



A Vermont Home Energy Savings Campaign

September 2009

Guide for Organizing a Home Energy Savings Workshop in Your Community

A) Overview

Central Vermont Community Action Council is working in partnership with community groups, municipalities, businesses, and non-profit organizations to organize local home energy saving workshops. In 2008, community groups and other sponsors organized 100 home energy saving workshops statewide reaching over 2700 Vermonters. These workshops are being conducted with the support of Efficiency Vermont and the Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network and with funding from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

The Button Up workshops are designed to teach residents about the fundamentals of how homes lose energy, simple do-it-yourself measures for incremental energy savings, significant saving opportunities associated with extensive energy retrofits, and available technical and financial resources. Button-Up Vermont will arrange for a trained energy auditor to come to your community at no-cost to deliver a prepared slide presentation and will provide you with educational and publicity materials. Participating community groups and municipalities have primary responsibility for arranging with Button Up Vermont for a presenter, finding a suitable location for the workshop and undertaking related logistical arrangements, publicizing the program locally, and collecting workshop evaluation forms. Participating groups may also choose to work with local retailers to provide discounted weatherization materials. Workshops are scheduled to begin in late-September and run through the fall and into early winter.

In the early fall, Button Up, in cooperation with regional planning commissions, will hold a series of eight regional information sessions around the state for groups planning to host or interested in hosting a Button Up workshop. The purpose of these regional sessions is to:

- Provide an overview of the Button Up program and offer some ideas on organizing one in your community;
- Distribute boxes of educational and publicity materials for you to distribute at the Button Up workshop; and,
- Provide an opportunity for towns to explore jointly hosting a Button Up Workshop.

B) Workshop Format

We propose that the Button Up workshop format consists of a PowerPoint slide presentation, speakers on energy-related topics of your choosing, and the showing of a 1/2 hour DVD on do-it-yourself weatherization measures. These components are described in more detail below.

PowerPoint slide presentation: Button Up Vermont has shortened and revised last year’s slide presentation and has prepared a 60-75 minute slideshow that will be delivered by a certified energy auditor who has been trained in the presentation. Workshop presenters will be asked to bring weatherization equipment and materials for display, e.g. a blower door, spray foam guns, and weatherstripping.

Local speakers: We are proposing that local organizers consider inviting individuals with knowledge on various energy-related topics to give short presentations. You might also want to invite speakers and local businesses to set up display tables with information and products.

Topic	Potential Speakers
Low-income weatherization assistance/fuel assistance program:	Community action agency
Wood stove safety	Local fire department
Solar hot water/electric systems	Solar installers
Weatherization materials	Local retailers
Wood pellet/cord wood stoves	Local retailers
Home weatherization retrofit	Local resident who has gone through the Home Performance with ENERGY STAR program

Video on Do-It-Yourself Weatherization Tips: One of the main comments we received from last year’s Button Up workshop was an interest in receiving more hands-on explanations of steps that people can take to weatherize their homes. In response, Button Up Vermont has prepared a ½ hour DVD on, “Simple Weatherization Measures to Button Up Your Home.” This DVD is designed for individuals with basic handyman skills and provides step-by-step procedures for weatherizing attic hatches or pull-down attic stairs, air sealing plumbing and wiring penetrations in the attic and basement, weatherizing bulkhead doors and other exterior doors, plugging air leaks along the box sills, and installing an interior storm window, among other tips. We propose that you offer this video at the end of the workshop for those participants who are interested.

Attached please find a proposed agenda for the Button Up workshop (See Attachment A: Workshop Description and Agenda).

C) Steps for Organizing a Home Energy Savings Workshop

Workshop Presenters: If you haven’t done so already, please contact *Button Up Vermont* to secure a date for your workshop, and we will then arrange for a workshop presenter to come to your community (Email; Button-up@cvcac.org or call -- 802 279 1708). We will provide you with the workshop presenter’s contact information so that you can make necessary logistical arrangements with him/her.

