

Energy Efficiency Best Practices: What's New?

The Latest from the Current Phase of Work for the National Programmatic Energy Efficiency Best Practices Study

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Abstract

This paper will present selected results and insights from the third phase of the national programmatic Energy Efficiency Best Practices study. The overall goal of the Best Practices Study is to identify and communicate excellent programmatic practices in order to enhance the design of energy efficiency programs in California and throughout the country. The first two phases of the study evaluated energy efficiency programs by program type, and type of program activity (e.g., marketing, tracking, implementation, management, etc.). They assessed applicable best practices for each program element, and delivered the analysis and data online via the project website (www.eebestpractices.com). This study has enjoyed widespread use by many energy efficiency providers and practitioners around the U.S.

A key objective of the third phase of the study, currently underway, is to extend the assessment of Best Practices to include two new areas: (1) Energy Efficiency (EE) Portfolios and (2) Nonresidential Education and Training Programs; This paper will report on our research methods and high-level findings to-date for each of these areas.

A second project objective is to selectively update findings from the previous study via a “What’s New” white paper. This updated information refreshes the data contained in our project website for changes experienced since the study was first done in 2004. Also included are findings from our research on new program delivery strategies and technology trends, based on in-depth interviews with national energy efficiency experts from around the country. The paper will describe our research approach and present selected findings and recommendations based on the results.

A third key project objective is to disseminate information from the previous study phases to managers of Local and Third Party programs in California. This is being done via a combination of a training workshop and a tool to help program managers self-benchmark their own programs against the relevant best practices. The self-benchmarking tool is briefly described.

Introduction

The original goal of the National Best Practices Study (the Study) was to broaden the skills and capabilities of energy efficiency practitioners by developing a set of EE best practices that could be used as a resource to enhance the design, implementation, and management of energy efficiency programs in California. The study saw a key beneficiary being program practitioners supported through public goods funds who would be able to reference the database and apply the information towards the development of successful energy efficiency programs. In fact, the study’s results have proven to be valuable for program managers both in California and across the U.S., as a result of their widespread dissemination through the project website.

The current phase of the study seeks to extend the results of the Phase I and II study. As the research plan for the previous study phases noted, “This study is intended to be a first, not final, step in a process that

would seek to identify and communicate best practices on an on-going or periodic basis. The large scope and dynamic nature of energy efficiency programs and energy markets require an on-going approach.” The current study phase recognizes and fulfills the need for ongoing research and analysis of best practices (BP) and has 4 key deliverables:

1. Portfolio Best Practices Report
2. “What’s New” White Paper
3. Nonresidential Education and Training Program Area Best Practices Report
4. Best Practices Self-Benchmarking Tool

The remainder of this paper will provide a brief look at each of these four areas. Because of space limitations, it is not possible to present extensive detailed results. What we hope to do is to offer just enough information to whet the appetite of the reader, so that they will want to visit the project website (www.eebestpractices.com) and download full copies of the reports and Self Benchmarking Tool for their use.

Portfolio Best Practices Report

Our objective was to perform a comparative analysis of Best Practices at the energy efficiency Portfolio level. We used a framework similar to that developed in the previous phases of the study to assess best practices at the Portfolio level, but extended it to include policy components that influence the environment that the Portfolio operates in.

Definition of Portfolios

We define “Portfolio” as a set of programs designed to work strategically and comprehensively across specific technologies, practices, and programs at a market level. Portfolios of interest for this study are comprehensive in their coverage and include a wide range of different types of programs that address most or all of the following:

- Multiple customer sectors – residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, low income
- Multiple equipment markets – lighting, HVAC, motors, VFDs, etc.
- Multiple vintage segments– retrofit, replace-on-burnout, major renovation, and new construction
- Multiple policy goals – e.g., resource acquisition, market transformation, equity, economic development, greenhouse gas mitigation

Components Used to Assess Best Practices

Best practices at the Portfolio level are more strategic and policy-oriented than those at the program level (which are more tactical in nature). However, there is some overlap with program-level best practices. The reason for this is that program-level BPs can be “rolled up” to the Portfolio level. Those practices that are more planning and quality control oriented are relevant to both programs and Portfolios. Therefore, the set of components used for our analysis of Portfolio BPs consisted of some of the components from the prior study, plus several new components that are more big-picture and policy based. The table below summarizes the components used. The rationale for each of these components follows.

