

## Reaching Customers through Innovative Community Engagement Programs

Paul Markowitz, Community Energy Program Manager, Efficiency Vermont, Vermont Energy Investment Corporation

Sunday, October 15

8:30 am – 5:00 pm | \$65 (includes 2 breaks, lunch on your own)

### Workshop format:

Lecture

Discussion

Case studies

Hands-on exercises

Readings

Are there particular customer segments that you are having difficulty in reaching? This full-day working session shares tried and true techniques to engage customers through their existing community associations and affiliations. Communities are not only defined as where people live, but also by how people are “in-community” with each other, such as places of employment, schools, non-profit organizations, and even mobile home parks. Community engagement programs meet customers where they are at and provide an ideal mechanism for raising awareness, changing behavior, and driving customers to make efficiency improvements. They embody “word-of-mouth” marketing and involve forming partnerships with local organizations, institutions, businesses, and other entities to communicate directly to their members, residents, and through other affiliations.

This working session will cover community engagement program design, fundamental elements of successful programs, how to identify and successfully work with local partners, and engagement tools and approaches. The hands-on session is designed for individuals who are directly involved in delivering energy efficiency programs. Participants are encouraged to come prepared with a particular marketing sector that they will work on. At the conclusion of the session, participants will have developed a community engagement program specific to their own service territory and/or community. This working session will cover community engagement program design, fundamental elements of successful programs, how to identify and successfully work with local partners, and engagement tools and approaches. Potential market sectors applicable for community engagement programs include existing residential homes, new residential construction, small businesses, municipalities and schools, and large employers. The session will also include guest presenters from around the country.

What previous workshop attendees have said about this working session:

“I appreciated the great mix of speakers, collaboration, and materials.”

“I learned about the value of establishing community partnerships and gaining good quality feedback.”

“I learned about importance of user feedback in designing and refining programs.”

“I learned about the importance of packaging your strategy – words are more important!”

“The workshop leader really tied everything together and wove a great narrative. The group discussion was great.”

“I valued learning about ways of providing feedback to partners to help them feel more ownership/be more motivational.”

“This workshop provided me with fresh ways to think about what constitutes community and partnering with them.”

### About the workshop leader:



Paul Markowitz is Community Energy Program Manager with Efficiency Vermont where he promotes partnerships with non-profit organizations, businesses, and municipalities to implement community-based energy efficiency programs. Paul has 30 years’ experience in energy and environmental project management, community planning, leadership training, and facilitation in non-profit institutions, state government, and academia. He has managed local environmental action programs in Central and Eastern Europe, directed state recycling programs, taught university courses on energy and solid waste policy, and promoted least-cost electrical planning. He has an MS in Resource Economics from the University of Vermont.