

Increasing Low Income Access & Equity Through Utility Programs

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About VEIC

- Mission to act with urgency to enhance the economic, environmental, and societal benefits of clean and efficient energy use for all people
- Energy efficiency, renewable energy, and transportation
- National and international clients
- Innovative program design and planning
- Transformative policy, advocacy, and research
- Clients: government agencies, regulators, utilities, foundations, and advocates



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Efficiency
Vermont

 EFFICIENCY**SMART**



DC
SUSTAINABLE ENERGY
UTILITY

Get the Goals Right

- Set utility goals for low-income EE programs to ensure access to programs
- Use a fuel-neutral metric to maximize impact
- Count non-energy benefits like improved health and safety in cost-benefit tests



Promote Effective Partnerships

- Partner with WAPs to add on EE measures
- Distribute efficient products at food banks
- Coordinate with partners that address health, safety, and building durability



Provide Access to Financing

- Use credit enhancements to expand access
 - Partner with credit unions, community development & housing agencies
- Relax underwriting criteria
- Include health/safety repairs
- On-bill financing issues:
 - LIHEAP payments
 - Disconnects/penalty fees



Efficient
mortgage
options:
FHA
Fannie Mae
USDA Rural
Development



Encourage Utilities to Offer a Comprehensive Portfolio

- Renters & owners
- Building types:
 - Single & multifamily
 - Public & private
- Measures:
 - Electric, gas, and fuel
 - New construction & retrofit
 - LEDs, electronics, major appliances, behavior, weatherization



Link Efficiency Programs to Low-Income Billing Services



Toolbox:

- Budget plan
- Low-income rate
- Arrearage management
- Discount rate for prepay with no penalties

- Auto-enroll in EE programs
- Deliver targeted savings tips through home energy reports & thermostat apps

Protect Vulnerable Customers During Power Sector Transformation

- Make sure that low-income customers can access smart technologies once proven
- Use defaults & controls that don't require customers to take action
- Ensure that new rates don't expose low-income customers to undue cost or risk



Resources

ACEEE, Building Better Energy Efficiency Programs for Low-Income Households (2016), <http://aceee.org/research-report/a1601>

APPRISE, Ratepayer-Funded Low-Income Energy Programs: Performance and Possibilities (2007),
<http://www.appriseinc.org/reports/NLIEC%20Multi-Sponsor%20Study.pdf>

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