| Portfolio Best Practices Components | Included in Prior Study* | New |
|--|---------------------------------|------------|
| Portfolio Objectives | | √ |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| <i>PORTFOLIO AND PROGRAM DESIGN PROCESS</i> | | |
| Portfolio Planning Process and Use of Program Theory | √ | |
| Adaptation to Changes in Technologies and Market Conditions | | √ |
| <i>PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT PRACTICES</i> | | |
| Staffing Approach | √ | |
| Portfolio Staff Development and Retention | | √ |
| Program Integration | | √ |
| Quality Control and Verification | √ | |
| Reporting and Tracking | √ | |
| Evaluation and Adaptation | √ | |
| <i>REGULATORY AND POLICY ENVIRONMENT</i> | | |
| Alignment with Organizational Strategic and Financial Goals | | √ |
| Impact on Short-term and Long-term Resource Planning | | √ |
| Avoided Cost and Cost-effectiveness Procedures | | √ |
| Funding Stability/Funds Management | | √ |

* Note that “inclusion” in the prior study was for program-level components, as opposed to the Portfolio level.

- **Portfolio Objectives.** The Portfolio’s objectives are instrumental in defining the expected outcomes against which its success will be judged. Effective Portfolio management practices are designed around a set of clearly-defined objectives which are actionable and measurable. This allows the Portfolio administrator to assess their progress versus the objectives on a regular basis and to take corrective actions if results are not on-track.
- **Portfolio Planning Process and Use of Program Theory.** The previous study phase was concerned with the use of program theory to design individual programs based on a clear understanding of the market, key market actors, appropriate intervention strategies, etc. The Portfolio level analysis looks across all of the programs in the Portfolio to determine the extent to which the Portfolio approach incorporates theory-based program designs and interventions.
- **Adaptation to Changes in Technologies and Market Conditions.** Portfolios operate in an extremely dynamic environment of constantly changing technologies, new codes and standards, consumer preferences, and economic and market conditions. This element is concerned with the Portfolio’s approach to staying abreast of these changes and planning for the necessary Portfolio and program changes that result.
- **Staffing Approach.** This component addresses the Portfolio’s overall staffing philosophy and preference for use of in-house staff versus subcontractors to fulfill both Portfolio administration and program implementation functions.
- **Staff Development and Retention.** It is generally recognized that having talented and motivated staff is a very important element in business operations. Portfolios face a major challenge in how to attract, develop and retain staff, since well-qualified candidates usually have other options available which they can pursue if they become dissatisfied with their current job conditions.
- **Program Integration.** End users today have access to a large number of programs promoting different types or elements of energy services. Integrated delivery of programs can simplify program delivery by “bundling” benefits from multiple programs and simplify

communications using a central point of contact. The challenge to Portfolio administrators is how to access and leverage these individual program benefits when “packaging” whole building projects in a way that is both efficient and understandable to the end-user.

- **Quality Control and Verification** –As at the program level, Portfolios that require QC and verification procedures for all programs in the portfolio demonstrate a commitment on the part of the Portfolio manager to deliver programs that are of the highest quality and help to ensure that savings claims are realistic.
- **Reporting and Tracking.** Efficient, accurate and timely tracking and reporting are important for Portfolio operations, because they allow managers to monitor their performance versus their objectives, and make adjustments and take corrective actions as needed when results are lagging.
- **Portfolio Evaluation.** A serious evaluation and continuous program improvement effort is a demonstration of the implementer’s commitment to the success of each program in the Portfolio, and the Portfolio overall.
- **Alignment with Organizational Strategic and Financial Goals.** Desirable financial policies are those that align the Portfolio administrator’s profit motives with the full deployment of cost-effective Portfolio programs as part of a balanced mix of energy resources. The most desirable financial policy approach is one that completely removes any disincentives for the energy provider that may result from reduced sales and associated profit margin, provides a comparable earnings opportunity for Portfolio resources to that for investments in supply-side infrastructure, and provides full and timely recovery of Portfolio costs.
- **Impact on Short-term and Long-term Resource Planning.** The treatment of energy efficiency in resource planning processes (including both filed resource plans, and related procurement decisions) is another critical element of the policy framework necessary to motivate excellent and sustainable Portfolio performance.
- **Avoided Cost and Cost-effectiveness Procedures.** Avoided costing and cost-effectiveness procedures influence the economic attractiveness of Portfolio resources (relative to competing supply side options), and therefore are a key to Portfolio resource valuation and selection.
- **Funding Stability/Funds Management -** Funding adequacy and stability are essential to support continuous Portfolio and program operations and to remove any disincentive to capturing all cost-effective Portfolio savings available.

