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Sample Script for Volunteers

Overview: This sample script is designed to be used by volunteers in a wide range of outreach activities associated with the VT Home Energy Challenge, including door-to-door outreach, phone-a-thons, and tabling at public meetings. It is meant as guideposts in terms of key talking points and to cover a range of efficiency options for homeowners. It should be tailored to your local situation and put into your own words. Below – all words in *italics* are actual proposed language you can use. Also, this script is meant to be used in combination with the “Resident Log Sheet” – an excel spreadsheet used to track resident responses.

- 1. Introductions:** *Hello. My name is _____ . I am working as a volunteer with the (name of group).*

We are here (calling) because our town is participating in the Vermont Home Energy Challenge – a neighbor to neighbor effort to help residents lower their energy bills and improve home comfort through efficiency. This program is being implemented by (name of your group) in partnership with Efficiency Vermont and the Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network.

The purpose of this brief visit is to ask you about energy efficiency improvements you have made to your home and to inform you about further opportunities to save energy and reduce your energy bills. Is this a good time to speak? This visit should only take a few minutes.

- 2. Home improvements to date:** *Have you completed comprehensive energy efficiency improvements in your home within the last several years, including insulation and sealing up air leaks that can cause drafty homes?*

Yes? (GO TO 5)

No? (GO TO 3)

Note to Volunteers: Comprehensive home efficiency improvements involve more than simply replacing light bulbs or installing weather stripping. They involve getting a whole house energy audit and undertaking improvements that can reduce home heat bills by 20-30% or more.

- 3. Comprehensive home efficiency improvements:** *The (name of your group) is reaching out to neighbors and friends to encourage you to complete comprehensive home energy efficiency improvements. Comprehensive home efficiency improvements can:*

- *Save money by lowering energy bills,*
- *Make your home more comfortable,*
- *Reduce the environmental impact, and,*
- *Solve problems like ice dams and mold.*

The first step is to get an energy audit by a trained contractor through the Home Performance with ENERGY STAR program. Efficiency Vermont is offering a \$100 discount off the cost of all home energy audits.

For Homes Served by VT Gas: (available in parts of Franklin and Chittenden counties)

Homes served by Vermont Gas may qualify for a free energy audit, cash incentives and low interest financing for weatherization. You can find out if your home qualifies online (www.vermontgas.com/efficiency_programs/res_programs.html) or by contacting Vermont Gas at (802)-863-4511 ext. 321 or efficiency@vermontgas.com. Typically, Vermont Gas will rebate 1/3 of the installed cost of the recommended measures and provide a reduced interest loan through a local credit union for the balance (including heating and hot water equipment).

For Homes Served by NeighborWorks H.E.A.T. Squad: (available in Addison, Bennington, Rutland, Windham, and Windsor counties)

The NeighborWorks H.E.A.T. Squad program has been working for the past two years in Rutland County and is now expanding to Addison, Bennington, Windham, and Windsor counties. The HEAT Squad works with Home Performance with ENERGY STAR program and offers a range of services to help homeowners weatherize their homes, including energy advisors to help guide you in the process, flexible financing – including low-interest loans, and project management. For more information, call Lori at 802 438 2303 x227 or email: lhompson@nwwvt.org.

Note to Volunteers: Include any specific offers being made by energy contractors in your region, such as additional discounts off of the cost of audits.

4. Would you be interested in having an *energy audit conducted on your home?*

Yes? (CONTINUE BELOW)

No [GO TO 5]

If yes, provide homeowner with the list Home Performance with the statewide list of ENERGY STAR contractors. You can also refer customers to the Efficiency Vermont website at www.encyvermont.com/homeperformance.

5. Home energy visits: *If you are not interested in an energy audit at this time, we can have trained volunteers come to your home to conduct a free home energy visit to identify energy saving opportunities. The home energy visit is not an energy audit, but rather a walk-through assessment to see if your house would be a good candidate for an energy audit by a trained/certified contractor. The home energy visit lasts approximately one hour. Would you be interested in scheduling a home energy visit?*

Yes? (CONTINUE BELOW)

No? (GO TO 6)

- *Are you the best person to contact for your home? If not who is?*
- *We will provide your name to the person who is doing the scheduling for home energy visits and someone will be in touch.*

Note to Volunteers: Only offer home energy visits if this is a program that your local energy group is offering.

6. Energy Saving Kits: *I wanted to let you know that Efficiency Vermont, the state's efficiency utility, has home energy saving kits available for all interested Vermonters -- available free-of-charge. These kits include two compact fluorescent light bulbs, an advanced power strip, a faucet aerator, and incentive coupons.*

- *Would you be interested in receiving a free home efficiency kit?*

Yes? [CONTINUE BELOW]

No? [GO TO 7]

We will put your name on a list and send you a short survey card that you will need to complete and send into Efficiency Vermont within the next month or so. Efficiency Vermont will then send you the Kit.

How does this sound? Great. Please provide me with your mailing address.

7. Pledge Card: *Finally, we are asking residents to sign and send in a Home Efficiency Pledge card. This card shows your commitment by pledging to improve efficiency in your home. Your pledge can also help our town win a prize for highest participation levels.*

- *Can we give you a pledge card to complete and send in?*

Yes? Provide individual with a pledge card. (**Note to volunteer:** You can offer to have them fill it out while you wait and then mail it for them.)

No? [GO TO 8]

8. Weatherization Assistance Program: *I wanted to make sure that you are aware the Vermont's Weatherization Assistance Program which provides free energy audits and energy improvements for income-qualifying households. Would you like more information about this program?*

Yes? Provide a copy of the Weatherization Assistance Program for your region.

No? [GO TO 9]

9. Educational Materials: *I have a number of educational materials about improving efficiency in your home that I would be happy to share with you. Are you interested in receiving these materials?*

Yes? Review specific materials and provide copies of those materials.

No? [GO TO 10]

10. Town-Specific Information: Include any specific information that you want to share with the individual, e.g. upcoming events/ workshops, raffle prizes for participants, etc.

11. Follow-Up: *We would be glad to make a follow-up call or email to see how you are progressing with your efficiency efforts and see if we can answer any questions. Would you be interested in a follow-up call or email?*

Yes? Write phone and email on resident log

12. Questions: *Do you have any additional questions about how to improve efficiency in your home? If so, I would like to suggest that you call Efficiency Vermont's Customer Support at 1-888-921-5990 and they can provide you with all the information you need.*

13. Good-bye: *Thank you so much for your time. Have a great day.*