



Community Door-to-Door Weatherization Outreach Campaign: A Guide to Development and Implementation¹

BACKGROUND AND PROJECT SUMMARY

In 2008, the Vermont legislature set a goal of achieving 25 percent energy savings in 25 percent of Vermont homes—that’s about 80,000 homes—by the year 2020.² To achieve this goal, Vermont needs to increase the number of homes weatherized each year by about six-fold . Studies and field experience indicate that utilizing various community-based social marketing measures to better understand public needs and promote weatherization at the local level can be effective at increasing the number of residents who participate. The premise of community-based social marketing—established through research in social psychology—is that in order to be effective, programs must be carried out at the community level and must involve direct contact with residents of a community. This approach goes beyond merely educating a community; it identifies barriers, helps residents overcome those barriers, and documents the results in order to determine the effectiveness of certain strategies.

In 2011, the [Sustainable Energy Resource Group](#)³ (SERG) and the [Thetford Energy Committee](#)⁴ (TEC) teamed up to form the Thetford Home Energy Action Team (HEAT) in order to test the implementation of community-based social marketing techniques for weatherization initiatives. A number of different approaches were employed to encourage home weatherization, including a door-to-door outreach and education campaign. As part of this effort, HEAT recruited and trained volunteers to help educate fellow residents on programs available to them, offer energy-saving tips, swap compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) for old incandescent bulbs and conduct energy assessments to give homeowners a better idea of their energy use and weatherization needs.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The Thetford Door-to-Door Weatherization Outreach Campaign is a successful model that can be replicated—with adaptations as needed—by other communities throughout Vermont in order to increase the number of weatherized homes in the state and improve residents’ quality of life.

This guide offers a step-by-step approach for helping communities conduct a door-to-door campaign to promote home weatherization in Vermont. It draws from the experience of the

¹ Prepared by the Sustainable Energy Resource Group under contract to Efficiency Vermont

² Vermont State Legislature 10 VSA 581: Sec. 6.10 V.S.A. §581

³ www.serg-info.org

⁴ <http://www.thetfordvermont.us/departments/energy-committee/>

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2011 Thetford Community Outreach and Education Campaign, conducted by HEAT and implemented by SERG in partnership with the TEC.

Questions about this program, its approaches, and lessons learned may be directed to the [Sustainable Energy Resource Group](#)⁵ at serg@serg-info.org or (802) 785-4126.

THE BENEFITS OF HOME WEATHERIZATION

Vermont has the second-oldest housing stock in the nation.⁶ Consequently, many Vermont homes are improperly insulated, making them uncomfortable in the extremes of winter and summer, and expensive to heat and cool. As climate change begins to have an impact on the Northeast, Vermonters are struggling with ever-rising heating bills, and it is becoming increasingly important to find ways of saving energy at home.

Heating homes in Vermont accounts for close to 60% of residential energy use.⁷ Home weatherization reduces cold winter drafts and summer heat gain, controls moisture, provides adequate fresh-air ventilation for healthy living, and tests appliance combustion for efficiency, carbon monoxide, and adequate exhaust.

Homes weatherized through the [Home Performance with ENERGY STAR Program](#)⁸ and [Vermont's Weatherization Program](#)⁹ typically save 25 to 30 percent on heating costs, for annual savings of \$750 to \$1,000. While much more extensive “deep-energy” retrofits can achieve 75 to 90 percent savings, retrofits cost more and have longer payback periods than home weatherization.

Home weatherization is one of the most cost-effective ways to reduce energy use, save on energy spending, and increase home comfort.

DEVELOPING AN ORGANIZING TEAM

SERG formed a partnership with the TEC to develop and implement the Door-to-Door Weatherization Outreach Campaign because the TEC has a long track record of successful projects in Thetford and is well respected in the community. In addition, the TEC is knowledgeable on the issues and had worked previously with many other groups and volunteers in town.

To broaden this effort beyond the TEC, SERG contacted and set up meetings with various groups and organizations in and around Thetford—such as churches, students, neighborhood groups, the Thetford Elder Network, the Thetford American Legion post, the Boy and Girl

⁵ www.serg-info.org

⁶ VPIRG 2006 “Building Solutions” publication & US 2000 Census

⁷ Energy Information Agency, 2010

⁸ www.encyvermont.com/homeperformance

⁹ <http://dcf.vermont.gov/oeo/weatherization>

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Scouts, and former weatherization recipients—to explain the overall program, seek their input and support, and recruit volunteers to serve on the organizing committee, the Thetford Home Energy Action Team (HEAT). Beyond the intrinsic value of networking within the wider community, building relationships with other constituency groups made it easier for people outside the already-committed circle to be open to participating in, and spreading information about, the program -- even if members of these groups were not able to commit to volunteering to assist directly in furthering the program's weatherization aims.

