

**Addendum to Strategic Energy Innovations' proposal to the
2011 Headwaters Grant Fund**

Project Title: *The Humboldt Energy Upgrade Contractor Training
Project*



*Helping Communities
Embrace*

The *Humboldt Energy Upgrade Contractor Training Project* will provide incumbent workers in Humboldt County's Building and Construction industry cluster with the skills and knowledge needed to access the expanding residential energy efficiency and home performance market. This addendum seeks to clarify two points – that there is indeed a growing demand for home performance contracting, and that training programs such as the one proposed should focus on incumbent (as opposed to transitioning) workers.

1. The residential energy efficiency retrofit and weatherization industry is among the fastest-growing segments of the green collar workforce.

"Looking across the current economic landscape, there are few areas where construction industry jobs seem poised to grow. **There is one significant exception, however, in the area of energy efficient retrofits of our nation's building stock.** A program that incentivizes energy improvements [such as Energy Upgrade California] would rapidly create jobs within the construction industry directly, and in retail, manufacturing, and local economic activity as well."¹

"The Center for American Progress has estimated that cutting energy use by 20 to 40 percent in just 40 percent of America's building stock would...drive half a trillion dollars of new investment into the built environment, while saving as much as \$64 billion every year on energy bills that consumers could spend in other ways. Retrofitting homes for efficiency is not just a matter of smart energy policy—it is also a bright spot in a weak economy where we can quickly jumpstart investment to get contractors hiring again."¹

"Workers who make new and existing homes and buildings more energy efficient perform valuable work in our economy and can make a good living doing so. Their work helps homeowners and businesses save energy and money. Research shows that the money saved is used to buy goods and services, which stimulates the regional economy and creates more jobs across all industry sectors. And, using less energy (which is still primarily generated by fossil fuels) also reduces green house gas (GHG) emissions and reduces our dependence on foreign oil. Everything invested in creating a more energy efficient environment can have a positive impact on our society and economy."²

2. Home performance training programs should focus on the current or incumbent workforce.

"Hopeful that policies and programs at all levels of government [such as Energy Upgrade

California] will spur customer demand, many types of companies are **investing in the future by preparing their current workforce** to work in the Home Performance industry. As demand picks up, companies are likely to bring back laid-off employees, give more work to underemployed subcontractors, and hire new staff with previous experience in the remodeling, home appliance repair, weatherization and residential construction sectors. Should demand continue to grow, there will be room in the industry for new entrants with limited residential construction and building analysis experience.”⁴

“To rapidly prepare workers for jobs in the Home Performance industry, **training providers should immediately focus on retraining the incumbent workforce** and provide on-the-job and industry certification training for unemployed construction, HVAC and remodeling industry workers.”⁴

“In their report on the energy efficiency services sector (EESS), researchers at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory found that:

...many “new” energy efficiency jobs will actually be existing jobs that are refocused toward providing more energy efficient practices and services. There are currently two primary paths for those who want to enter the EESS workforce:

- Existing occupations (e.g., HVAC technicians, lighting contractors, construction trades, project managers) which are transformed into more energy efficiency-focused positions via retraining, and
- Emerging occupations that are somewhat unique to the EESS (e.g., home energy raters, commissioning services, energy/Home Performance services, energy auditors)...”³

Sources:

¹Hendricks, Bracken and Matt Golden. *Taking on the Tool Belt Recession: Energy Efficiency Retrofits Can Provide a Real Help for Construction Unemployment*, Center for American Progress, March 2010.

http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/03/tool_belt_recession.html

²*Environmental Scan: Energy Efficiency Occupations, Northern Inland Region (including Humboldt County)*, Centers of Excellence, August 2009.

http://www.coecc.net/Environmental_Scans/ee_scan_norIn_09.pdf

³Goldman, Charles A., Peters, Jane S. Albers, Nathaniel, Stuart, Elizabeth and Fuller, Merrian C. *Energy Efficiency Services Sector: Workforce Education and Training Needs*. Lawrence Berkeley National

Laboratory, Environmental Energy Technologies Division, and Research Into Action, Inc. March 2010.