Portfolios Included in the Study

A total of nine Portfolios were included in this study. They are listed below:

- **New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA).** NYSERDA manages the New York Energy SmartSM program. Funded by a System Benefits Charge (SBC) on electric transmission, this program offers energy efficiency, research and development, low-income and environmental disclosure funding and education to assist electric consumers as the regulated electricity market moves to more open competition.
- **Efficiency Vermont.** Efficiency Vermont operates a full-suite of electric energy efficiency programs. Compared to the other Portfolios reviewed, Efficiency Vermont’s focus is the narrowest, addressing electric energy efficiency programs only. It is also the smallest Portfolio, in terms of its absolute budget size. However, when examined on a relative basis,

(i.e., as a percent of revenues), its budget is the highest of the Portfolios researched. Efficiency Vermont is in its 7th year of operation and its contract was recently extended to the end of 2008.

- **Energy Trust of Oregon.** The Trust is the newest of the Portfolios reviewed, having only been in operation since 2002. In addition to the energy efficiency and renewables programs it administers for the state, the Trust also implements gas conservation programs for some of the state's gas utilities through separate contracts with them. These gas programs are not part of the Trust's Portfolio addressed by this study.
- **Xcel Energy – Minnesota** Xcel Energy's Minnesota Portfolio consists of electric and gas energy efficiency programs, and demand response programs for smaller mass market customers of its Northern States Power Company subsidiary. Its Portfolio is mature, and has been in place since the early 1980s.
- **MidAmerican Energy.** MidAmerican's Portfolio is the most comprehensive of those reviewed for this study, and includes both energy efficiency programs and demand response programs applicable to all major customer classes. Like many of the other utility administrators in this study, MidAmerican has been a long-time administrator, of its programs, since the early 1990s. Its Portfolio originated from a regulatory requirement to file energy efficiency plans with the state regulators every 5 years.
- **Florida Power and Light.** Florida Power and Light operates a relatively large Portfolio which includes both energy efficiency and demand response programs. Although it has been administering these programs for many years, it has done so quietly and is less well-known for its accomplishments than other administrators.
- **California Investor-Owned Utilities (IOUs) - Pacific Gas and Electric, Southern California Edison and Sempra Utilities (San Diego Gas and Electric and Southern California Gas).** California's investor owned utilities have been operating large energy efficiency Portfolios since the early 1980s. These utilities are well-known for their leadership in the energy efficiency area, and for their work developing, implementing, and advocating for strong energy-efficiency programs and standards both within California and nationally. The California Public Utilities Commission recently decided to continue investor-owned utility administration of energy efficiency Portfolios for at least the 2006-2008 time period.

California's investor owned utilities' Portfolios have the following characteristics in common: (1) They consist of energy efficiency and low income programs only; (2) the programs address all major customer classes; (3) both traditional and nontraditional markets are served; (4) a combination of mature and newer programs is offered; and (5) both statewide and local programs are included.

Best Practices Themes

Because of space limitations, the full set of Portfolio Best Practices will not be presented in this paper. However our findings include five major best practices themes which cut across all of the Portfolios included in our study. These themes are offered below.

Successful Portfolios share many common characteristics, even if they appear to be very different in terms of their administrative models, funding sources and governance. These characteristics are:

- Deeply committed senior management and program staff

- Clearly defined goals and objectives
- Tools for regularly monitoring progress against these objectives, and enabling mid-course corrections when results veer off-course
- A willingness to try new program approaches as well as to retain those that are “tried and true”
- Stable program funding sources and levels

Portfolios use a combination of strategies to successfully address the many challenges they face, some which are common to all and others which are unique to a state or region. These challenges include:

- Changing codes and standards and associated baselines, which require adjustment of energy efficient measures promoted by their programs
- Maturity in certain markets, and high saturations of energy efficient equipment installed
- Increasing savings targets
- Inadequate funding levels
- Increased need for integration with rapidly expanding set of related programs offered by sister organizations

A strong commitment by senior management to the Portfolio, their willingness to provide the resources needed to support it, and their creation of a culture that values and nurtures its activities and results, are key success elements. Elements of a highly supportive working environment include:

- A mission statement that is aligned with the Portfolio’s objectives and values; role modeling of the mission in the organization’s activities
- Senior management that continually emphasizes the importance of the Portfolio’s activities and accomplishments throughout the organization
- Budgets and staffing levels that are sufficient to support the Portfolio’s activities
- A work culture that emphasizes and rewards continuous improvement in Portfolio achievements
- Advocacy of Portfolio-friendly regulatory and legislative policies such as decoupling mechanisms, performance-based incentives, and cost-effectiveness procedures, among others

Having clearly defined and measurable objectives, understanding the relative importance of each, and regularly monitoring progress against these objectives are key to a Portfolio’s ability to attain them. The principle underlying this best practice is that “you can’t manage what you don’t measure” Effective management of the Portfolio by its objectives requires:

- Objectives that are actionable, measurable and aligned with the overall policy goals
- Tools that provide for regular monitoring of progress against these objectives

Having a balanced Portfolio with a diverse set of programs representing different markets, delivery strategies, and maturity levels is essential. Of nearly equal importance is the need to continually adjust and rebalance offerings. Reasons for rebalancing include:

- Changes in end-user and market acceptance of existing technologies (as compared to initial forecasts)
- Introduction of new technologies
- Changing codes and standards
- Desire to test new approaches to determine their effectiveness

“What’s New” White Paper

The goals of the “What’s New” white paper are to refresh some of the information contained in the original study reports, and provide new information on emerging technologies, program approaches and market trends. The paper includes a separate chapter for each program area that summarizes the most significant changes and trends, and selectively updates the summary lists of Best Practices and associated rationale for each based on what we learned.

Data Collection Strategy

Our data collection strategy included both secondary and primary data collection:

- **Secondary data** sources included recent conference proceedings, relevant websites, and recent industry publications. Our goal in conducting this secondary research was to summarize and report, by program area, the trends in program designs, technologies, and other aspects, based on the relevant findings. We also developed a list of recommended new best practices based on these trends.
- Our **primary data** collection strategy consisted of a series of in-depth interviews with key industry experts to debrief them on new energy efficiency policy, program and technology trends. The industry experts included: selected industry consultants, senior ACEEE staff, Energy Star program staff, representatives of ESource and the PIER/Emerging Technologies programs, and Climate Change Action Registry and NAESCO staff. We also completed high-level interviews with Commissioner Art Rosenfeld of the California Energy Commission and Ralph Cavanagh of the Natural Resources Defense Council to obtain their views on the top policy issues, opportunities and challenges related to energy efficiency and renewables.

In addition, we conducted an email blast of program managers who were interviewed in the previous phases of the study. The purpose of the email inquiry was to learn of any new best practices that had emerged in the programs since the previous study.

Selected Findings

The white paper identifies the following key trends in energy efficiency markets:

Climate Change. A key market trend is the emerging focus on environmental issues associated with production of electricity and natural gas; in particular, air quality, land use, habitat, aquatic resources, and climate change. Climate change is by far the highest profile issue to emerge. The issue of climate change has the potential to raise the profile of energy efficiency and create political will for expanded goals and increased funding.

Integration of Policy Objectives. Beyond climate change, there are other opportunities to optimize multiple policy issues as well. For example, the California PUC is looking at the embedded energy associated with supplying water. Closer program integration between energy efficiency and load management programs is also a theme. An example of an integrated solution might be that instead of necessarily paying the customer for their demand response when an interruption may occur, some of those payments are front-loaded so that the customer can buy higher incremental-cost equipment.

Another area that is ripe for further integration is utility and non-utility energy efficiency initiatives. Opportunities for integration exist at both the portfolio planning and marketing levels. Some states are

pursuing a more integrated marketing approach for larger customers to help them leverage additional funding sources and emission credits. State tax credit programs present similar integration opportunities.

The Limits of Technology. The rate of technological innovation on the energy efficiency front may be slowing. Incremental improvements in the efficiency of existing technologies are getting smaller and more expensive. Program managers are responding by:

- Focusing greater attention on performance and installation quality, particularly in the areas of insulation, HVAC, and lighting controls
- Exploring replacement technologies and design strategies that deliver substantial energy benefits (e.g., advanced evaporative cooling and night ventilation instead of refrigerated AC systems)
- Emphasizing non-energy benefits to expand the market share for energy efficiency

Future programs will need to get better at achieving high levels of market saturation and affecting human behavior.

