

Vulnerable Populations: Outreach, Trends and New Approaches

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Energy poverty is a distributional issue:

- Some have less than adequate resources and less access to energy services that are enjoyed by a majority
- Energy poverty is affected by:
 - ✓ household's income (aka "energy burden");
 - ✓ energy prices
 - ✓ energy in-efficiency
 - ✓ inadequate weatherization

Understanding Energy Poverty

Distribution

- Income
- Energy Prices
- Energy Efficiency



Recognition

- Vulnerability
- Needs
- Respect

Procedures

- Easy access
- Expedited Services
- Full Compliance w/plans



Tackling Energy Poverty



To help address energy poverty, let's consider:

- **Energy Affordability** – The percent of household income spent on energy, including low-income rates, taxes and energy assistance, inability to invest in more efficient HVAC, or to weatherize
- **Access and Processes** – Little knowledge of assistance programs, weak or mismatched services, program barriers, societal barriers (i.e., transportation, time from work, etc.)
- **Flexibility** – Service providers and utilities must recognize this growing segment and find better ways to serve it

Business as usual = < than optimal results!

Tackling Energy Poverty - **OUTREACH:**



Customer Engagement in a Social World



Tackling Energy Poverty -

OUTREACH:



OUTREACH methods are changing fast...

Information Sources/Technologies allow and mostly **demand real-time** messaging in order to attract, gain and keep your audience...

Cost effective methods:

- *Email Campaigns*
- *Social Media*
- Radio
- Direct Mail

Tackling Energy Poverty - **OUTREACH:**



USE VIDEO!

- Social media is mostly **free**
- Create videos describing your and your partners energy service:
 - ✓ Videos offer affordable viewing opportunities via smart devices
 - ✓ Easily accessible via any platform (web, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)

Atmos Energy's “Driving” OUTREACH:



- “Mobilizing” agency services

Sharing the Warmth
Mobile Billboard –
Texas



← Weatherization Assistance
Wrap - Texas

Great Work Congress!

LIHEAP just received its first big funding increase since FY09.

Despite the Administration's repeated calls to eliminate LIHEAP, Congress boosted LIHEAP +7% in FY18.

Great work NEUAC! Example: <https://neuac.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/The-Reality-of-LIHEAP-6-23-2017.pdf>

Spotlight poverty (i.e., working poor accessing LIHEAP, veterans applying for LIHEAP, aging infrastructure, rising costs of all other services exacerbates energy poverty, etc.)

Percentage of Income Payment Programs (PIPP) can lower energy burdens and increase energy affordability

States with PIPP include: CO, IL, ME, MI, NH, NJ, NV, OH and PA -- See:

<https://liheapch.acf.hhs.gov/docs/PIPPupdate.pdf>

Operational Opportunities...

Is it time to **consider**?

- **Staffing:** Inventory, assess, adapt, automate, modernize and train, etc.
- **Processes:** easily accessible, standardized, consistent, automated, etc.
- **Data:** continuous State, Agency and Energy Vendors access, etc.
- **Partnerships:** Leverage, consistent communication, cooperation and synergy

New Approaches – “Why?”



States/agencies/utilities/fuel funds/allies **must collaborate** to:

1. Do more with less;
2. Serve more qualified recipients; and
3. **Centralize, standardize, and automate** processes to ensure success of 1 and 2 above...

New Approaches



- **Revise** rules/plans to improve performance
- **Utilize** flexibility within program guidelines
- **Communicate** w/key stakeholders those exceptions and when to apply them
- **Implement** and **share** w/these stakeholders, to achieve greater efficiencies and results
- **Consider** categorical eligibility, simplified application, waive extraneous requirements, etc.

What Services to Offer?

- Consult w/state/tribal peers, vendors, and **clients**;
- Collaborate/Partner to offer assistance blitzes/campaigns (to cut expense);
- ***Drive to the client*** – utilizing specialized delivery methods like:
 - ❖ Mobile Service Vehicles and Locations
 - ❖ **Flexible operating days/hours**
 - ❖ Offer easy online and Smart APP access; and
- Automate energy assistance pledges and payments.

New Approaches:



Drive to your customer...

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-LgXp-i7K4pU9AYPcHT1sGiObv6ZfpmX/view>

Thank You!

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