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ENERGY OUTREACH Colorado

Helping Coloradans afford home energy

Better Together: Linking and Leveraging Energy Programs for Low-Income Households

November 19, 2015

Creating a Nonprofit Hub for Energy Assistance

- Overview of Energy Outreach Colorado
- Historical Perspective
- Current EOC Program Matrix
- Energy Efficiency and Behavior Change Programs
- Advocacy Efforts
- How other states can work towards this model

Energy Outreach Colorado Overview

- Mission – To ensure all Colorado households have access to home energy
- Since 1989, distributed more than $250 Million
- Programs - bill payment assistance, energy efficiency, behavior change, and advocacy
- Strong utility partnerships across the state
- Staff serve on Governor appointed energy committees
- Actively intervene at the Colorado Public Utilities Commission
- Monitor many coalitions – state and national
  - National Energy and Utility Affordability Coalition

EOC's History

- Created in 1989 by Governor's Executive Order
- Existing utility programs were transferred to the newly created organization
- EOC is a 501(c)(3) with independent Board of Directors
- Funding came from:
  - Traditional utility bill insert programs
  - Unclaimed utility deposits and refunds (legislated)
  - Direct mail programs, corporations, and foundations
  - Fines and utility settlements (regulatory)

Program Evolution

- Initially funding supplemented state LIHEAP
- LIHEAP (heating) operates in Colorado November – April and is county administered by DHS
- Recognized need for year-round assistance for all energy needs, including electricity
- EOC developed year-round assistance program for all fuel types through partnership with 125+ community based assistance agencies statewide (like CAPs)
- Require clients apply for LIHEAP first when open

Current Energy Assistance Program

- When client isn't eligible for LIHEAP, EOC assistance can be provided seamlessly to the client
- Tracked in centralized database to ensure client receives assistance only once a year
- Vendor payments to utilities
- Partnership with school districts, United Way's 211, and counties is expanding participation
- EOC also initiated Percent of Income Program in Colorado – all IOUs participate

Expansion to Energy Efficiency

- EOC developed Nonprofit Energy Efficiency Program when cash assistance partners struggled paying bills in 2005-06
- After DSM was mandated, worked at legislature and PUC to ensure that low-income households had restricted DSM funding
- Secured contract with State Energy Office to deliver statewide multi-family weatherization program
- Secured Crisis Intervention Program (furnace repair and replacement) contract with State LIHEAP and transformed service delivery

EOC Program Funding Matrix

Bill Payment Assistance	Energy Efficiency Projects	Efficiency Education & Advocacy
Utility Bill Check off Programs - legislation for IOUs - REAs and MUNIs participate	Utility Demand Side Management (DSM) Contracts – (legislation and regulatory) IOUs, REAs, MUNIs	Individuals and Corporate donors
Residential Late Fees – Xcel Energy (regulatory)	State Weatherization Funds – Multi-family buildings	Contracts with Affordable Housing Developers and Housing Authorities
Severance Tax Operational Funds – State funds (legislation)	Crisis Intervention Program – LIHEAP Funds – furnace repair and replacement	Utilities are beginning to fund resident engagement programs - Pilot with Xcel Energy
Individual Donors - 20,000 annual donors	City and County of Denver – franchise fee negotiation	Facility manager trainings for Multi-family and Nonprofits
Corporations and Foundations	Oil and gas producers; Individuals and Corporate donors	Lobbyist and regulatory attorney on contract; pro bono attorney
$10 Million per year	**$10-12 Million per year**	**$500,000**

EOC Advocacy Efforts

- Regulatory Activities
  - Intervention in Rate Cases
  - Intervention in Utility Mergers/Acquisitions
  - Participation in Rule Making
  - Initiated Percent of Income Payment Program
  - Fines from utility noncompliance

- Legislative Activities
  - Unclaimed Utility Deposits and Refunds
  - Natural Gas Deregulation (not active in CO but EOC could benefit)
  - Low Income Energy Assistance Act – voluntary check off program on utility bills
  - Low-income program requirement in DSM programs
  - Severance tax funding for low-income programs

Key Success Factors

- Being active in Advocacy – ensuring low-income issues are considered
- Leveraging Funds – public, utility and other private funds
- Understanding Funders' Goals
  - Utilities = Energy Savings
  - State and DOE = Production; quality of measures installed
  - Cities and Corporations = Carbon Reduction
- Energy Efficiency Subcontractor Model; able to ramp up and down quickly
- Producing and Tracking Results and Good Reporting
  - Database – tracking units, kW, kWh, Dths, carbon
  - Outcomes – Measurement and Verification
  - Continuous Process Improvement
- Keeping the clients needs first
  - Building Owners and Residents
  - Advocacy on their behalf – no one else considered their needs

What other states can do

- Ensure funding for low-income programs – special consideration
- Advocate at Legislature and Public Utilities Commission
- Establish strong partnerships with utilities, State Energy Office and LIHEAP
- Statewide Participation – no community left out
- Active Stakeholder Participation – include all communities – seniors, disabled, communities of color, rural, resort
- Focus on improving existing program infrastructure
- Ensure maximum consumer protections
- Focus on health and safety benefits in addition to energy savings

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