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Annual Report Template

How to Use this Home Performance with ENERGY STAR Document

EPA has developed this document to provide Sponsors with a template to ensure all information required by the partnership agreement is submitted to EPA. The Annual report is due December 15th of every calendar year, and can be submitted as an application for ENERGY STAR awards. Please see section C-2 of the Partnership Agreement for details on this requirement.

SPONSOR INFORMATION

Date	1/7/2011
Name of Sponsor	Xcel Energy
Location	Minnesota

CONTRACTOR RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Please include a summary of recruitment and training activities performed in the last calendar year. Include number of new contractors, training courses offered and attended, and any other pertinent information.

You may also include number of jobs completed, progress toward your program goals, energy savings, or any other metrics to illustrate your program's current status. Feel free to attach additional pages, as needed.

In order for an installation contractor to participate in Xcel's HPwES program, contractors at a minimum needed to complete the following:

- Attend and complete the Xcel Energy HPwES and Whole House System training
- Sign and agree to the terms and conditions contained in the Xcel Energy Participation Installation Contractor Agreement, which among other things, details certain customer service requirements and commonly recognized best practices for the trade involved in our HPwES program
- Provide the following documentation along with signed Contractor Agreement:
 - o Proof of Liability Insurance
 - o Copies of State or Local licensing (as applicable based on area of trade)
- Remain in good standing

We held our Whole House System Trainings in February. In the end we had 77 contractors on the 2010 PIC list.



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QUALITY ASSURANCE ACTIVITIES

Please include a summary of your QA activities for the previous year. Include number of jobs reviewed (in-field and desktop). If you have made any changes to your QA plan, please details those changes here.

100% of all program participants must complete our on-site test-out requirements in order to receive Xcel Energy rebates. Those requirements include:

- A physical inspection of all required and optional measures installed by the customer. Work must be completed according to accepted industry best standards.
- A CAZ test and blower door test.
- Provide the test-out inspector, all applicable receipts for installed recommendations.

Projects that did not pass the test-out requirements were brought to the attention of the PIC who completed the work. Neighborhood Energy Connection worked directly with the PIC to detail the issue or issues discovered and any corrective actions needed for the project to pass.

In addition, each rebate application was reviewed by Xcel Energy's rebate operations team for accuracy. All receipts were reviewed and eligibility is confirmed before rebates are sent to the customer.

MARKETING PRACTICES

Please include a summary of marketing practices from the previous year. Include any marketing training or other resources used.

In 2010, we did a broad mix of marketing tactics including:

- Bill Inserts (June)
- Update news articles (February, August and December)
- Online Banner Ads (Weatherbug, Fox News, Star Tribune, KSTP, etc)
- Online Search Engine (Google)
- Remodeling Today Magazine (Summer edition)
- Television (Showcase MN - Kare 11)
- Auditor incentives
- Welcome Packets that include reminder magnet and an envelope to store all receipts along the way.



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MAJOR PROGRAM MODIFICATIONS TO CURRENT OR FUTURE PLANS

Please address any major changes the program is undergoing or plans to undergo in the next year.

For 2010 we had one main modification to the program, which was to increase the rebate amounts to be higher than those of the stand alone programs. We found that this helped motivate customers to go through our Home Performance program rather than to simply take advantage of our rebates one-by-one as they see fit to make the improvements. This technique of higher rebates amounts will continue in the future along with the change of the time-line required for the program. In the past it was always a 6-month period in which customers had to complete all the measures, which is increased to 1 year in 2010. We found this gave customers more time to space out the projects and relieved some of the financial burden they were experiencing with the short time-line.

For 2011, I don't expect any major changes to take place. As always we are always trying to improve our programs and will be continually reviewing the program guidelines. I do anticipate to try out new marketing techniques as the more standard advertising of the program doesn't appear to be bringing in the results we want.