



LIFE

Low-Income Forum on Energy

LIFE Low-Income Forum on Energy
2009 Regional Meeting Evaluation
Binghamton, NY
May 7, 2009

The fourth of seven meetings in the LIFE 2009 Regional Meeting Series was held in Binghamton, New York on May 7, 2009. Sixty-one individuals attended this event.

Attendees by Affiliation

% of Attendees	Type of Organization
11%	Community Action Agency
0%	Community-Based Low-Income Energy Agency
0%	Community-Based Low-Income Housing
5%	Consultants
9%	Cooperative Extension
0%	Educational Institution
4%	Energy Service Company (ESCO or Marketer)
4%	Faith-Based Organization
25%	Local Government Agency
20%	Not-For-Profit
0%	Public Official
0%	Rural or Neighborhood Preservation Organization
13%	State Agency
9%	Utility Company
0%	Weatherization Agency

Agenda and Ratings

Note: attendees were asked to rate session content using the following scale:

5=Excellent 4=Very Good 3=Good 2= Fair 1=Poor

Session 1: Consumer Protections 101 and Then Some...

Rating: 3.92

The number one resource that low-income clients have is their caseworker. The more that you know, the better you can assist your clients to meet their energy needs and take advantage of the protections that they are entitled to. Learn about the important protections that the Home Energy Fair Practices Act (HEFPA) offers utility customers. *Speakers: Pamela Carter, NYS DPS; Laura Getz, NYS DPS; David Pitel, NYSEG*

Session 2: Applying the Knowledge: Initiating Client Energy Actions

Rating: 4.31

Clients are provided with information everywhere they go, but how can you get them to apply this information and benefit from it? This session will dispel myths related to energy use, provide simple energy saving actions to share with your clients, and provide tips on how best to communicate these ideas to the low-income households you serve. *Speaker: Terry Walker, Honeywell Utility Solutions*

Session 3: An Update on Weatherization

Rating: 4.00

This presentation will outline the recent revisions to the Weatherization Assistance Program resulting from the incorporation of funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Hear about the updates to WAP and how frontline workers can assist their clients within the framework of the new WAP plan. *Speaker: Beth Ryan, NYS DHCR*

Session 4: Case Study: Best Practices – Regional Highlights

Rating: 3.94

This session will highlight a local agency or initiative and provide information on how it works, what makes it work, and its potential for replicability. *Speaker: Ken Schlather, PhD, Cornell Cooperative Extension*

Session 5: Non-Traditional Resources – Life After HEAP

Rating: 3.76

As you know, traditional energy assistance sources such as HEAP and WAP have limited funds and are only able to serve a small portion of those eligible. Along with this reality, recent trends in the economy and the energy market have led to an increase in the number of households in need. This situation is compounded by the many that need assistance but are just above the income eligibility guidelines. This session will explore some non-traditional and community-based sources of assistance that can be used to assist both income-eligible clients as well as those that are just beyond the eligibility guidelines. Learn from members of your community about "LIFE after HEAP". *Speakers: Lisa Baker, Steuben County DSS; Ben Smith, Chemung County Department for the Aging and Long Term Care; Paul Suarez, Family Enrichment Network*

Session 6: Putting Your New Knowledge to the Test: Hypothetical Family – Assisting the Smiths

Rating: 3.76

Increasing energy costs combined with the recent economic downturn have left many families feeling the pinch and needing assistance. Explore the resources available in your community as you work with other attendees to find solutions for the Smiths.

Evaluations Returned: 36

Total day's average rating of all session scores: 3.95

How did you hear about this meeting? (Attendees were asked to... check all that apply.)

43% Postcard notice	19% My supervisor
19% Email notice	16% A colleague
3% LIFE Newsletter	0% