



Building Performance Professionals  
Association of Vermont

**BPPA-VT**

Vermont's Authorities on Energy Efficiency

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December 11, 2013

From: BPPA-VT  
To: Efficiency Vermont  
RE: Proposal for BPPA-VT Market Development and Support  
Attachment: BPPA-VT Budget Proposals

BPPA-VT has been working throughout its first year of operation to identify and clarify our members' pressing issues. Our mission is *to support and represent our members as we work to promote Vermont's building performance industry and ensure the energy efficiency, comfort and safety of our residential and commercial buildings. We endeavor to develop a robust market for the entire range of energy efficiency services as well as market conditions that allow for reasonable profit to be made from delivery of these services.*

Our goals include supporting building professionals' efforts:

- to reach reasonable economies of scale in their businesses to insure business security
- to fulfill their commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- to provide increased opportunities for gainful employment
- to work toward energy security for all Vermonters
- to support the healthy growth and security of Vermont's statewide economy

BPPA members realize that to be effective in achieving our goals, we must become better organized and take more responsibility for general market development by being more proactive in our direct involvement in policy and program development. Nationally, states with the most successful building performance industries have the most well-organized, proactive and well-supported contractor organizations. In these states, there is a close, interdependent relationship between the building performance trade association and the state program administrators. In a number of cases, the state program provides significant financial support to the trade association to insure the association's capacity for ongoing, active engagement.

BPPA staff and its member contractors are committed to supporting EVT in discussing program ideas and concepts, especially as they relate to our members' businesses and business development, at no cost. However, as concepts turn into meetings and more requests on our time in order to support EVT's programs and responsibilities, it would only seem fair and equitable to compensate BPPA staff and its members who give up their own time in support of EVT's efforts. We are committed to collaborating with EVT and working towards our collective goals, but request that EVT consider the value of having BPPA in the marketplace and work with us to come up with an arrangement that compensates us for our time and expertise so that we can continue to work as effectively as possible together into the future.

It is in consideration of our goals and in recognition of the importance of increased and consistent engagement in process that we submit the attached proposals for providing direct support to EVT's program development and service delivery process.

**BPPA-VT proposals address the following projects or areas of concentration:**

- General participation in EVT's program development process
- Efficiency Excellence Network support
- Home Ownership Center coordination
- Home Performance Program (Re-) Development
- Contractor workforce development
- CEED BP/BEF small business facility training for contractors and BP redevelopment

**General participation in EVT's program development process**

As the industry evolves, BP professionals need to increase their level of commitment to participation in the development of the market, the various programs from which they benefit and ultimately, the workforce that provides services. Investment (\$, time and creative energy) and ownership of strategy and outcomes are key to ensuring and optimizing BP professionals' full, creative engagement. Much of the primary responsibility in these areas has long fallen to EVT. EVT's expertise and administrative muscle have been critical in jump-starting the industry by creating a set of service standards, systems for accountability and reporting and a stable foundation for growth. This has resulted to some degree in a contractor base that is too complacent and passive, often waiting for direction to be handed down by EVT. It is time for service providers to step up to the plate and take more responsibility for industry development and direction. EVT will benefit from BP contractor participation on multiple fronts, including gaining valuable market insights and sharing the responsibility of program design and delivery.

**Efficiency Excellence Network**

BPPA is in a position to ensure that its members become fully engaged with EEN development and are well-positioned to take best advantage of the opportunities presented by collaborating with fuel dealers and HVAC contractors. BPPA can identify, engage and support BP contractors who are interested in participating in this pilot and in working to establish effective systems for capitalizing on the potential of these collaborations. This support is necessary if this initiative is going to succeed. With support from EVT, BPPA can develop program participation criteria, develop and issue an RFP to its members, select appropriate contractors, coach and support them, provide QA oversight, report activities back to EVT and attend the meetings around this initiative.

**Home Ownership Center Coordination**

Similar to the supporting role for the EEN, BPPA is in a position to support any future work with Homeownership Centers. Given that involvement in Home Performance services would be a relatively new responsibility for most Homeownership Centers, working with a partner that could "match-make" and oversee a qualified contractor base will be key to the success of this effort. BPPA is in an excellent position to play this supporting role and could provide similar services to EEN support. These services could include development of program participation criteria, developing and issuing an RFP, then selecting appropriate contractors, coaching and supporting contractors along the way, development of a QA process, providing oversight and QA, reporting to the Homeownership centers and EVT and attending any supporting meetings.

**Home Performance Program (Re-) Development**

HP contractors need to be part of the discussion as EVT redesigns and develops the new Home Performance with ENERGY STAR Program. The contractor perspective is critical to ensure

EVT's success with this program. However, contractors are busy people and need to keep working in order to pay the bills. BPPA is willing to take on identification of appropriate contractors, gathering their perspectives and bringing them to the table to review new program designs, test software or provide feedback as program elements changes.

### **BP Workforce Development and Support**

BPPA wants to ensure that Vermont workers are the ones to ultimately receive the benefits of a market that reaches reasonable scale. If sales of EE services were ramping up at the levels that would be on target for achieving State goals, we would not have the workforce to do the work. Development of a workforce that has the capacity to fulfill State goals will require long-term, active engagement with various State organizations including the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, the Agency of Education, VTC, Vermont's network of career centers, and many others.

We cannot accept the irony that a primary reason we can keep up with market demand for EE services is because demand is relatively weak. Without a doubt, if efforts to stimulate market demand kick in and BP contractors find themselves struggling to keep up with that demand, they will risk losing control of the growth opportunity they have been working so hard to achieve. Ongoing efforts in this area need to include worker training, business training, curriculum development and continuing education opportunities. BPPA must take a lead in determining need and drafting an outline for this development process.

### **CEED BP/EBF Small Business Facility Training for Contractors**

BPPA will take a lead role in working with CSE and EVT to develop curriculum, schedules, logistics plans, budgets, etc. in support of the launch and implementation of this program. This type of program offers BP professionals a chance to add to their skill sets and diversify their revenue opportunities.

We understand that there is work to do in consideration of modification of the BEF program. We feel that this area of work holds significant potential for all stakeholders, especially of course, the small business owners who stand to realize substantial savings. BPPA staff and contractors look forward to working collaboratively with EVT to define and develop this initiative

The attached first draft of budget proposals is intended to outline areas and means of potential collaboration. We look forward to the ongoing discussions that will help to further refine how we might best work shoulder to shoulder with EVT to accomplish the tasks that lie ahead and achieve our shared goals.

Best regards,  
Jonathan Dancing  
Richard Faesy  
BPPA-VT Board of Directors