SERG sought to recruit individuals who could effectively share information with their groups because of their existing ties and trust among their members. SERG also sought out individuals who might be able to contribute certain skills to the team and share some responsibilities. Some of the skills needed included:

- Strategic planning
- Volunteer recruitment and training
- Communications, media, and publicity
- Data collection and entry

SETTING PROGRAM GOALS

The goals for increasing home weatherization in Thetford were designed to match the Vermont legislature's climate-change goal of reducing energy use by 25 percent in 25 percent of Vermont homes by 2020.

Steps to setting home weatherization goals in Thetford:

1. Thetford Town Listers were asked to provide the number of homes in town; this figure was divided by four to determine the number of homes needing to be weatherized by 2020.
2. [Efficiency Vermont's \(Home Performance with ENERGY STAR¹⁰](http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2/34861a.html) program and the [community action agency¹¹](http://www.dcf.vermont.gov/oeo/weatherization_offices) (CVCAC, which runs the weatherization assistance program covering Thetford) were asked to provide the number of homes in town that had already been weatherized.
3. The number of already-weatherized homes (#2) was subtracted from the number of homes needing to be weatherized (#1) to establish the number of additional homes that need to be weatherized.
4. The number of additional homes needing to be weatherized (#3) was divided by the

¹⁰ <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2/34861a.html>

¹¹ http://dcf.vermont.gov/oeo/weatherization_offices

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number of years until 2020 to determine the number of homes per year needing weatherization, in order to meet the statewide climate-change goal.

Through these steps, it was determined that the number of homes to be weatherized every year until 2020 in Thetford needed to triple, from 12 to 36.

DEVELOPING AN OUTREACH PLAN

In developing an outreach plan, SERG applied community-based social marketing approaches that included reaching out to all Thetford homeowners individually, as much as possible, to explain the benefits of weatherization; developing and using success stories of other Thetford residents who had participated in these programs; and giving homeowners firsthand opportunities to meet and talk with professional service providers, those providing financing and incentives, and homeowners who had gone through the process.

Door-to-Door Outreach Campaign – Educational and promotional-material kits were developed (these included case studies of local homes that had been weatherized) for distribution to every home in town, and volunteers were recruited and trained to use these kits to inform local residents about the benefits of home weatherization and the resources available to them. *(NOTE: In communities where volunteer resources are limited, an alternative would be to conduct targeted outreach to friends and neighbors of individuals whose homes have already been weatherized.)*

Home Energy Expo – Homeowners were able to attend workshops, see demonstrations of weatherization measures and materials, and talk with professional service providers, those providing financing and incentives, and homeowners who had already implemented weatherization measures in their homes.

Weatherization “Skillshop” – A day-long, in-depth, hands-on workshop was organized for homeowners interested in learning how to make some home energy improvements themselves.

Home Weatherization Tour – Open houses were held at two local homes that had been weatherized, allowing people to tour the homes and talk with the homeowners about their experiences.

AN EFFECTIVE PROGRAM MESSAGE

The main message should be simple, using just a few words that address issues that are important to everyone in the target audience.

General “Messaging” to the Entire Community – Research has determined that the issues around home weatherization that appeal to everyone include:

- Saving energy

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- Saving money
- Increasing home comfort

Targeted “Messaging” to Specific Homeowners or Audiences – Of course, there are many other benefits from home weatherization that may appeal to certain groups or individuals, and it may be helpful to discuss these as appropriate:

- Reducing carbon emissions, slow climate change, protect the environment
- Increasing energy security, reducing reliance on foreign fuels
- Creating local jobs and strengthening the local economy

AN EFFECTIVE PROGRAM IMAGE

It is helpful to develop an easily identifiable name and logo for “visual branding” that everyone can understand and connect with at a glance. With permission, Thetford HEAT borrowed and customized the [Upper Valley Home Energy Action Team’s](#)¹² name and logo because they conveyed the desired message to homeowners in a short, catchy way. The name and logo were used on stationery, posters, T-shirts, tote bags, and handouts, making it easy to identify these elements as part of the Thetford HEAT program.

The Thetford HEAT logo is available from SERG for customized use by other groups.



BUILDING COMMUNITY AWARENESS, SUPPORT, AND PARTICIPATION

Most people are more likely to know and trust others from their own town, rather than people from outside the community, who promote participation in a program. Therefore, one of the strategies employed in the Thetford Door-to-Door Weatherization Outreach Campaign was to use successful weatherization projects in town to help inform other homeowners about the program and encourage their participation.

Identifying Successful Weatherization Projects – SERG contacted [Efficiency Vermont](#)¹³ and

¹² <http://www.uvheat.org/pages/mission.html>

¹³ <http://www.encyvermont.com/Index.aspx>

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several [Home Performance with ENERGY STAR](#)¹⁴ contractors who do business in the local area to ask them if they would be willing to contact homeowners who were pleased with, and achieved good savings from, their weatherization work and to solicit their help in promoting home weatherization work in town. [A list of Home Performance contactors can be found here.](#)¹⁵ The goal was to identify homeowners who were well known in the local area, who achieved measurable savings from their weatherization work, and who could serve as good spokespeople. Six families interested in helping were initially identified, and ultimately two families were selected who met all of the most important criteria.

Developing Brief Case Studies and Case Summaries – SERG worked with the two families to develop the [Biddle Family](#)¹⁶ and [Toth Family](#)¹⁷ Case Studies that documented their experience with the weatherization project. The case studies included details about problems the homeowners had experienced before the weatherization work; the weatherization measures installed; the costs of improvements; any financial incentives; the projected or actual energy and dollar savings; the calculated savings from improvements over time (for return on investment); homeowner testimonials; and photos of the home and the owners. Following the project SERG helped develop 10 basic [Case Summaries](#)¹⁸ of other homeowners who made improvements through the Home Performance program. (NOTE: Most of the information for these Case Studies and Summaries can be gathered from the “HERO” report that is generated by a Home Performance with ENERGY STAR contractor and submitted to Efficiency Vermont, and by a simple interview with homeowners.) A [Simple Case Summary Template](#)¹⁹ is available from SERG. Efficiency Vermont may be able to help identify homeowners who have participated in the Home Performance with ENERGY STAR program and who are willing to participate in promoting a local home weatherization project. For more information, contact Efficiency Vermont at 1-888-921-5990.

Informing the Community – Every year-round home in Thetford was targeted through a door-to-door outreach campaign. While this was an ambitious goal (Town Listers estimated there were 1,100 year-round residential names and addresses), the TEC felt that the notoriety of an effort to reach every home in town would in itself create a “buzz” that would bring added attention to and support for the program.

A variety of free and low-cost media were used to inform the community about the home weatherization program. A [Program Introductory Letter](#)²⁰ to Homeowners was mailed to every home; program posters were hung throughout the town; several [notices](#)²¹ were posted to the

¹⁴ <http://www.encyvermont/homeperformance>

¹⁵ <http://www.encyvermont/homeperformance>

¹⁶ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Biddle-Case-Study.pdf>

¹⁷ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Toth-Case-Study.pdf>

¹⁸ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Thetford-Case-Summaries.doc>

¹⁹ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Case-Summaries-Template.doc>

²⁰ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Thetford-HEAT-Programs-Letter-to-Homeowners.doc>

²¹ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/N.-Thetford-Outreach-email-Announcement.doc>

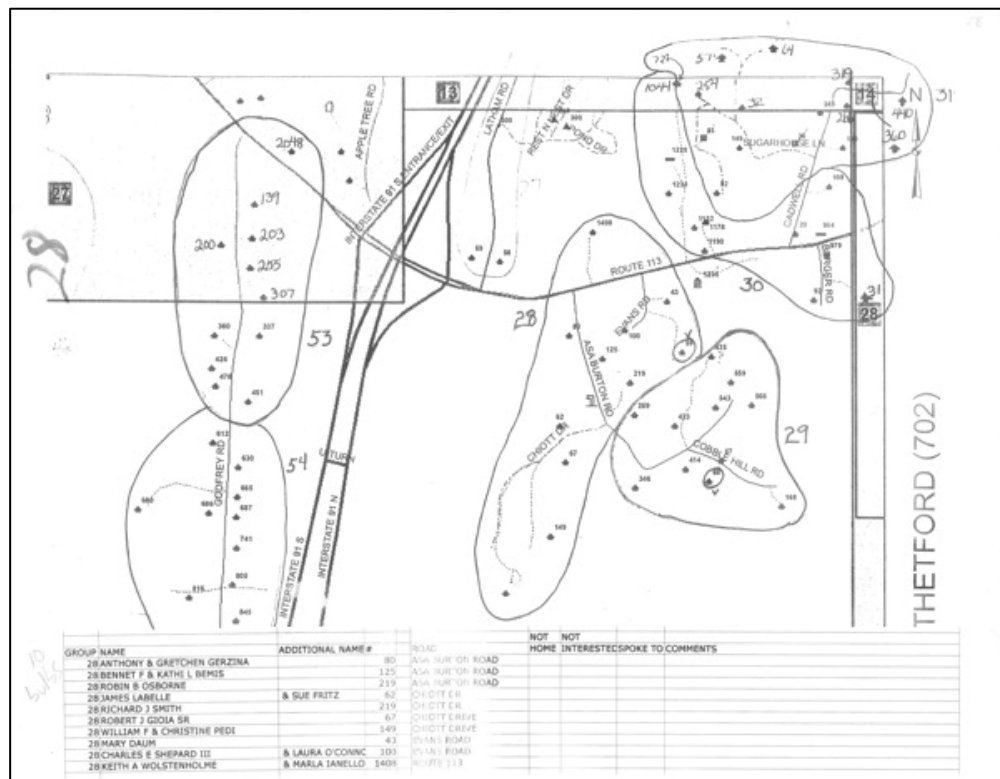
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town listserv; letters and a great [article](#)²² were published in the daily newspaper serving the town; and a notice was placed in the town newsletter.