As noted above, we encourage you to invite a member of your community to the workshop who has recently had an energy audit and has implemented a comprehensive energy retrofit on their house. Our preference is that you find someone who has used the *Home Performance with ENERGY STAR* program to talk about their experience and how it improved their comfort and reduced their energy use. *Home Performance with ENERGY STAR* is a national program from the U.S. EPA and U.S. Department of Energy, and is overseen locally by Efficiency Vermont. It offers a comprehensive, whole-house approach for improving energy efficiency and comfort in your home. We suggest that you ask your workshop presenter to contact individuals with whom they have performed a comprehensive energy retrofit on their home, and to have your presenters ask this individual if they might be interested in speaking about their experiences at the Button Up workshop.

Site Logistics: As a local workshop organizer, you are responsible for securing a meeting location, arranging food, finding audio-video equipment, and displaying educational materials. Any costs associated with site logistics will be borne by local organizers. These site logistics are described below.

- **Meeting space:** We suggest finding a meeting room that can comfortably seat the anticipated number of participants from your community – which could range between 30 -100 people. The room should be handicap accessible, if possible. You should plan on conducting a walk-through of the space prior to the workshop to be sure the lighting and other mechanical details are in full working order. We suggest that the Button Up workshop be the only activity taking place in the room at the time to minimize distractions.
- **Food:** We propose that you provide refreshments such as drinks and snacks, which can often be provided by local volunteers or through local business donations.
- **Audio-video equipment:** You will need a laptop computer, a projection screen, and LCD projector for the presentation. Please be sure to have a relatively recent version of “Powerpoint” (a slide presentation software) on the laptop that you bring. The workshop presenters will bring an electronic version of the presentation to use on your computer. (In some cases, the workshop presenter will be able to bring their own laptop computer; please be sure to check with the presenter when you contact them.) Also, the laptop computer will be essential for playing the “how-to” weatherization DVD.

You might also need some type of audio system with speakers or public address system that is appropriate for the room size – depending on the space. We strongly encourage you to test all audio-video equipment well before the start of the workshop to ensure that it is working properly. We suggest finding a community member knowledgeable in audio-visual equipment and PowerPoint to assist in your efforts.

- **Educational materials:** Button Up Vermont will provide you with educational materials on home weatherization tips, financing and technical resources, and other pertinent information. These materials will be distributed at the regional information sessions for you to take back to your community for distribution. Button Up Vermont will also

provide you with a workshop evaluation form for you to distribute to all workshop participants (see below). We can also mail publicity and educational materials to you, if necessary.

Registration: We ask that you establish a workshop registration table and have all individuals attending the workshop sign in and provide their contact information (particularly email addresses and phone numbers), in case you want to follow-up with individuals. Button Up Vermont will ask you to provide us with this contact list so that we can undertake follow-up evaluation of participants. We suggest setting up several tables near the entrance for educational materials.

Outreach: We encourage you to use a broad range of approaches for reaching out to residents in your community. It is important that community members hear about the workshop from a variety of sources. Publicity professionals often refer to the “Rule of Three” which states that people must hear about an event three times before it makes its way onto their calendar! We suggest using the following outreach methods, including:

- **Personal contact:** The most effective means for getting people to a workshop or meeting is personal contact – either through phone calls, giving announcements at other organizational meetings, or face-to-face conversations. Also, consider sending invitations to certain participants who you think might benefit greatly from the workshop.

Network: We encourage you to network with other organizations in your community, such as the local Area Agency on Aging, local food shelf, conservation commission, offices of the Center for Independent Living, civic groups like Rotary and Kiwanis Club, and town officials. An effective avenue for reaching out to these groups is to attend their meetings or send them notices about the workshop and asking them to inform their members. If these groups also have a web site or e-newsletter, you can provide them with an announcement, electronic flyer, or other content for them to post and distribute within their list serves.

