

2023 DSM Residential & Multifamily Evaluation Findings

Developed for the Xcel Energy Colorado Roundtable
February 14, 2024

2023 DSM Evaluations

Residential DSM Evaluations

Home Energy Squad

Home Energy Audits

Multifamily DSM Evaluations

Multifamily Building Efficiency

Income-Qualified Multifamily Weatherization

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Home Energy Squad







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Home Energy Squad: Overall Findings

-  Product **influenced customers to install energy-efficient equipment sooner** than otherwise. Retrospective net-to-gross ratio (NTGR) estimated to be 0.94.
-  Most participating **customers proactively sought** out the product and selected the offering that aligned with their needs.
-  Energy **bill savings was one of the greatest motivations** to enroll in the product but received the lowest satisfaction scores.
-  Participating customers **interested in upgrading equipment in their homes but lacked specific recommendations** connecting them to products.
-  The **primary barrier to participation was scheduling** an appointment.
-  **Significant data analysis is required** to track whether participating customers pursued Home Energy Squad recommendations.

Home Energy Squad: Recommendations

- 1 The NTGR could increase to 0.96 if Xcel Energy pursues Recommendations 2 & 3.
- 2 Improve outreach efforts by targeting customer demographics and geographies with lower participation rates.
- 3 Adapt product materials to highlight benefits beyond energy bill savings.
- 4 Assess effectiveness of recent product changes designed to decrease wait times. Monitor any differences, such as across offerings or geography, and attempt to address them.
- 5 Home Energy Squad recommendations should address a range of top customer interests and clearly direct them to applicable Xcel Energy products.
- 6 Add identification flag for Home Energy Squad Plus participants in product trackers.

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Home Energy Audit: Overall Findings

-  Half of participating customers reported they **learned about the product through their own research or through a trusted source.**
-  Relative to Home Energy Squad, the Home Energy Audit product showed larger **differences between participant and non-participant demographics.**
-  **Learning which upgrades to prioritize** was a motivator to enroll in the product, but customers were least satisfied with the after-audit support they received.
-  The primary barriers to pursuing recommendations were initial **cost and slow payback.**
-  **Trade partners wanted more support** from Xcel Energy across various aspects of the product.
-  Peer programs offered less comprehensive assessments and **focused on providing customer-centric tools** to build more portfolio engagement.

Home Energy Audit: Recommendations

- 1a Focus on adding trade partners who provide services to customer groups with lower participation.
- 1b Coordinate with other products to over-target customer groups with lower participation in the Home Energy Audit product.
- 2a Assess viability of developing a propensity model to target new customers.
- 2b Develop joint marketing strategies with trade partners to increase Home Energy Audit marketing.
- 3 Improve internal coordination and marketing with Home Energy Squad.

Home Energy Audit: Recommendations

- 4a Home Energy Audit recommendations should address a range of top customer interests and clearly direct them to applicable Xcel Energy products.
- 4b Work with trade partners to explicitly connect recommendations to Xcel Energy products and advising services.
- 4c Explore how future dashboards could be designed to include Home Energy Audit recommendations.
- 5a Explore strategies that could help reduce upfront cost burdens associated with audit recommendations.
- 5b Educate contractors on all financing options for energy-efficient upgrades.
- 6 Address gaps across the trade partner experience in terms of rigor of training, clarity of marketing, and responsiveness of administration.

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Multifamily Building Efficiency: Overall Findings

-  Product **influenced property representatives to make more energy-efficient upgrades sooner** than otherwise. Retrospective NTGR estimated at 0.88.
-  Property representatives did **not consistently communicate to occupants** about Xcel Energy products and services.
-  Property representatives **remained concerned about the return on investment**, particularly for larger scale projects.
-  Trade partners were **satisfied with the quality and cadence** of Xcel Energy's marketing efforts, but some wanted more updates on product details.
-  Both trade partners and occupants had **suggestions for additional measures** to be offered as part of the Multifamily Buildings product.
-  Market actors are **aware of shift towards electrification but raised concerns** about costs and an over-reliance on the electrical grid.

Multifamily Building Efficiency: Recommendations

- 1 Use a 0.90 NTGR if the following recommendations are met:
 - Develop longer-term relationships with property representatives to encourage more participants to pursue Stage 3 projects.
 - Focus on non-lighting equipment.
- 2 Conduct user experience testing on both marketing materials and website accessibility with trade partners.
- 3 Encourage the implementor to estimate ranges on costs and benefits during the energy assessment stage.
- 4 Conduct analysis for adding the equipment suggested by occupants and trade allies and ensure a smooth transition with other products.
- 5 Develop and carry out an occupant communication plan.
- 6 Increase education on the benefits of electrification to both trade partners and property representatives.

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Income-Qualified Multifamily Weatherization: Overall Findings

-  The **implementer was an effective partner** at implementing and marketing the product.
-  **Relationships**, either through the implementer or through professional connections, **were key** for both property representatives and trade partners.
- ★★★ Participants reported **satisfaction** with ability to install energy-saving equipment at no-to-low cost, although majority of projects are lighting.
-  A key barrier for trade partners was **accessing occupant units** to complete in-unit work.
-  Property representatives most frequently experienced **language barriers** in communicating with occupants.

Income-Qualified Multifamily Weatherization: Overall Findings



Most measures desired by participants were covered due to the custom nature of the product design; however, **custom savings calculations were the biggest pain point** mentioned by the trade partners and Xcel Energy.



Participating property representatives and trade partners expressed they would **appreciate more frequent outreach** from the product.



Trade partners reported **difficulties keeping track of code changes** across jurisdictions.



When asked about electrification, property representatives were most concerned about how **electrification would impact their ability to provide affordable housing**.

Income-Qualified Multifamily Weatherization: Recommendations

- 1 To encourage more complex projects, track the age of participants' equipment and align recommendation reminders with equipment age.
- 2 Continue to partner with the implementer, a well-known partner statewide in affordable energy efficiency, to leverage complementary strengths.
- 3 Leverage personal relationships to promote the product and expand diversity of projects.
- 4 Explore expanding availability of product materials in multiple languages and assess feasibility of documenting occurrences.
- 5 Increase outreach efforts by having a newsletter or listserv for the product with updates on new offerings, reminders of product offerings, and a place to form connections with the participants.

Income-Qualified Multifamily Weatherization: Recommendations

- 6 Determine if feasible to have implementation staff be a liaison for any in-unit work to help manage and document issues with getting into occupant units.
- 7a Coordinate with other products that track code changes across jurisdictions, such as the New Construction product, and make this information easily accessible to trade partners.
- 7b In addition to tracking changes, offer info/listening sessions to trade partners on jurisdictional differences, especially for electrification related changes.
- 8 Continue to explore ways to minimize bill impacts on affordable housing that might occur from electrification upgrades, including addressing relevant findings from any Beneficial Electrification Pilot efforts.
- 9 Work with the implementer to better understand trade partners' expectation of timeline and documentation of savings calculations.

Thank You

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