SESSION 2C

EVALUATING ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAMS IN THE LOW-INCOME SECTOR

Moderator: Martin Kushler, ACEEE

PAPERS:

Design of the National Impact Evaluation for the DOE Weatherization Assistance Program
Mark P. Ternes, Oak Ridge National Laboratory
Martin Schweitzer, Oak Ridge National Laboratory
Richard Schmoyer, Oak Ridge National Laboratory
Bruce Tonn, Oak Ridge National Laboratory
Joel F. Eisenberg, Oak Ridge National Laboratory

Estimating the Energy Savings Potential Available from California's Low-Income Population
Kathleen Gaffney, KEMA Inc.
Fred Coito, KEMA Inc.

Impact of Flipping the Switch: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Low-Income Residential Energy Education Programs
Anne West, Quantec LLC
Jamie Drakos, Quantec LLC
M. Sami Khawaja, Quantec LLC

SESSION SUMMARY

This session addresses three very distinct and timely subjects relating to energy efficiency programs for the low-income sector: the design of the forthcoming national Weatherization evaluation; results of a California low-income energy efficiency potential study; and a comparison of evaluations of low-income energy education programs.

The first paper, "Design of the National Impact Evaluation for the DOE Weatherization Assistance Program", focuses on the new forthcoming national evaluation of the DOE Weatherization Program, being planned by Oak Ridge National Laboratory. This extensive research effort is of considerable interest because it will be the first comprehensive national evaluation of the Weatherization Program since the early 1990's. This paper describes the proposed evaluation approach in some detail, and should be of interest both to those involved with low-income energy efficiency programs as well as those who appreciate the complexities of undertaking a large-scale, comprehensive national evaluation.

The second paper, "Estimating the Energy Savings Potential Available from California's Low-Income Population", presents the results of the first-ever comprehensive statewide needs assessment of the low-income population in California. The research features a 'bottom-up" approach, using detailed assessments of energy efficiency measure applicability and need, based on over 1,500 onsite surveys throughout the state. This paper should be of interest both for the specific results obtained, as well as the methodological approach employed.

The third paper, "Impact of Flipping the Switch: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Low-Income Residential Energy Education Programs", focuses on an important but traditionally neglected area: evaluating the impact results of programs featuring energy education and the distribution of "low-cost" energy efficiency measures. These types of programs are very popular with both government and utility-funded low-income service efforts, but traditionally have not received much in the way of serious impact evaluation. This paper discusses methodological approaches and challenges associated with

evaluating these types of programs, reviews results from a number of recent (post-2000) evaluations, and provides the authors' conclusions regarding energy education "best practices".