New technologies. Several promising new technologies, already commercialized, are expected to reach a greater level of market acceptance in the near future:

- New lighting technologies: new LED applications, load shedding ballasts, hybrid fixtures, advanced lighting controls
- Cool roofs
- Tankless water heaters
- Demand controlled ventilation
- “Nightbreeze” cooling technology that combines advanced evaporative cooling and night ventilation
- Conditioned-based monitoring and other information-based “smart” technologies
- “Disruptive” technologies – low-energy technologies that replace energy-intensive technologies and fundamentally change the way that things are manufactured. Examples include replacing welding with adhesive bonding or replacing compressed air systems with linear pneumatic positioning equipment.
- More efficient storage water heaters, which use near-condensing or condensing technologies
- Condensing boilers, two-stage furnaces, and ECMs
- Improving water heating efficiency by reducing distribution losses through better design and return loop plumbing
- Advanced building diagnostic and control systems
- More efficient tilling practices using GPS-guided equipment to reduce diesel use and needs for water and pesticides.

New approaches for promoting energy efficient technologies. In addition, energy efficiency program administrators are testing new ways to promote energy efficient technologies. Among them are:

- *Focusing on the whole building rather than simple equipment changeout.* Increasingly, programs are evaluating and promoting energy efficiency to end-users based on the needs of the whole building, often using an approach that integrates offerings from multiple programs.
- *Focusing on installation quality and post-installation performance.* The lack of breakthrough technology developments, combined with increasing federal standards, has driven attention toward installation quality. Quality installations provide for optimal equipment sizing, and address related infrastructure (e.g., ductwork) and operating conditions/degradations. Regarding the latter, some programs require post-commissioning of installed systems up to two years after the initial installation to ensure persistence of savings impacts.
- *Providing performance-based incentives.* Some programs are offering incentives based on measured performance after the equipment is installed and all its interactions with other

building systems have been taken into account.

- *Demonstration and validation of new energy efficient technologies.* Many programs also sponsor demonstrations of new technologies and develop case studies to help disseminate the results, targeting end-users that can benefit from the technology under study.
- *Training of equipment installers.* In an effort to enhance installation quality and develop market capabilities, programs are increasingly requiring equipment installers to participate in program sponsored-training programs.

The full What's New White Paper provides a detailed and up-to-date look at specific issues and emerging Best Practices for each of the program categories addressed during the first phases of the project. This paper is currently in the final review stage, and will soon be distributed to a wider audience via the project website.

Nonresidential Education and Training Program Area Best Practices Report

We also completed an analysis of best practices for the Nonresidential Education and Training program area, representing the twelfth program area of the Best Practices study. Research for this program area was started during the previous study phase. The data collection, analysis and reporting were completed using the instruments, procedures, and formats from the previous phase of the study.

Programs Included in the Study

A total of six programs were reviewed for the study.

Building Operator Certification (BOC). BOC is a nationally recognized training program designed to educate facilities personnel about energy and resource efficient building operations. While not focused on trade allies in the traditional sense, the facilities staff are professionals and the BOC certification may provide them with an avenue toward greater earning potential by offering a recognizable, marketable certification and skill set—similar to the HVAC contractor or architect trained to provide more efficient services to their clients. The BOC training is offered widely in California, the Northwest, the Midwest and among the Northeast utilities.

California Statewide Education and Training. Implemented by the four California investor-owned utilities (IOUs) through their six Energy Centers, the program provides a wide range of educational services, designed to collect, transfer, research, evaluate, demonstrate and showcase energy efficiency concepts.

Energy Design Resources (EDR). Implemented by the California IOUs and SMUD, EDR is primarily a website providing information about energy efficient design practices for a variety of building professionals working in a variety of nonresidential building types. Resources include design briefs and case studies as well as software tools and virtual workshops. EDR is not an independent “program” as it is housed under the Statewide Savings By Design program. It supports other programs indirectly, including the Standard Performance Contracting program and the Energy Centers by offering resources and tools that make it easier for trade allies to design and build energy efficient commercial and industrial buildings.

Compressed Air Challenge. A national program implemented by the Department of Energy, the Compressed Air Challenge training program is designed to provide plant personnel and compressed air system vendors with knowledge and tools they need to improve the energy efficiency and overall performance of plant compressed air systems.