- **Posters:** Button Up Vermont will provide each local organizer with copies of an 11” x 17” poster that announces the workshop and provides space for specific information about date, time, and location of your workshop, along with contact information. You might also want to consider making mini-posters/flyers and placing stacks on the counters of local stores, businesses, library, post office, and other public locations.
- **Media:** Button Up Vermont will compile a list of all workshops statewide and make this available through various media outlets. Efficiency Vermont will update this schedule on its website on a weekly basis. We will also be sending periodic updates to the state’s daily and weekly papers with a schedule of the Button Up workshops within a region. Further, Button Up Vermont will be filming a ½ hour show for cable access stations touching upon some of the key points in the Button Up presentation and encouraging people to attend a workshop. This cable access show will be distributed to cable access stations throughout the state.

We encourage you to contact both local newspapers and radio stations to publicize the workshop. We are providing you with a sample press kit that includes a sample press release, calendar announcement, and radio public service announcement. (See Attachment C: Press Kit for Button Up Vermont.) Some information about these is provided below:

- Notices in community publications: You will want to place notices about the workshop in community publications, including school newsletters, and monthly community newspapers. Be sure to ask your local paper to put an item in their calendar section. You should also consider sending your local papers a press release announcing the workshop and then following up with a reporter about doing a story. Note that deadlines vary, but deadlines can be six weeks or more in advance of the event.
- Radio and TV- Button Up Vermont is preparing and distributing radio and TV public service announcements statewide informing people about the Button Up workshops and encouraging them to visit the Efficiency Vermont website (or phone number) for a workshop schedule. We encourage you to send local radio stations a calendar listing of your workshop. We also encourage you to coordinate with other towns in your region to contact radio stations about doing short interviews on energy savings and workshop times.

Working with Local Retailers: We encourage you to work with local retailers to engage them in providing weatherization materials at discounted rates. To help sell the idea to them you can offer several benefits if they participate, including publicity, good will, and bolstering their image as a good “citizen” of the community. *Button Up Vermont* will provide you with “retailer decals” for participating stores to place on their windows to indicate that they are part of the program.

Materials to consider asking your local retailer to discount include: window kits, caulk and caulk guns, foam guns and cans of foam, interior storm window kites, and weatherstripping. Retailers can offer discounts in a number of ways, including “Buy 2 – Get 1 Free,” or receiving 10-20% off of specific items. We also suggest that you encourage local retailers to attend the workshop to confirm the promotional efforts that they are offering.

Many retailers are already participating in a program to sell discounted compact fluorescent lightbulbs through Efficiency Vermont. These retailers may also be interested in offering discounts on weatherization materials. For a list of participating retailers in the CFL program, see www.efficiencyvermont.com/pages/Residential/Marketplace.

Efficiency Vermont has graciously offered the assistance of their retail account managers to work with you to select a local retailer that may be able to help you put together a local program. Please be clear that neither Button Up Vermont or Efficiency Vermont has any funds to underwrite the cost of these discounts. EVT already has working relationships with hardware stores and other retailers offering discounted compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). The retail account managers meet regularly with local retailers and are willing to help facilitate your conversation with them about what kind of discounts they can offer on weatherization materials such as caulking and weather stripping, reprogrammable thermostats, and other

energy saving measures. The retail account managers may be able to join you for a meeting with a local retailer during one of their trips through their service area. Below are the list of the Retail Account Managers and the counties they serve, along with their phone number. Please feel free to contact them if you are interested in pursuing this component further.

- Michael Middleton- Rutland, Windsor, Bennington, & Windham counties 802-881-4677
- Kate Salerno- Chittenden & Addison Counties 802-522-5519
- Steve Howard- Essex, Orleans, Caledonia, Orange & (portions of) Washington counties 802-310-0267
- Catherine Beauregard- Grand Isle, Franklin, Lamoille, & (portions of) Washington counties 802-338-8237

Door Prizes: In addition to discounts on weatherization products described above, you might want to consider offering door prizes to workshop participants and use this as a marketing tool to encourage people to attend the workshop. For example, you can offer door prizes for items such as free caulk guns, weatherstripping, interior storm window kits, or spray foam guns. Local retailers might provide these materials at no-cost in exchange for promotion of their store. Further, if your organization has funds available, you might consider subsidizing the cost of an energy audit and offering it as one of the door prizes.

