

The Guidelines for Home Energy Professionals Project

The U.S. Department of Energy and the home energy upgrade industry collaborate to define high-quality work and develop highly qualified workers.

The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) was created in 1976 and has weatherized more than 7.3 million households since its inception. Throughout the years, private industry, public utilities, municipalities, and states have also implemented numerous home energy upgrade programs in the market—making weatherization efforts a staple in their energy efficiency portfolios.

The Guidelines for Home Energy Professionals project was created to provide a high-quality baseline between states, agencies, employers, employees, and homeowners by incorporating input from 2,000 home performance industry members and more than 30 years of DOE weatherization experience.

The Guidelines for Home Energy Professionals project was developed using a three-pronged approach:

- 1. Defining the Work:** The Standard Work Specifications
- 2. Validating the Training:** Accreditation of Energy Efficiency Training Programs
- 3. Certifying the Worker:** Home Energy Professional Certifications

Defining the Work

A home energy upgrade job is a collection of individual measures (e.g., attic insulation) aimed at increasing the energy efficiency of a particular system in a building. These individual measures are the focus of the Standard Work Specifications for Home Energy Upgrades. The Standard Work Specifications define the minimum acceptable outcomes for any weatherization or home performance task to be effective, durable, and safe. The intention is to provide one, universal resource for all



Components of the Guidelines for Home Energy Professionals Project

1. Define the Work

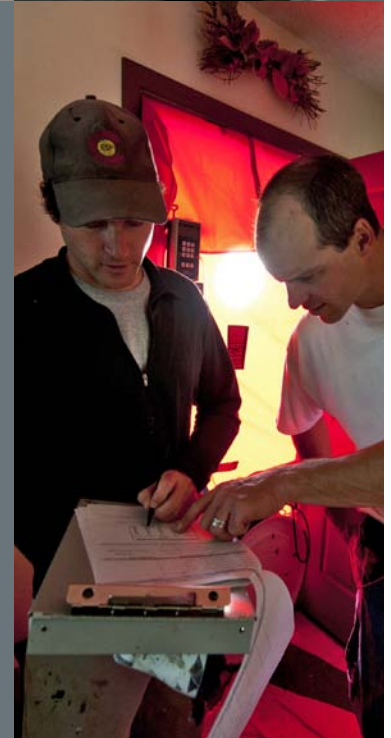
Standard Work Specifications for Home Energy Upgrades describe the outcomes for energy efficiency measures.

2. Validate the Training

Training organizations for home energy professionals base their curricula on common, minimum standards.

3. Certify the Worker

Four Home Energy Professional worker certifications demonstrate worker capabilities to perform high-quality home energy upgrades that are consistent within the industry.



individuals working in the field, including trainers and training coordinators, energy auditors, quality control inspectors, home inspectors, crew leaders, and energy efficiency program administrators.

The definition of the work and the specifications for successfully completing a particular measure are a major step in establishing residential energy upgrades as a national industry. The Guidelines for Home Energy Professionals project initially focuses on Standard Work Specifications for Single-Family Home Energy Upgrades. DOE and its National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) engaged hundreds of subject matter experts and conducted several industry technical reviews and public comment periods to develop this document. Guidelines for multifamily and manufactured housing are scheduled to follow.

Validating the Training

High-quality work requires well-trained workers. DOE and NREL developed Job Task Analyses (JTAs) to set a foundation for accredited training curricula development and execution.

The JTAs cover four major energy upgrade job classifications (quality control inspector, energy auditor, crew leader, and retrofit installer technician) and define the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities for each job category.

The four JTAs, which were developed and validated by the weatherization and home energy upgrade industries, are available at www.wip.energy.gov/about_certifications.html. This common resource confirms that training organizations are educating their students using the same standards and everyone has the same expectations for each job classification.

The four JTAs also serve as a basis for new, third-party accreditation of energy efficiency training programs through the Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC) and drive a suite of new national worker certifications supported by DOE.

Certifying the Worker

Four new Home Energy Professional certifications are also part of the Guidelines effort, targeting a worker's capacity to demonstrate concrete and consistent ability within the industry. These advanced certifications are job-oriented and require a fully trained or experienced professional to demonstrate the comprehensive knowledge, skills, and abilities to be successful in a specific role. Candidates must have upfront job experience as a prerequisite in addition to passing both a written and practical exam.

The new Home Energy Professional certifications — funded by DOE, developed by NREL, and administered by the Building Performance Institute, Inc.—are intended to complement one another and provide a career lattice in the home energy upgrade industry.

For more information about the Guidelines project, see www.wip.energy.gov/about_certifications.html.

The Benefits of this Project

For Workers: Trained and certified workers have a competitive edge in the marketplace. Consumers perceive certifications as an assurance of quality and certified workers become sought after employees as jobs arise.

For Industry: Home energy upgrade programs and contractors nationwide can choose to increase their quality of work, reduce call backs, and improve profitability.

For Training Providers: Industry standards are stabilized and training providers are able to implement tried and trusted curricula. With one universal and comprehensive guide, training centers no longer have to spend large amounts of time covering standards for each and every state.

For Consumers: Consumers can have greater confidence that purchased energy upgrades are the energy upgrades they need, and the work will be completed correctly by trained and qualified professionals.

“The Electric & Gas Industries Association (EGIA) is excited to see the Guidelines for Home Energy Professionals project moving forward. It's vital that leading utility, government, and energy organization-sponsored programs signal to the weatherization and home energy upgrade industries that they value high-quality work and have the best interests of the consumer in mind.”

— Ed Thomas, Vice President of Utility and Government Services, Electric & Gas Industries Association (EGIA)

Photos (from front page): NREL/PIX 18028, NREL/PIX 18023, NREL/PIX 17951, NREL/PIX 18029, by Dennis Schroeder

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
ENERGY

Energy Efficiency &
Renewable Energy

For more information, visit:
wip.energy.gov/retrofit_guidelines.html.

DOE/GO-102012-3765 • November 2012

Printed with a renewable-source ink on paper containing at least 50% wastepaper, including 10% post consumer waste.