

Commercial Portland Roundtable December 1, 2010

Tom Beverly: General Updates. For projects tied to Business Energy Tax Credits make sure to get pre-approval before starting a project, or even purchasing equipment. Trade allies asked for a quick turnaround time on tax credit applications and would like coordinated efforts between Energy Trust and ODOE to expedite the process. Energy Trust does work with ODOE to improve communications and processes, but we don't influence the BETC approval process. We can help expedite communications if you are having problems reaching someone at ODOE.

Energy Trust is currently streamlining our forms, including categorizing and prioritizing the forms to help remove barriers to participation. Forms that cause delays, have more potential for customer complaints, or pose particular problems are the priority. In 2011 we will streamline forms based on the priorities and put forms online when possible. If you have any feedback on forms please let us know so we can incorporate your ideas into them. If there are forms that pose a problem, or even individual fields within a form that cause delays, we need to know. This is your chance to help us improve these things, and without your comments we have to make an educated guess.

Trade allies said they prefer online forms over paper forms. They would like to have paper forms as backups. They also said the lighting tool was easy to fill out and helped them catch errors. Also, Powerclerk for solar trade allies has helped the process as well. Trade allies commented that we have done a lot to improve our forms, and are not that bad. The comparison was made between our three page form and 100 pages of tax credit paperwork for the same project.

Dan Wilkinson: Existing Buildings Updates. There is now a standard incentive book and brochure for customers and trade allies. We can provide those if you contact us. The multifamily program has been moved to Lockheed Martin, and they will be managing the program starting in 2011. This reflects a shift in thinking about the multifamily efforts, and a belief that multifamily is more of a commercial program than a residential.

Dawn Doberenz: Commercial Lighting Updates. This year we focused on the T-12 to T-8 upgrade with a bonus incentive until December 15. Another common measure has been HID and incandescent upgrades. For LED we are offering incentives on limited applications and you must complete a checklist to determine if an LED is a good quality product. However, there is no incentive yet for Linear LED T-8s. Make sure to add controls to projects. For custom incentives they must be 35% of the installed cost and must pass our cost effectiveness test.

Mana Haeri: New Buildings program. The New Buildings program has been restructured to meet the new code for 2010. The program has been streamlined to make processes simpler. We adopted a menu of service approach to make it

easier to adapt to projects of different scopes. For professional services, there is now an early design assistance incentive. There are also energy modeling, commissioning, and installation incentives. There are new tools available, including a lighting and HVAC calculator. Please provide feedback as you use these tools, and we'll make updates to them. For LEED projects, not much has changed. There is a new multifamily program offer for new construction projects.

Doug Boleyn: Solar Updates. Next year there will be an emphasis on commercial solar water heating, which includes pool heating. The outreach and business development specialists in the Existing Buildings program have been training on how to qualify new leads for solar. This will provide a source of leads for solar trade allies. ATACs (outreach contractors) have also been trained on how to do basic solar site assessments and feasibility studies. This will also be a good source of leads. Energy Trust is looking into alternative means for non-trade allies to submit applications and reserve solar incentives. This would primarily be for new buildings and government entities, since they want to lock in an incentive before a trade ally is selected. These types of applications will have to meet the same technical requirements and specs.

Kate Hawley: Southwest Washington Updates. The NW Natural Washington program launched in 2009, and is available through the New Homes, Existing Buildings, and Existing Homes programs. We reached our 2010 goal and 80,000 therms were saved by the Existing Buildings program. In 2011, we would like to do more projects in hospitality, food service, and government. We are also looking to add custom incentives for next year and they would be slightly different from incentives in Oregon.

Brian Alfano: Greenstreet lending program. The program started about two years ago and they have recently restructured the loans. There are new commercial real estate and business loan options. There are new requirements that at least 51% of loan goes to energy efficiency or solar power. The rates and loan amounts are more attractive than in the past, and should help fund more projects. Contact Umpqua Bank for more details.

Washington break-out session: Trade Allies said that nobody knows about the incentives in Washington, but the incentives have been a positive selling point for customers, once they are aware.

They would like to see more direct mail, and said it's hard to find Washington information on our website. Many trade allies are reaching customers through the internet, and should look in Google options for searching Energy Trust incentives in Washington. Radio was also suggested as a means of advertising. Trade allies said that even with the incentives, the payback time is a hindrance to the program.

Trade allies also thought the spiff should go to the sales person to get a better response time, but they worried that a spiff could cause them to focus on one product instead of what is best for the building. They also said a spiff would not work as well for larger companies.

Some trade allies thought 2011 will be a better year than 2010, but things will not pick up too much more. This is a recovery time and energy efficiency will help and has increased some new business avenues. There is also a barrier with leased spaces because of tenant vs. owner requirements. We need to work something out with both parties involved. Washington trade allies would like to see a packet of Washington brochures sent out to them.