

Uniform Methods Project

Uniform Methods Project Overview

Calculating Savings from Energy Efficiency Programs

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The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has initiated the Uniform Methods Project to bring uniformity to the way energy savings are calculated for energy efficiency programs. The project goal is to develop and deploy a consistent method for calculating savings for a particular measure. DOE hopes to develop a method for each of the most common residential and commercial energy efficiency measures and programs.

Background

Current practice for evaluation measurement and verification (EM&V) of energy efficiency measures allows for multiple methods for calculating energy savings. These methods were developed to meet the needs of energy efficiency program administrators and regulators. While the methods served their original objectives well, they have resulted in differing and incomparable savings results—even for identical measures—in different energy efficiency programs and in different jurisdictions. The inconsistent results, especially when derived from the same measures, have limited the acceptance of reported energy savings.

DOE is sponsoring a stakeholder effort to develop a common method to calculate savings for a particular energy efficiency measure. This effort will:

- Provide states and program administrators with clear, accessible, step-by-step methods to determine savings
- Reduce the cost of EM&V for public utility commissions, utilities, and program administrators
- Enable comparison of savings across similar efficiency programs and measures
- Strengthen the credibility of energy efficiency savings.

Project Scope

DOE expects the Uniform Methods Project to define the following items for a specific set of end-use efficiency programs and measures:

- Applicability of a specific method for measuring savings and the data required
- Specific criteria and guidance on determining baselines
- Method for determining first-year and life-cycle savings
- Reporting guidelines and template appropriate for the required data and method

- Other items as necessary and relevant to ensure that the savings calculated using the method will be comparable regardless of who performs the calculation.

DOE and the Uniform Methods Project Steering Committee recognize that a number of organizations have already completed a significant amount of work in EM&V. Therefore this project will build from understood and accepted best practices for savings calculations, with the participation of technical experts and users of EM&V documents.

Methods Development and Review

DOE has convened stakeholders to facilitate a process to develop uniform methods: the Uniform Methods Project Steering Committee, technical advisory groups, and teams of technical experts. Technical experts will begin the process by developing a consensus method for calculating savings and will present that method to the technical advisory groups for approval. Upon approval, the technical advisory groups will present the results to the steering committee. When the steering committee has completed its review of the results, there will be an industry review. Finally, there will be a formal public comment period before the methods are finalized.

When this process is completed, the steering committee will present the methods to DOE for its final review and designation as the standard method for calculating energy savings for that particular measure or program. Stakeholders are encouraged to adopt the methods, but adoption is voluntary.

The first phase of this project will focus on seven measures:

- Commercial lighting
- Commercial unitary HVAC systems
- Lighting controls
- Refrigerator recycling
- Residential boilers and furnaces
- Residential lighting
- Whole-house retrofits

Contact

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