DOOR-TO-DOOR OUTREACH STRATEGIES

The strategy to go door-to-door to every home included several steps.

1. **Identifying Homes** – The Town Listers provided a spreadsheet listing the 911 street addresses and names of all homeowners in town and maps of the town showing all the roads and locations of the 911 street addresses. After looking at the placement of homes on the map and thinking about how long each home visit might take, the list was broken down into batches of 10 homes in relatively close proximity to one another. This turned out to be a good number, as average visits, including “no-shows” and travel between, took about 30 minutes per home. Each batch of 10 homes was assigned a number, and a circle was drawn on a large map of the whole town showing where each numbered group of 10 homes was located. (**NOTE:** In addition to home addresses, some Town Listers may be able to provide information on what type of heating fuel each home uses—this is very helpful.)
2. **Providing Notice to Homeowners** – Before any home visits took place, a [Program](#)



²² <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Thetford-HEAT-Valley-News-Article.jpg>

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[Introductory Letter](#)²³ was sent to all homeowners notifying them that volunteers would be coming to their door. The purpose of the letter was to:

- Inform homeowners about the program and advise them of intended visits so they would not be surprised by strangers at their door.
- Present the Thetford HEAT logo and explain that volunteers associated with the program would wear shirts with the logo on it, so homeowners would be able to recognize visitors as HEAT volunteers.
- Allow homeowners to “opt-out” of visits or to contact the team to schedule alternative dates if they were not going to be home.
- Encourage homeowners to gather fuel-use data and be prepared by knowing the dimensions of the heated area of their home, so volunteers could help them compute relative energy efficiency calculations during the visit.

3. Pilot Outreach in North Thetford – A trial run of the door-to-door outreach process was conducted in one of Thetford’s five villages, consisting of about 100 homes, before taking on the whole town, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the outreach and to identify aspects of the plan that could be changed as needed to improve the process.

- **Cold Calls** – When they visited, the volunteers found that many homeowners were not at home. In those cases, they hung a plastic shopping bag on the door, containing all the written materials being distributed, along with a [“Sorry-We-Missed-You”](#)²⁴ notice clipped to the outside. Volunteers also attached a handwritten note to the notice with their names, phone numbers, and an offer of a return visit to explain the program, install a free energy-saving CFL (provided by Efficiency Vermont), and help homeowners fill out a Home Energy Efficiency Calculator ([online version](#)²⁵ and [Word version](#)²⁶) and [Home Weatherization Survey](#)²⁷ in order to qualify for a free home-energy-audit drawing.
- **Scheduled Visits** – A few volunteers who were canvassing in their own neighborhoods and knew the homeowners they were visiting called ahead to schedule a time when they would be there for the visit. This process resulted in a much higher percentage of homeowners filling out the surveys and talking with the volunteers.

(NOTE: To avoid missed visits, volunteers could look up in a town phone book the phone numbers of homes they plan to visit and call ahead to schedule visits. Day and time of visit is important. Visits on Saturday mornings found many homes empty, but Sunday afternoons

²³ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Thetford-HEAT-Programs-Letter-to-Homeowners.doc>

²⁴ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Thetford-HEAT-Sorry-We-Missed-You-Door-Hanger.doc>

²⁵ <http://www.serg-info.org/home-efficiency-calculator/>

²⁶ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Home-Efficiency-Calculator.doc>

²⁷ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Thetford-HEAT-Homeowner-Survey.doc>

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proved to be a more likely time to find people at home.)

RECRUITING AND TRAINING VOLUNTEERS

Number of Volunteers –SERG determined that an estimated 100 volunteers would be needed to contact owners of Thetford’s 1,100 homes personally. The TEC had recruited more than 50 volunteers for a previous project and it seemed possible that, with concerted effort, 100 volunteers could be recruited for this project. As it turned out, however, due to many people being involved with Tropical Storm Irene cleanup or working on a state cross-country race that was held in Thetford at the same time, only about 50 volunteers were recruited. Consequently, only 650 of the town’s 1,100 homes were reached in the time allotted. Information on the program was mailed to the remaining homes in town.

Setting a goal of reaching every home in town was a huge undertaking; this might work better in other towns where there is a stronger volunteer base. (**NOTE:** If volunteer and time resources are limited, a targeted outreach effort in neighborhoods around where successful weatherization jobs have already been completed could be effective. This tactic might include inviting neighbors and friends to open home tours of successful jobs. Similarly, the “time-frame” for covering the entire town could be extended over a period of three or four years, with manageable groups of neighborhoods targeted in each year.)

Recruiting Volunteers – It is very important to recruit a large number of volunteers who represent as wide a cross-section of town residents as possible so they can share information about the project with all of the local groups, committees, and neighborhoods with which they are affiliated. To that end, SERG visited numerous town, neighborhood, church, civic, and student groups to explain the program and recruit volunteers; circulated volunteer recruitment notices via email and the town listserv; posted fliers around town; published announcements in the town newsletter; and solicited individual homeowners who had already implemented weatherization measures, as well as volunteers who had participated in previous TEC projects.

