

Steven Wiese, Frontier Energy

Poster Title: High Impacts in Low Income Multifamily Housing

Abstract: CenterPoint Energy's Agencies in Action program has provided comprehensive and cost-effective weatherization and energy efficiency services to income eligible residential customers since 2007. Frontier Energy implements the program for CenterPoint Energy. Starting in 2015, Frontier Energy developed and incorporated a program component aimed at replacing aging HVAC systems in all-electric multifamily housing with new, high efficiency heat pumps. Each year, owners of qualifying multifamily properties are invited to competitively bid for incentives covering a share of the cost of heat pump replacement projects on multiple units at a complex. Bids are scored based on the cost effectiveness of each proposal, so bids requesting lower incentives or greater savings are preferred. Incentives are offered to fund the highest ranked projects that meet all due diligence requirements, subject to annual spending limits applicable to sponsors, property owners and ownership groups, and contractors. The program design makes use of unique scoring, ranking, inspection and legal due diligence procedures developed by Frontier Energy in order to ensure that projects are selected and completed on time, within budget, and with minimal surprises along the way. The approach ensures that low income residents in multifamily homes can benefit from the program, and leverages program funds by requiring a share of the cost to be provided by the owners of multifamily properties. An accompanying white paper reviews the impacts, cost effectiveness, and trends of the program over the past 4 years. By compiling information obtained from all bids received, as well as actual installation data from awarded and completed projects, we obtain granular insight into program outcomes and trends. These data reveal that the program has consistently yielded increasing savings and cost effectiveness on a year over year basis, due primarily to the competitiveness of the bidding process and gradually increasing equipment efficiencies.