Consumer Engagement in Energy Codes
Why target consumers?

• In 2011, BCAP and Consumers Union began outreach to raise consumers’ awareness of energy codes.
• Consumers can be a counterweight to our biggest barrier – opposition from home builders.
• It’s hard to make policy changes without public support.
• In communities where public support is high, energy codes are easier to adopt.
• So… HOW to educate consumers?
  • THE FIRST STEP: Find out what motivates them.
BCAP & Consumers Union conducted a survey to consumers

• What messages resonate with consumers?
  1. Money saving?
  2. Environmental impacts?
  3. Quality construction?
  4. General benefits?
  5. Common arguments against energy codes?
5,086 Internet respondents—demographics:

• 50% Males/50% Females; Age 18+; About 2/3 own homes

• Most (79%) purchased their homes more than 2 years ago and don’t have near-term plans to buy another home.

• Most (84%) had an annual HH income of $79K or less.

• Most had ave. mo. energy bills of $100-$199.

• Results broken out into these sub-categories
Respondents were from these regions

**Northeast:**
1. New England - ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT
2. Mid-Atlantic - NY, PA, NJ

**Midwest:**
1. East North Central - WI, MI, IL, IN, OH
2. West North Central - MO, ND, SD, NE, KS, MN, IA

**South:**
1. South Atlantic: DE, MD, DC, VA, WV, NC, SC, GA, FL
2. East South Central: KY, TN, MS, AL
3. West South Central: OK, TX, AK, LA

**West:**
- Mountain: ID, MT, WY, NV, UT, CO, AZ, NM
- Pacific: AL, WA, OR, CA, HA
Statement Prior to Survey

Energy codes are minimum requirements that builders must meet to ensure that homes meet energy efficiency standards.
Consumers agreed with the following statements:

• Homebuilders should not make less efficient homes at the consumers’ expense. (73%)

• Energy codes would help my energy bills be more affordable and predictable. (71%)

• Energy codes help make homes more comfortable to live in. (68%)

• Energy code standards will help to ensure quality home construction. (70%)
Consumers agreed with the following statements:

- Energy codes should be enforced like other safety and quality standards of construction. (75%)

- Homeowners should have a right to a home that meets national energy standards. (82%)

- Energy code standards will help ensure that homeowner and taxpayer dollars are used wisely and efficiently as new building will be required to be built right the first time. (74%)

- I would rather pay slightly more for a new home and have affordable, predictable operating costs and energy bills. (79%)
What did we do with the results?
Helped Influence Policy

• Show that constituents want energy efficiency
• Combat common arguments against energy codes
• Ohio as an example
  – Call-to-action resulted in over 1,000 e-mails
  – Survey results were core of Consumers Union testimony
  – Results used in press releases, op-eds and other forms of media outreach
Developed Resources for Consumers, Advocates, and Professionals

1. Consumer Guide
2. Home Guide
3. Home Checklist
4. Advocate Guide
5. Consumer Handout
6. Professional Handout
7. Realtor Handout
ENERGY CODES:
What Advocates Need to Know

We don't often think about how much energy used in buildings impacts society. Yet buildings account for over 40 percent of total energy use in the United States—more than either the transportation or industrial sectors.

Energy Codes are minimum requirements for efficient design and construction for new and renovated residential and commercial buildings. They form part of the overall building code suite adopted by state and local governments.

BUILDING ENERGY CODES ARE IMPORTANT BECAUSE THEY:

- REDUCE ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS
- SAVE CONSUMERS MONEY

The average S. home spends about $1,205 on energy bills each year. Meanwhile, in 2016, the commercial sector spent an estimated $92 billion on non-renewable energy expenditures. Energy-efficient buildings reduce asthma rates and put money back into consumers' and companies' pockets. Awareness of additional savings could then be used.
BUYING A NEW HOME? REMODELING?

Make sure it’s built right.
You could be buying a home that will be uncomfortable and waste money!

With colder weather coming, you may be dreading rising utility bills and uncomfortable drafts in your home.

When homes are built or remodeled, builders are supposed to construct them according to regulations set by energy codes, which are minimum requirements for energy efficiency.

Energy efficient homes use less energy, resulting in lower utility bills and a more comfortable home, as well as environmental benefits. A home built to the model code can save you $200 every year.

Talk to your builder. Make sure your home meets the state or local energy code!

For more information on home energy efficiency and to see if your home meets the code, please visit agreenerfuture.org.

aGREENERFuture.org
WORKING FOR CLEAN, RENEWABLE, AFFORDABLE ENERGY

HOMEOWNERS WANT ENERGY EFFICIENT HOMES!