Volunteer Training and Role Playing – All volunteers were required to participate in a two-hour training session to familiarize them with the materials they would be sharing, and to make sure that everyone was clear and consistent in their “messaging.” The training also emphasized the importance of being upbeat and friendly in interactions with homeowners, and of trying to build some kind of connection with them through common interests. These might include roles they fill in community activities, being part of the Thetford Home Energy Action Team, or where they live.

Thetford HEAT volunteers discuss outreach materials and strategies.

The training session included a review of all of the materials, as well as a role-playing exercise, first by organizers as a demonstration, and then by the volunteers. Following their training, volunteers were asked to complete a practice presentation at home with friends and family so they could get comfortable with the presentation and materials.

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The materials to be distributed by volunteers included more information than any homeowner could be expected to absorb during an introductory visit (see list and links to handouts in Appendix). Therefore, volunteers were instructed to present a brief overview and summary of the key points of the program, and to emphasize that contact information for Thetford HEAT was provided in the materials and homeowners were welcome to contact HEAT with any questions they might have. The goals of the visit were to build a sense of comfort and trust in Thetford HEAT, to cultivate a willingness to let Thetford HEAT help homeowners understand and navigate the weatherization process, and to emphasize to homeowners that Thetford HEAT stood ready, willing, and able to help them every step of the way. Throughout the visits, the theme of the presentation was on the main message: that home weatherization would help residents *Save Energy, Save Money, and Increase Home Comfort*—themes that everyone can relate to.

Volunteer Teams – Initially, all volunteers were asked to go out in teams of two, so they could support each other in their first presentations. Many found this very helpful, as one volunteer might remember something the other forgot to mention. It also worked well that one volunteer could help install the CFL and fill out information on the [Home Weatherization Survey](#)²⁸ as the visit progressed, while the other focused on making the presentation to the homeowner.

After volunteers gained some experience with home visits, they were allowed to go out alone if they felt comfortable doing so—and since volunteers were in short supply, this made it possible to reach more homes. The exception was that any volunteer under the age of 18 was required to be accompanied by an adult at all visits.

SCHEDULING OUTREACH DAYS

The volunteers were polled on-line to figure out which days they could canvas and weekends proved best for most volunteers. There were 50 volunteers to reach 1,000 homes and from the trial outreach in North Thetford, it seemed the average visit, including travel between homes took about half an hour. So the door-to-door outreach was scheduled on Saturday and Sunday over two weekends. This would have been enough time had there been a strong turnout at each day, but there was a falling-off over the second weekend and we were unable to reach all 1,000 homes.

SHOWTIME: LOGISTICS FOR OUTREACH DAYS

A central staging area was chosen in the part of town to be visited on that day. Volunteers gathered at the staging area in the morning to pick up home assignments and materials and to receive last-minute instructions.

Assigning Homes – When volunteers arrived at the staging area, they were asked to look at the map and choose which batch/es of 10 homes they wanted to visit. They were encouraged to

²⁸ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Thetford-HEAT-Homeowner-Survey.doc>

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select homes of people they knew, so homeowners would be more open and receptive to their visits.

Volunteers signed their names on a master list next to the group number of the homes they had chosen, and they put a check mark on the circle of homes on the composite map. This allowed program organizers and other volunteers to see easily which houses had not yet been assigned and to identify which volunteers were going to which homes, in case any follow-up was needed or any problems developed. Setting up this system was a time-consuming task, but it was very helpful for the volunteers and the program organizers.

Material Distribution – Volunteers then picked up a cloth tote bag that had been imprinted with the project logo and stuffed with enough materials for 10 home visits.

Each tote bag had the following paperwork clipped to it:

- A number corresponding to the group of 10 homes claimed by the volunteer.
- A [small sectional map](#)²⁹ of where the homes were located with a list of who lived in the homes, with 911 street addresses and boxes to record what happened at each visit.
- A [checklist](#)³⁰ of all the materials they should have and procedures they should follow upon returning materials and forms to the staging area.

Last-Minute Instructions – Once volunteers were equipped with their visit assignments and tote bags, a meeting of the group was held to touch on last-minute points to keep in mind throughout the day. Topics covered in this meeting included:

- A review of the materials and the main messages that were to be shared
- A warning about not putting themselves in dangerous situations; e.g., staying away if there were loose dogs or if anything seemed uncomfortable
- A discussion about how everyone was feeling
- Sharing and talking through any concerns—mostly nervousness about knocking on strangers' doors
- A reminder to keep presentations friendly and upbeat—and to have FUN!

Before volunteers went out, a group photo was taken for use in telling the story later.

This whole morning process was great for team building, and for getting everyone excited about and more comfortable with their visits. Volunteers then went out to distribute the materials and talk with homeowners.