Workshop Evaluation: As part of our efforts to monitor the impact of the program, we ask that you let *Button Up Vermont* know the total number of people who attend your workshop. We are also interested in other indicators for measuring the impact of the program. Of particular interest, Button Up Vermont is interested in keeping track of the number of participants who move forward with having an energy audit and/or major energy retrofit conducted under the Home Performance with ENERGY STAR program.

As noted above, *Button Up Vermont* will provide you with a workshop evaluation forms to distribute to workshop participants at the conclusion of the workshop. These workshop evaluation forms will help us understand the effectiveness of the presentation. We ask for your assistance in reminding participants to complete the evaluation form before they leave the workshop. The workshop presenter will be responsible for returning the completed evaluation forms to *Button Up Vermont*.

D) Resources:

Button Up Vermont: If you are interested in having a Button Up workshop in your community, please contact Diana Peduzzi, Assistant Coordinator, *Button Up Vermont* at Button-up@cvcac.org (802 279 1708), or Paul Markowitz, Coordinator, *Button Up Vermont* at paul@markowitzvt.com (802 229 6307).

Help for Vermont: For a description of a wide range of programs to help Vermonters address food and fuel issues, see www.helpforvt.org or call 211.

Efficiency Vermont: For an extensive description of efficiency improvements and resources for helping improve energy efficiency in your home and business, see www.encyvermont.org or call Toll-free: 1-888-921-5990.

Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network: for assistance in forming a local energy committee or guidance in undertaking local energy projects. Contact Bob Walker@ Sustainable Energy Resource Group -- 802 785 4128 (Robert.J.Walker@valley.net); or Deb Sachs @ Alliance for Climate Action -- 802 658 8487 (dsachs@10percentchallenge.org); or Joey Miller @ Vermont Natural Resources Council – 802 223 2328 (jmiller@vnrc.org); or Paul Markowitz @ VT Chapter of Sierra Club – 802 229 6307 (paul@markowitzvt.com).

Attachment A: Workshop Description and Agenda



A Vermont Home Energy Savings Campaign

Workshop Description and Agenda

Button Up Vermont is working in partnership with town energy committees, educational centers, civic groups, businesses, and non-profit organizations throughout the state to help organize free home energy saving workshops.

Through a series of two-hour workshops, residents will learn about:

- Fundamentals of how homes lose energy,
- Simple do-it-yourself measures for incremental energy savings,
- Significant saving opportunities associated with extensive energy retrofits, and
- Available technical and financial resources.

Attached is a sample agenda.

Workshop participants will receive educational materials on measures they can undertake themselves, contact information for energy audit services, lending institutions that offer low-interest loans for energy retrofits, and other information.

Button Up Vermont is an initiative of the Central Vermont Community Action Council, in partnership with the Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network and Efficiency Vermont. Funding is provided by the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. If you are interested in finding out about organizing a workshop in your community or for your workplace, please contact Diana Peduzzi at button-up@cvcac.org or 802 279 1708. For information about a workshop in your area, [visit www.encyvermont.com](http://www.encyvermont.com) or call 1-888-921-5990.

Proposed Agenda

Button Up Vermont -- Home Energy Saving Workshop

Workshop Goals

The goals of the Button Up workshop are to improve residents' understanding of:

- How your home loses heat
- Some of the most cost-effective solutions for saving energy and fuel
- An understanding of what you can do yourself and when you need a professional
- Some basic weatherization and energy conservation tips
- Health and safety issues associated with improving efficiency
- Technical and financial resources available

Proposed Agenda

6:45 Refreshments, Registration

7:00 Welcome and Agenda Overview (*local organizers*)

- Welcome participants
- Review agenda for the evening
- Acknowledge elected officials, other folks
- Introduce workshop presenter

7:05 Workshop Overview (*workshop presenter*)

- Efficiency and conservation: no-cost/low-cost actions to save energy
- How homes lose heat: fundamental of building heat loss
- Air barrier: specific locations in your home of air leakage and opportunities for air sealing
- Thermal barrier: preventing conductive heat loss through insulation
- Health and safety issues associated with energy efficiency
- Technical and financial resources available to save energy
- Questions and answers

8:15 Local Speakers Panel (local speakers –optional)

8:45 Break

9:00 Video: "Simple Weatherization Measures to Button Up Your Home."

