

Strategy for Encouraging ASHRAE Member Engagement in the State Energy Program and Weatherization Assistance Program

The State Energy Program and Weatherization Assistance Program: Advancing Energy Efficiency Priorities and Assisting Low-Income Families

The State Energy Program (SEP) and Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) are two of the most impactful Federal programs in existence. For each of the past several years, SEP has provided \$50 million directly to States for designing and implementing energy efficiency and renewable energy plans. Each dollar of these funds has typically leveraged \$10.71 of State and private funding. Each dollar has also resulted in \$7.22 of energy cost-savings, and annual savings of 1.03 million source BTUs¹.

Similarly, over its 40-year history, WAP has provided weatherization services to more than 7 million low-income families, lowering the energy bills for these households, which suffer from disproportionately high energy bills.

ASHRAE’s expert members are well-positioned to help States design and implement the programs and policies under SEP and WAP to affect the greatest positive change possible.

The State Energy Program and Weatherization Assistance Program: An Opportunity and Challenge for ASHRAE’s Technical Expertise and Grassroots Members

The SEP and WAP provide States with funding that supports capacity building, technical assistance, and the sharing of best practices that are appropriate to State and regional circumstances. Examples of activities supported by SEP include:

- Building energy code adoption, implementation, and compliance
- Technical support
- Scaling-up adoption of energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies
- Financing for commercial and residential retrofit programs
- Residential energy audits
- Workforce training
- Energy savings performance contracting
- Energy planning

States have wide discretion over the use of SEP and WAP funds – however that itself poses the challenge of getting the policies supported right. **This is where the input of ASHRAE’s members becomes most crucial. By establishing trusting relationships with the State offices that administer these programs, ASHRAE’s members can provide these offices with**



The Weatherization Assistance Program is the United States’ single largest residential energy efficiency program.

¹ National Association of State Energy Officials. “U.S. State Energy Program”. <http://www.naseo.org/sep>.

key insights into local, State, and regional needs, while using their technical expertise to identify the points where these funds can be of greatest leverage.

Goals and Specific Actions

As part of an effort to create the networks necessary to promote ASHRAE Standards, products and services, all US-based ASHRAE Chapters are encouraged to meet with officials from their State Energy Office and the office that administers the States' WAP² at least twice per Society Year. Invitations for State Energy Office and WAP officials to speak at Chapter and/or CRC meetings are encouraged to provide the greatest number of networking and learning opportunities between Society members and government officials. As programs are implemented, relationships developed, and feedback sought, contact can be expected to increase.

Many State programs will hold public hearings or meetings at which proposed activities are discussed. Chapter members should identify one person and an alternate who participates at these meetings and reports back to the Chapter. The Chapter may find that their Grassroots Government Advocacy Committee Chair is an appropriate person to fill this role.

Chapters should highlight their engagement with State Energy Offices and SEP- and WAP-funded activities in their newsletters, social media, CRCs, and elsewhere to demonstrate their value, strengthen relationships, and inspire others to participate in the highlighted or similar activities.

Chapters should be sure to claim PAOE points for these activities, as many are likely eligible.

Frequently Asked Questions³

1. Where do I go for State contacts, overview facts and figures, general information, and technical assistance on WAP?

The short answer is State contacts for WAP can be found at the WAP Technical Assistance Center – Grantee Contacts located at <http://waptac.org/grantee-contacts.aspx>. This website is going to be one of your main places for learning about and receiving updates on WAP.

The slightly longer answer is that the National Association of State Community Services Programs (NASCSP⁴) is the professional organization that provides support for WAP grantees. NASCSP maintains the WAP Technical Assistance Center⁵, which as noted above, contains a treasure trove of information on WAP, provides updates on DOE WAP notices, offers training, standardized curricula, and a range of technical tools for the Program.

² While the SEP is almost uniformly administered by the State Energy Offices, the names of the State offices that administer WAP vary greatly. For information on the WAP State office names and contacts, visit <http://www.waptac.org/Grantee-Contacts.aspx>.

³ For another FAQ on WAP visit <http://waptac.org/WAP-Basics/FAQs.aspx>.

⁴ <http://www.nascsp.org/>

⁵ <http://waptac.org/>

2. What are some of the ways ASHRAE is most directly connected to WAP?

WAP Program Guidance⁶ address ASHRAE Standard 62.2-2013 Ventilation and Acceptable Indoor Air Quality in Low-Rise Residential Buildings. An FAQ on how Standard 62.2 is used in the Weatherization Assistance Program can be found at <http://waptac.org/Additional-Pages/FAQ-ASHRAE-62002E2.aspx>.

3. Where can I find summaries of how States have recently used SEP funds?

One of the best State-by-State summaries of how SEP funds have been recently used can be found at http://www.naseo.org/Data/Sites/1/us-sep-successes-booklet_09-30-15.pdf. This document can help spur discussions within ASHRAE Chapters and is a great resource for conversation-starters when setting up and meeting with State Energy Officials.

4. What can I say in my meetings with State Energy Officials and State WAP administrator offices? Can I speak for ASHRAE?

Lobbying laws differ from State to State, so your Chapter GGAC Chair should definitely be familiar with each States' definitions and requirements. That said, because ASHRAE's members are volunteers and engagement with government officials is focused on education and technical assistance, engaging in government affairs by ASHRAE's Chapters and members is strongly encouraged.

ASHRAE Chapters and members can "speak" for the Society to government officials, so long as they adhere to established ASHRAE policy, positions, and official documents. If you ever have questions, contact both Mark Ames and Jim Scarborough in ASHRAE's Government Affairs Office at WashDC@ashrae.org or 202-833-1830.

⁶ <http://waptac.org/Program-Guidance/2016-Program-Guidance-Documents.aspx>