Material Distribution – Volunteers reviewed materials in the packet with homeowners.

²⁹ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Sectional-Map-and-Home-List.jpg>

³⁰ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Volunteer-Check-List-Instructions.doc>

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Particular attention was placed on the [Weatherization Resources](#)³¹ handout listing programs that provide home assessment and improvement services and the [Thetford HEAT Programs](#)³² offering residents opportunities to learn more about the weatherization service providers and their offerings. A description of and links to all materials distributed can be found in the appendix.

Gathering Data and Filling Out Forms – The packet of information carried by volunteers included a [Home Weatherization Survey](#)³³ to gather the homeowner’s name and contact information, size of home and amount of heating fuel used. This information allowed volunteers to help the homeowner [calculate the number of BTUs per square foot of heated area used in the home](#)³⁴, which provides a rough idea of how efficiently the home is heating. (BTUs are British Thermal Units, a measure of heat.)

Everyone who shared his or her home energy-use information was entered into a drawing for a free home energy assessment. Homeowners who were not home during volunteer visits or who received their information in the mail were encouraged to fill out and mail in the [Home Weatherization Survey](#)³⁵ information. In total, survey information was collected from 240 Thetford homeowners.

Material Returns and Results – The staging area was open throughout the day for volunteers to drop off leftover materials and completed homeowner surveys, to pick up additional bags of materials to distribute, and upon completion of the visits, to fill out volunteer surveys providing feedback on how the program had gone and offering any suggestions for improvements to the process. Coffee, juice, pastries, cheese, and fruit were available for volunteers throughout the day.

As volunteers returned to the staging area after completing their assignments, even those who had expressed nervousness about meeting with unknown homeowners were very excited and upbeat about their experiences. They hung around the staging area and compared notes, sharing results, tips, and suggestions for improvements, and filled out volunteer surveys.

Ultimately, over the course of five days, 50 volunteers visited and distributed information packets to 650 of Thetford’s 1,100 homes (60 percent of the town’s homes). Some of the materials that were distributed promoted other related Thetford HEAT weatherization events, such as the Home Energy Expo, Weatherization Skillshop, and Home Weatherization Tour, that were going to happen soon, so it was decided that the materials for the remaining 350 homes would be mailed with a [cover letter](#)³⁶ rather than being delivered in person in order to give

³¹ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Thetford-HEAT-Vt.-Weatherization-Resources.doc>

³² <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Thetford-HEAT-Weatherization-Programs.doc>

³³ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Thetford-HEAT-Homeowner-Survey.doc>

³⁴ <http://www.serg-info.org/home-efficiency-calculator/>

³⁵ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Thetford-HEAT-Homeowner-Survey.doc>

³⁶ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Thetford-HEAT-Programs-Letter-to-Unvisited-Homes.doc>

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homeowners enough lead-time to plan to attend these events.

TRACKING RESULTS, NEXT STEPS

The Thetford Energy Committee entered all of the [Home Weatherization Survey](#)³⁷ information gathered by volunteers into a database. SERG and the TEC plan to contact homeowners in the database to see what home energy improvements have been installed and what their energy use is in each of the next three years, with results entered into the database. In addition, participants will be asked what measures have been effective in persuading them to take action, to get an idea of how better to reach other homeowners in town. Finally, participants in the database will be notified about energy-saving information and opportunities over that period.

CAPTURING AND TELLING *YOUR* COMMUNITY'S STORY

The 2011 Thetford Door-to-Door Weatherization Outreach Campaign can be replicated (with adaptations as needed) by other communities throughout Vermont in order to increase the number of weatherized homes in the state and help residents ***Save Energy, Save Money, and Increase Home Comfort.***

Questions about this program, its approaches, and lessons learned—and how this campaign can be tailored to meet the unique needs of *your* community—may be directed to serg@serg-info.org or (802) 785-4126.

As you are developing and implementing a home weatherization project in your community, you can reach out and influence many more homeowners both within and outside your community by keeping the following tips in mind:

- Chronicle every step of your project by recording results, taking photos, and [gathering quotes](#)³⁸ from participants as you go.
- Contact your local newspaper to see if it is willing to cover your event and write an [article](#)³⁹.
- Write your own stories and follow-up case studies, and make sure you share your stories with [Vermont Energy & Climate Action Network](#)⁴⁰ and [Green Energy Times](#)⁴¹.
- Submit an article to your town newsletter and listserv.
- See if you can get local public access television to produce and air a story on your project.
- Post your own project videos on [YouTube](#)⁴².
- Most important, remember to stay positive and have fun!

³⁷ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Thetford-HEAT-Homeowner-Survey.doc>

³⁸ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Thetford-Weatherization-Participant-Quotes.doc>

³⁹ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Thetford-HEAT-Valley-News-Article.jpg>

⁴⁰ <http://www.vecan.net/>

⁴¹ <http://www.greenenergytimes.org/>

⁴² http://www.youtube.com/user/serginfo?feature=results_main

APPENDIX

THETFORD DOOR-TO-DOOR WEATHERIZATION OUTREACH CAMPAIGN MATERIALS –

Following is a list of the materials developed or gathered for distribution.