<http://eetd.lbl.gov/EA/EMP/reports/lbnl-3163e.pdf>

⁴Redman, Elizabeth. *THE HOME PERFORMANCE INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE ON TRAINING AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT*, Efficiency First Home Performance Resource Center, May 2010.

www.hprcenter.org



Surfside Construction

Andrew Jordan

General Building Contractor

License # 860526

(707) 599-9528

Dear Headwaters Board,

I wish to express my support for Strategic Energy Innovations' proposal to facilitate a home performance and Energy Upgrade California training. As a general contractor specializing in all aspects of home construction and remodel, I believe that a home's durability, affordability and comfort are in many ways determined by its initial design and construction. But, there are many things a contractor can do to improve the performance of an existing home. I get many requests from homeowners to improve the energy efficiency of their homes through the installation of double paned windows, air sealing, and other measures. I also realize that too much air sealing can lead to poor indoor air quality. Given the increasing demand for this kind of work, I am especially interested in receiving training in home performance, because I will have a better understanding of how my work affects the house and its occupants, I will be seen as a specialist in this growing market, and I will be able to help homeowners get big rebates.

I understand that my company cannot participate in Energy Upgrade California until we have certified BPI Building Analyst Professionals on staff. Furthermore, we need to receive specific training in Energy Upgrade reporting and retrofit requirements; otherwise we will not be able to access the available rebates (up to \$4,000 per household) on behalf of Humboldt County residents.

I have been interested in getting BPI certified for some time, but I haven't been able to afford the typical training fees to become a certified Building Analyst Professional. Also, since there are no trainings locally available for incumbent workers, I'd have to pay additional costs go out of County to go through the required training. The training proposed by Strategic Energy Innovations will be in Humboldt County and designed for incumbent Humboldt County contractors. It will only cost about half of the going rate for such a training, and it will be local.

This training is desperately needed in Humboldt County. If I cannot get trained up and entered into the Energy Upgrade California program, we will lose out on the expanding home retrofit market. And if local contractors don't get the credentials, we may see out-of-county contractors that have the required credentials coming into Humboldt to do home retrofit work.

I encourage you to support SEI's proposal. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Sincerely,

Andrew Jordan
Surfside Construction
Lic#860526



Alchemy Construction Incorporated
PO Box 4154
Arcata, CA 95518
707-822-8013
Lic. # 751437

February 18, 2011

Dear Headwaters Board,

The purpose of this letter is to indicate my strong support for Strategic Energy Innovations' proposal to facilitate a home performance and Energy Upgrade California training for established local contractors. As a construction and remodel company specializing in green building, we are well positioned to take advantage of the growing demand for residential energy efficiency. However, my company cannot participate in Energy Upgrade California until we have certified BPI Building Analyst Professionals on staff. Furthermore, we need to receive specific training in Energy Upgrade reporting and retrofit requirements; otherwise we will not be able to access the available rebates (up to \$4,000 per household) on behalf of Humboldt County residents.

I want to have as many certified Building Analyst Professionals on staff as possible, but the typical cost of the training is prohibitive. Furthermore, I would have to pay additional costs to send employees out of County to go through the required training (CR has been offering BPI trainings, but not for incumbent workers). The training proposed by Strategic Energy Innovations will be in Humboldt County and designed for incumbent Humboldt County contractors. It will only cost about half of the going rate for such a training, and it will be local.

This training is desperately needed in Humboldt County. If I cannot get my staff trained up and entered into the Energy Upgrade California program, we will lose out on the expanding home retrofit market. And if local contractors don't get the credentials, we may see out-of-county contractors that have the required credentials coming into Humboldt to do home retrofit work.

I encourage you to support SEI's proposal. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Sincerely,

Amy Bohner, V.P.
Alchemy Construction Inc.