved in weatherization service delivery.