

**Humboldt Energy Task Force
Energy Efficiency and Energy Education
Program Recommendations**

Prepared by

**The Schatz Energy Research Center
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Summary of Recommendations to Humboldt Energy Task Force for Energy Efficiency

The Schatz Energy Research Center (SERC) recommends that the Humboldt Energy Task Force (HETF) implement the following activities to achieve greater energy efficiency in Humboldt County's residential sector. *(Note: The enclosed Zip disk includes MS Word files of all of the fact sheets, brochures, PSAs, display ads, press releases, and other program materials listed below.)*

1. Emphasize educational activities over nuts-and-bolts weatherization programs. Given limitations on staffing and budget for energy programs, educational activities will probably yield greater results (see attached "Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Public Education Campaign").
2. Set up literature distribution racks at key locations (city halls, county buildings, public libraries) to distribute brochures and fact sheets on energy efficiency and solar energy provided by SERC (attached; note that contact addresses and telephone numbers for HETF should be added to these materials before reproducing).
3. Initiate an informational campaign via radio and newspaper using PSAs, display ads and press releases provided by SERC (attached).
4. Create a web site and telephone "hotline" to provide information to residents. The hotline should be a direct phone line to an energy staffer (e.g. at City of Arcata). The web site should initially be very simple and low-maintenance.
5. Organize and deliver a one-day workshop on energy efficiency and renewable energy for residents (see attached "Outline for an Energy Educational Workshop").
6. Organize and deliver a one-day halogen torchiere trade-in event to reduce residential electricity costs and reduce fire hazards (see attached "Halogen Torchiere Trade-In" sheet and files on Zip disk).
7. Promote do-it-yourself energy audits using online energy analysis software (see attached "Energy Auditing Software" sheet and CD-ROM).
8. Provide Humboldt County residents with information on how to finance energy efficiency and solar energy projects (see attached "Financing Energy Projects" sheet).
9. Survey local energy efficient products and services vendors and provide residents with a guide listing available products and services (see attached excerpt from guide prepared by City of Palo Alto Utilities).
10. Monitor energy-related activities of other California local governments via the Local Government Commission and the League of California Cities in order to remain up-to-date on program ideas that could be transferred successfully to Humboldt County. Contacts are Pat Stoner at LGC (916-448-1198) and Aaron Ferguson at LCC (916-658-8249). SERC performed a search for existing case studies on energy efficiency programs (see attached "Case Studies in Municipal Residential Solar Thermal, Solar PV and Weatherization Programs")

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Public Education Campaign

SERC recommends that HETF use public education as its chief tool to achieve residential energy efficiency goals. There are many options for creating weatherization programs in which HETF could provide materials and installation. However, these services are already being provided to low-income households by Redwood Community Action Agency. Providing similar services to higher income households could be legally prohibited as a “gift of public funds.” Furthermore, HETF may find it impossible to provide the staffing resources necessary to manage a “hands-on” weatherization program. At the present time, HETF members have only committed one three-quarter time staff person (City of Arcata) to implementation of energy projects.

A public education campaign, on the other hand, will cost less to implement, will reach more households, and will leave the financing and implementation of weatherization measures in the hands of residents. An education campaign will be useful to residents. While the state has reached out to consumers with its “Flex Your Power” energy education campaign through print and broadcast media, this has not fulfilled the need for detailed, specific information for consumers on how to reduce energy costs. An HETF campaign could provide information relevant to Humboldt County (e.g. less emphasis on summertime cooling, greater attention to rural off-grid residents’ needs and measures that reduce indoor moisture) and contact information to connect residents with local businesses that provide efficiency products and services.

SERC recommends that HETF provide energy education in a variety of formats, including printed brochures and fact sheets; public service announcements, display ads and news releases for the media; and a workshop on energy efficiency and renewable energy. SERC also recommends that the HETF and/or its member agencies establish a telephone “hotline” and a web page to provide information on energy topics to Humboldt County residents and businesses.

One of the most valuable services an energy education program could offer the Humboldt County public would be to make them aware of existing incentives and programs and help them access these services. In the area of energy efficiency, residents should receive information about PG&E’s rebates. PG&E’s current “1-2-3 Cashback” program offers rebates for compact fluorescent lamps, energy-saving home improvements and Energy Star[®] appliances. These rebates range from \$3 (for CFLs) to hundreds of dollars for major appliances. Online information is available at www.pge.com/123/.

For solar photovoltaic projects, residents should be made aware of the California Energy Commission’s Emerging Renewables Buy-Down Program. Information on this program is available online at <http://www.consumerenergycenter.org/buydown/index.html>. There is also a \$750 incentive available from the state for solar hot water systems. Workshops and brochures produced by HETF should emphasize all of these rebates and incentives.

Another valuable resource for residents in reducing their energy costs is the online energy audit. PG&E and other utilities formerly offered in-home professional energy audits as a free service to customers. As part of their efforts to reduce operating costs, most utilities have discontinued these audits. Online computerized audits are now available that customers can perform themselves. Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory has produced an exceptionally effective and user-friendly online audit package. It is called Home Energy Saver, and it is available at <http://hes.lbl.gov>.

SERC has developed templates and example education materials in a number of formats:

- energy fact sheets in tri-fold, bi-fold and full page formats on
 - home heating
 - air sealing
 - insulation
 - lighting
 - phantom loads
 - windows
 - solar thermal energy
 - solar electricity
 - vendors of efficiency products and services
- public service announcements for broadcast media
- press release and display ads for newspapers
- an outline for an educational workshop to encourage residential energy efficiency and use of renewable energy

All of the materials listed above are provided as attachments to this report.

The proposed hotline could simply be the direct phone number for a staff person with energy program responsibilities employed by one of the HETF member jurisdictions. The web page should be designed as a “low maintenance” site, mainly serving to provide basic information on HETF, a calendar of local energy events and links to more detailed energy information, which is already found in abundance elsewhere on the web.