9:30 Adjourn

Attachment C: Press Kit for Button Up Vermont

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: [YOUR NAME]

Where: [YOUR PHONE, YOUR E MAIL]

[TODAY'S DATE]



A Vermont Home Energy Savings Campaign

FREE BUTTON UP WORKSHOP COMING TO [YOUR COMMUNITY HERE] [DATE]

([YOUR COMMUNITY NAME]) Want to reduce home energy use, but not sure where to start? Tired of cold or drafty spots around your house? Wondering what resources are available to help make efficiency improvements?

You'll learn about all this and more by attending a free *Button Up Vermont* workshop on [DAY], [DATE], at [TIME] in [LOCATION]. [NAME OF COMMITTEE] is hosting this session, one of the 100 being held statewide.

The workshop will focus on the greatest opportunities for saving energy in homes and where to find technical and financial resources to get started. *Button Up Vermont's* specially trained presenter will lead a myth busting slideshow, display samples of energy saving materials, and provide free educational resources including a video of do-it-yourself projects.

"Button Up workshops are designed to help people learn about the best ways to save energy in their homes," explains [NAME HERE]. "These free workshops are considered a first step for Vermonters wanting to learn how to be most effective in reducing heating costs."

(Optional sentence: Local retailers are also participating by offering discount coupons at the workshops for weatherization supplies.)

The Central Vermont Community Action Council is offering these workshops, in partnership with Efficiency Vermont and the Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network and with funding from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

To find out more about this workshop, contact [NAME, E-MAIL, PHONE]. You can also visit www.encyvermont.com.

Calendar Listing



A Vermont Home Energy Savings Campaign

PLEASE LIST THIS WORKSHOP IN ALL
CALENDARS. THANK YOU.

Free Button up Workshop Coming to [YOUR COMMUNITY NAME]

[DATE OF EVENT]

[TIME OF EVENT]

[PLACE OF EVENT] (Old Labor Hall, Aldrich Library, etc.)

[STREET ADDRESS/LOCATION OF EVENT]

[TOWN OR VILLAGE]

Attend this free Button Up Vermont workshop to learn hands-on ways you can reduce home energy use and expenses. Refreshments provided.

Cost: FREE

Contact: [YOUR NAME], [YOUR PHONE] or [YOUR E MAIL]

Website: www.encyvermont.com or 888-921-5990.

SAMPLE 30 SECOND PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

PLEASE ANNOUNCE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE [DATE]

CONTACT: [NAME], [PHONE]

30 Seconds Kill Date: [DATE THE DAY AFTER WORKSHOP]

**Find Out How to Lower Heating Bills at
Free *Button Up Vermont* Workshops**

DID YOU KNOW MOST VERMONT HOMES CAN SAVE 20% OR MORE ON THEIR FUEL USE?

TO FIND OUT WHAT YOU CAN DO TO LOWER HEATING BILLS, ATTEND A FREE *BUTTON UP VERMONT* WORKSHOP THIS FALL.

THESE TWO HOUR SESSIONS WILL FOCUS ON PRACTICAL, COST EFFECTIVE MEASURES YOU CAN TAKE.

BUTTON UP VERMONT IS WORKING WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS. YOU CAN ATTEND ONE IN [NAME OF TOWN] ON [DATE] AT [TIME] AT THE [PLACE]. OR FIND A COMPLETE SCHEDULE AT EFFICIENCYVERMONT DOT COM.

LEARN ABOUT THE BEST WAYS TO SAVE ENERGY IN YOUR HOME AT A FREE *BUTTON UP* WORKSHOP NEAR YOU.

Winter Is Coming.

Button Up Vermont!



A Vermont Home Energy Savings Campaign

Come to a free Home Energy Saving Workshop to learn about:

- The most effective strategies for saving energy
- What you can do yourself and when you need a professional
- Where to find technical and financial resources

Where:

When:

Contact:

Produced by Central Vermont Community Action Council, in partnership with the Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network and Efficiency Vermont. Funding provided under the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.