Protect your customers.
Please ensure that their home meets 2009 IECC.

82% of consumers surveyed* believe that homeowners should have a right to a home that meets national energy standards. 79% said that they would rather pay slightly more for a new home and have affordable, predictable operating costs and energy bills.

Every dollar spent on energy efficiency upgrades in a home yields 56 in savings! A home built to the 2009 International Energy Conservation Code will save homeowners hundreds of dollars a year on their utility bills, make their home more comfortable, and help the environment.

Most homeowners expect that their home is being built to a high energy efficiency standard and associate energy efficiency with high-quality construction. Please protect your customers and help ensure that their homes meet 2009 IECC.

For more consumer information, please visit agreenerfuture.org. And for more information on how to build to the latest Energy Code, please visit www.nhenergycode.com.

HOME BUYERS WANT ENERGY EFFICIENT HOMES!

Show off a home’s energy efficient qualities.
It’s what consumers want!

79% of consumers surveyed said that they would rather pay slightly more for a new home and have affordable, predictable operating costs and energy bills. 82% believe that homeowners should have a right to a home that meets national energy standards.**

What are the selling points of an energy efficient home? Superior quality of construction, year-round comfort, improved air quality, lower energy costs, mortgage savings, and higher resale value potential, just to name a few.***

For more consumer information, please visit agreenerfuture.org. And for more information on home energy efficient features, please visit www.nhenergycode.com.

*Survey of 5,000 consumers conducted by Consumer Reports, 2011
**GDS Associates.
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A GREENER ENERGY FUTURE
Working for clean, renewable, affordable energy

Build Better, Live Better. Know your energy rights!
MAINE  MICHIGAN  NEW HAMPSHIRE  OHIO

Please use our publications to learn more:

For Consumers:
- Consumer Guide
- Home Guide
- Home Checklist

For Professionals:
- Professional Handout
- Consumer Handout

For Advocates

If you are interested in receiving hard copies of any of these resources, please contact Stacy Weisfeld for more information.

“We are encouraging professionals and advocates to distribute the consumer handout to the public. We would like to see them in as many office buildings, lobbies, libraries, community centers and other locations as possible!”
Make Sure Your Home Meets Minimum National Standards for Energy Efficiency!

What are Energy Codes?

Energy Codes are minimum requirements for efficient design and construction for new and renovated residential and commercial buildings. They form part of the overall building code that is adopted by your state or local government.

Building energy codes are important because they:

- **SAVE YOU MONEY ON OPERATING COSTS**
  Buying a home is likely the most expensive investment you will ever make. Before you buy, you should think about how much it'll cost to run it.

- **PROTECT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY**
  By making sure your home was built to the model energy code, you can protect yourself and your family against high utility bills and shoddy construction.

- **ARE A COST-EFFECTIVE INVESTMENT**
  It’s much more cost-effective to build a home that meets the model energy code than to try to improve its efficiency later on through an expensive retrofit. When energy efficiency investments are spread out over the term of a standard mortgage, owners usually realize net savings within the first year.

- **REDUCE ENERGY USE AND POLLUTION**
  Buildings use about 60% of all the energy we use, and contribute to one-third of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.
Consumers: Take Action

THE BCAP
Energy Code Awareness Campaign

You have a right to an energy-efficient home that meets national standards.

Homes built to the model energy code save money and reduce energy use and pollution. Use these consumer resources to learn about the energy code, demand energy-efficient construction, and help spread the word.

Energy Code Checklist
Learn the energy code basics and how to identify construction that meets code.

Interactive Energy Code Guide
Dive into the energy code in greater depth.

Find Your Energy Code
A step-by-step guide to finding out the energy code in your location.

Why Energy Codes Matter PowerPoint
Spread the word on energy codes.

State-specific Resources
Materials specific to a few states.

About the Consumer Campaign

BCAP and Consumers Union are excited to launch a new effort to educate the public on the impact of home energy use, the role of energy codes in addressing home energy performance, and what you can do to save energy—and money.

Our primary goal is to educate and engage everyone in support of energy codes. You have a right to a home that meets national standards for energy efficiency.

Read more about the Consumer Campaign >
CURRENT OPPORTUNITY

• BCAP and CU have funding to assist several states in creating a campaign
  – Co-brand materials;
  – Disseminate materials via local jurisdictions, events, home shows, newsletters, website links
  – Media outreach: news releases, magazine articles, TV, radio

• Together, we can help build consumer support for energy codes.
Contacts

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