[Program Introductory Letter](#)⁴³ – Mailed to homeowners to announce the program and inform that volunteers would be visiting.

[Handout Packet Cover Page](#)⁴⁴ – This included the Thetford HEAT name and logo, the main message (“Save Energy, Save Money, Increase Home Comfort”), and local contact information for more help.

[Weatherization Programs, Resources, and Incentives](#)⁴⁵ – This described the various Vermont weatherization programs, including contact information. Also included was information on program incentives and financing.

Local Case Studies of two Thetford homeowners who were pleased with the results of their home weatherization projects.

- [Biddle Family Case Study](#)⁴⁶
[Toth Family Case Study](#)⁴⁷

Home Energy Efficiency Calculator ([Online Calculator](#)⁴⁸ or [Word Version](#)⁴⁹) – We used this calculator to help homeowners quickly determine the relative heating efficiency of their home by comparing the square footage of the home’s heated floor space with how much energy is used to heat the home. The calculator converts all fuel used for heating to BTUs and divides by the area of heated space in the home to generate BTUs used per square foot of heated area. 30,000 BTUs/SF is relatively efficient. While this number is greatly affected by numerous factors, including how the home is used (is it a vacation home, heated only part time, or does it include office space or residents that require heating throughout the day, etc.), inside temperature settings, and wintertime degree days, it can serve as a rough guide to how well the home “shell” serves to retain heat.

List of Local Weatherization Contractors – A list of the certified Home Performance with ENERGY STAR contractors in the local counties was included, as well as a link to an online list of all the [participating contractors in Vermont and more information about the HPwES program](#)⁵⁰ (search by zip code) – www.encyvermont.com/homeperformance.

⁴³ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Thetford-HEAT-Programs-Letter-to-Homeowners.doc>

⁴⁴ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Thetford-HEAT-Cover.doc>

⁴⁵ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Thetford-HEAT-Vt.-Weatherization-Resources.doc>

⁴⁶ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Biddle-Case-Study.pdf>

⁴⁷ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Toth-Case-Study.pdf>

⁴⁸ <http://www.serg-info.org/home-efficiency-calculator/>

⁴⁹ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Home-Efficiency-Calculator.doc>

⁵⁰ <http://www.encyvermont.com/homeperformance>

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Energy Saving Tips ([online](#)⁵¹ or [Word Version](#)⁵²) - We provided a list of simple, mostly free measures homeowners can implement to save energy.

Home Weatherization Survey⁵³ – Volunteers used this survey to collect basic contact and home heating information to establish a baseline database for those interested in participating and receiving ongoing information about energy-saving opportunities. The survey includes home efficiency calculations for follow-up, targeted outreach to those with particularly high usage. Homeowners who completed the survey, including energy use information, were entered into a drawing for a free home energy assessment, valued at \$450, at the Home Energy Expo. (**NOTE:** A Home Weatherization Survey could be set up online, possibly through SERG or Efficiency Vermont, so information can be automatically downloaded to a database accessible by the town energy committee.)

OTHER THETFORD HEAT PROGRAMS

SERG and the TEC organized several other programs in conjunction with the Door-to-Door Weatherization Outreach initiative. [The Home Energy Expo](#)⁵⁴, Weatherization Skillsshop, and [Home Weatherization Tour](#)⁵⁵ all took place on three weekends within a month and a half after the door-to-door visits, giving homeowners who had received information an opportunity to follow up and learn more. [A Final Report](#)⁵⁶ for all these programs is available.

Thetford Home Weatherization Incentive Program⁵⁷ – Thetford received a \$24,000 federal stimulus grant to provide incentives, matching those from Efficiency Vermont (EVT), to homeowners who weatherized their homes through the Home Performance with ENERGY STAR (HPwES) program.

Thetford Home Energy Expo⁵⁸ – 150 people attended a day-long event providing homeowners with an opportunity to meet and learn more from weatherization program directors, contractors, and homeowners who had received weatherization services, plus workshops, demonstrations, and skits.

Weatherization Skillsshop – Eleven people participated in in-depth, day-long Do-It-Yourself weatherization training provided by Central Vermont Community Action Council.

Home Weatherization Tour – Twenty-four homeowners visited two homes that had been weatherized, one through the Home Performance with ENERGY STAR program and one through

⁵¹ www.serg-info.org/energysaving-tips/

⁵² <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Energy-Saving-Tips-Handout.doc>

⁵³ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Thetford-HEAT-Homeowner-Survey.doc>

⁵⁴ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Energy-Expo-Poster.pdf>

⁵⁵ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Open-Homes-Tour-Flyer.pdf>

⁵⁶ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/SERGs-Thetford-Weatherization-Program-Report1.doc>

⁵⁷ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/SERGs-Thetford-Weatherization-Program-Report1.doc>

⁵⁸ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/SERGs-Thetford-Weatherization-Program-Report1.doc>

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the Do-It-Yourself program organized by Efficiency Vermont.

