Guidelines for Home Energy Professionals

Defining High-Quality Work and Developing Highly Qualified Workers

The Guidelines for Home Energy Professionals (GHEP) provide universal resources to support high-quality work and a skilled, credentialed workforce for home energy upgrades. GHEP incorporates input from more than 2,000 home performance industry members and draws on 45 years of U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) weatherization experience to provide a high-quality baseline across states, agencies, employers, employees, and homeowners.

To support the increasing need for quality home energy upgrades, through both the DOE Weatherization Assistance Program and across private industry, utilities, municipalities, and states, GHEP provides a three-pronged approach:

- **Work Definition:** The Standard Work Specifications (SWS) describe minimum quality outcomes for energy efficiency measures.
- **Training Validation:** Training organizations base their curricula on common, minimum standards.
- **Worker Credentials:** Certifications demonstrate that workers have the knowledge and ability to perform high-quality home energy upgrades.

Work Definition

A home energy upgrade is a collection of individual measures (e.g., installing attic insulation and air sealing) aimed at increasing the energy efficiency of a building. Comprising more than 1,500 specifications, the SWS describes the minimum acceptable outcomes for any weatherization or home performance measure to be effective, durable, and safe. The SWS provides one universal resource for all individuals working in the field, including trainers and training coordinators, energy auditors, quality control inspectors, installers, home inspectors, crew leaders, and energy efficiency program administrators and implementers.

GHEP establishes the SWS for single-family homes, multifamily homes, and manufactured housing energy upgrades, and the specifications for successfully completing a particular measure can be applied to any residential energy upgrade work. To develop this online resource, DOE and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) engaged thousands of subject matter experts, conducted several industry technical reviews, and held several public comment periods. NREL continues to maintain the SWS at sws.nrel.gov.

Training Validation

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

The Job Task Analyses cover four major energy upgrade job classifications—quality control inspector, energy auditor, crew leader, and retrofit installer technician—and define the tasks,

A Benchmark for Quality

GHEP resources directly support the DOE Weatherization Assistance Program's Quality Work Plan, which establishes a benchmark for quality home energy updates. It defines what constitutes a quality installation of weatherization measures, outlines how those measures are inspected and validated, and prescribes acceptable training and credentialing of workers. The work plan is an example of a benchmark approach that supports consistent, high-quality work and develops highly qualified workers. Learn more at energy.gov/scep/quality-work-plan-requirements.

knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for each. The Job Task Analyses also support competency-based professional certifications and assessment-based certificate programs. These programs provide clear guidance for curriculum, assessments, screening, and other requirements for awarding certifications and certificates for home energy upgrade professionals in any field.

The Job Task Analyses, which were validated by the weatherization and home performance industry, serve as the basis for third-party accreditation of residential energy efficiency training centers. Learn more at energy.gov/scep/guidelines-home-energy-professionals-credentials.

Worker Credentials

Home Energy Professional certifications establish a worker's competency to perform the tasks required for weatherization home upgrades.

These advanced certifications are job-specific and require a fully trained and experienced professional to demonstrate the comprehensive knowledge, skills, and abilities to be successful in a specific role.

Certifications give workers a competitive edge in the marketplace and help home energy upgrade programs and contractors increase their quality of work and improve profitability. To learn more about the Home Energy Professional certifications, visit energy.gov/scep/guidelines-home-energy-professionals-credentials.

The Installer Badges Toolkit provides a flexible, customizable model for a competency-based, on-the-job, apprenticeship approach to training and skills recognition across the home performance industry. Based on a JTA and the SWS, the Installer Badges Toolkit consists of 25 badges, each representing different energy efficiency tasks that an installer could perform on a home. The badges support industry-wide consistency across the country for workers completing similar work requiring the same skills. Learn more at sws.nrel.gov/installerbadges.

Connect With Us

For more information about GHEP, visit energy.gov/scep/guidelines-home-energy-professionals

or email us at workforce.guidelines@nrel.gov.

Photos from Energy Resource Center

For more information, visit: energy.gov/scep

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