Industrial Efficiency Alliance. Implemented by the Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (NEEA), the Industrial Efficiency Alliance incorporates all of NEEA’s market transformation activities in the industrial sector. Technical training is a key element, and is expected to account for a significant portion of its projected energy savings.

Wisconsin Daylighting Collaborative. This program is implemented by the Energy Center of Wisconsin. Its market transformation goal is to promote the use of "cool daylighting" as part of an integrated design of building envelopes, electric lighting, and HVAC systems of commercial and institutional buildings without increasing first costs. The program brings together a variety of organizations and professionals interested in promoting the benefits of daylighting. The program offers incentives (such as design assistance and technical grants), demonstrations and research to architects, engineers, contractors and other building professionals.

Best Practices Themes

Again, space limitations prevent us from reporting the full set of Nonresidential Education and Training program Best Practices. However our findings include five major best practices themes which are based on our review of all of the programs included in the study. These themes are shown below.

The most successful programs intentionally incorporate best practices from adult learning theory into training and education (T&E) activities so they are relevant and accessible to the adults that attend them. Best practices in adult learning include: offering information and experiences that show how to solve real problems that occur in daily work life; providing opportunities during the training for attendees to practice new skills and receive feedback; including small group activities and concrete experiences rather than relying solely on expert lecture; and providing limited or focused content that does not overwhelm attendees. These practices increase the likelihood that T&E will result in behavior change.

Market transformation is a frequent driver for nonresidential T&E programs. These programs are often key components of a market transformation strategy. They may take several forms. For example, some have a broad focus, seeking to inform key energy efficiency constituencies (for example contractors, engineers, and design professionals); others are more narrowly defined as a component of a larger program. Most T&E programs seek to overcome market barriers related to lack of information, asymmetric information, and performance uncertainty. In addition to educating key market actors on desired energy efficiency practices, they serve as a vehicle for disseminating program information to the market and making market actors aware of program opportunities.

Training and education further the overall goal of achieving energy savings. Many of these programs also support resource acquisition efforts by enhancing the skills, knowledge, capabilities and understanding of market actors so that they can more effectively develop energy savings projects with end users.

Effective T&E programs provide value to the target market specifically, not just the utility. Training approaches and content can be enhanced by market research, baseline studies, partnerships with professional organizations, and early evaluation efforts to create training programs that provide significant value to market actors. Coordination with professional organizations can qualify T&E courses for continuing education (CEU) credits, increasing the appeal and value of the program.

Successful T&E programs require a long-term commitment from implementing organizations. The programs reviewed all represent multi-year commitments to training for a sector, a group of market actors or for a certification effort. The multi-year commitment is important in building expertise among trainers, refining curriculum and leveraging word-of-mouth communication. It can take years to build the program, the organizational capacity and the program reputation to the point where the training effort is poised to influence a discernable portion of the targeted market.

Best Practices Self-Benchmarking Tool

One final area of project emphasis was development of a Best Practices self-benchmarking scoring tool. This Excel-based tool allows program managers to benchmark their own programs against applicable best practices, and identify gaps and areas of improvement needed. The self-benchmarking tool is based on a scoring system that uses a 3-level scoring rubric. A score of 0 means the practice is not done, 1 means the practice is partially done or is done infrequently, and 2 means the practice is fully done. Scores have been developed for all 11 program areas addressed in the previous study phase, the Cross-cutting Best Practices (which apply to all program areas), and the recently completed Nonresidential Education and Training program area. Each program area has its own unique grading system, based on the scoring results. The Self-Benchmarking tool was “road tested” at a one-day training workshop on May 30, 2007 for California’s energy efficiency program managers. In general, they found the tool to be useful for evaluating their own programs, identifying areas in their own programs where there was room for performance improvement, and strategies for addressing them.

The self-benchmarking tool, as well as all of the above reports, are, or will be, posted on the Best Practices project website in the very near future (www.eebestpractices.com). Be sure to regularly monitor the website during the coming weeks for these new additions.

Conclusion

These current project deliverables are intended to broaden the scope of the original study, and to bring findings from the original study phase up-to-date. However, the project team recognizes that these Best Practices, are dynamic in nature, and that our industry would greatly benefit from a long-term commitment to ongoing Best Practices research and reporting. In a final project activity, we will be exploring long-term funding and sponsorship options that would assure these findings would be regularly updated and made available to industry practitioners going forward.