VERMONT WEATHERIZATION PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

[Home Performance with ENERGY STAR \(HPwES\)](#)⁵⁹, administered by Efficiency Vermont, (888-921-5990), provides up to \$2,000 in financial incentives to Vermont homeowners who complete energy efficiency improvements through a certified Home Performance with ENERGY STAR contractor.

[Vermont Weatherization Assistance Program](#)⁶⁰ – administered by Vermont Office of Economic Opportunity, Geoff Wilcox, (802) 769-8376 – Provides free home energy audits and improvements to income-qualified Vermonters through the residents’ local Community Action Program.

[Do-It-Yourself Weatherization Program](#)⁶¹ run by Efficiency Vermont (888-921-5990) provides access to the tools and technology needed to complete energy efficiency home improvements and qualify for up to \$2,000 to help pay for the work.

[Upper Valley HEAT](#)⁶² – Provides one-stop shopping for information and referrals on home weatherization in the Upper Valley region of Vermont and New Hampshire.

PROJECT FUNDING

Options to help raise funds for local energy projects:

[High Meadows Fund](#)⁶³ – Has been supporting efforts to expand home weatherization throughout Vermont.

[New England Grassroots Environment Fund](#)⁶⁴ (NEGEF), (802) 223-4622 – Provides small grants (typically \$500 to \$2,500) to energize and nurture long-term civic engagement in local initiatives that create and maintain healthy, just, safe, and environmentally sustainable communities.

[Ben & Jerry’s Community Action Team](#)⁶⁵ – The Ben & Jerry’s Foundation offers various grant-making programs, including their Community Action Team, which provides up to \$1,000 in grants for local outreach programs.

⁵⁹ <http://www.efficiencyvermont.com/homeperformance>

⁶⁰ <http://dcf.vermont.gov/oeo/weatherization>

⁶¹ http://www.efficiencyvermont.com/for_my_home/ways-to-save-and-rebates/energy_improvements_for_your_home/DIY_HomeEnergyImprovements/general_info/overview.aspx

⁶² www.uvheat.org

⁶³ <http://www.highmeadowsfund.org>

⁶⁴ [grassrootsfund.org](http://www.grassrootsfund.org)

⁶⁵ <http://www.benandjerrysfoundation.org/>

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[Vermont Community Foundation](#)⁶⁶ – VCF has several funding opportunities, including their Small and Inspiring Grants, which provide \$500 to \$2,500 for local projects.

Local Businesses – Local businesses are often very interested in supporting local projects, especially if they can get some publicity or business exposure connected to a good project. See the [Thetford HEAT Business Sponsorship Proposal](#)⁶⁷ for ideas of how to package a business proposal.

Individual Donors – Most towns have a few wealthy residents who are more than willing to support good local projects that benefit others in town.

Municipal Support – Check to see if the town select board is willing to designate funding for your project or general energy committee funds to support energy projects in or for the town.

EXAMPLES OF OTHER SUCCESSFUL OUTREACH CAMPAIGNS

[NeighborWorks of Western Vermont](#)⁶⁸ – 110 Marble Street, West Rutland, VT 05777, info@nwwvt.org, (802) 438-2303 – A federally funded program in Rutland County that assists homeowners in getting their homes weatherized, NeighborWorks provides handholding and guidance to help homeowners through the weatherization process, and helps homeowners schedule home energy audits, review and explain audit reports, develop a work plan, and consider financing options.

[One Change's Project Porchlight Campaign](#)⁶⁹ – Vermont contact Chris Granda, granda@grasteu.com, (802) 922-7005 – Project Porchlight is a grassroots energy-efficiency program that encourages people to switch from incandescent light bulbs to energy-efficient CFL bulbs as a first step toward making greater energy savings. Changing a light bulb is a simple way to save money and protect the environment. When people participate in that first simple action, they can become empowered to believe that their actions matter and can make a difference. Project Porchlight converts awareness into action by making first steps accessible to all people by providing them with the information and a free CFL bulb. Project Porchlight does this by engaging and connecting with volunteers, community groups, and leaders, mobilizing them in their own communities to deliver free CFL bulbs along with a message to their friends and neighbors. CFL bulbs are delivered at community events and the old-fashioned way, going door-to-door to engage people directly. More than 14,000 volunteers from more than 3,500 community groups are currently engaged in and have participated in the delivery of more than 3.7 million free energy conservation measures across Canada and the United States, using One Change's Project Porchlight Campaign message: ***Simple actions matter.***

⁶⁶ <http://www.vermontcf.org>

⁶⁷ <http://www.serg-info.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Thetford-HEAT-Sponsorship-Proposal.doc>

⁶⁸ <http://heatsquad.org/>

⁶⁹ <http://www.projectporchlight.com>