

Energy Performance Score Program Hits 1000 Home Audits in Washington State

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PORTLAND, Ore., March 22, 2011 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Earth Advantage Institute, a nonprofit green building resource and certification group, announced that its Energy Performance Score (EPS) programs in Washington State have produced more than 1000 home energy audits and are continuing at a high rate.

The programs, undertaken with municipal and utility district partners, are part of Earth Advantage Institute's strategy to help cities boost residential retrofit upgrade rates and reduce carbon emissions, a key goal for many regions.

While all the programs are ongoing -- including a Seattle EPS pilot of 5,000 homes, a Bellingham pilot of 900 homes, and programs in Snohomish, Thurston and Kitsap counties -- initial data are showing very effective post-audit retrofit rates. The Bellingham program, for example, has returned a retrofit rate of 50 percent to-date, with 300 audits completed and 150 energy upgrades finished or underway, according to the Opportunity Council, which manages the program.

Such rates far surpass conventional program "conversion" rates because of an innovative model that uses the Energy Performance Score, similar to a miles-per-gallon rating for homes, as a market mechanism to enable home buyers and homeowners to compare energy consumption among homes. When combined with a one-stop shopping process that walks consumers through the audit, upgrade recommendations, contractor bids and financing options, the result is a higher uptake rate of energy work.

"The Energy Performance Score and associated Energy Analysis Report are helpful tools in motivating homeowners to make energy efficiency improvements," said Shawn Collins, manager of the Community Energy Challenge. "Homeowners respond well to the presentation of information in the documents, particularly concerning the estimated energy savings to be realized. The EPS reports paired with cash incentives for participating homeowners have been key factors in the 50% uptake rate that we are seeing in the residential market."

About Earth Advantage Institute

Earth Advantage Institute works with the building and design industry to help implement sustainable building practices. Its nonprofit mission is to create an immediate, practical and cost-effective path to sustainability and carbon reduction in the built environment. The organization achieves its objectives through a range of innovative certification, education and technical services programs.

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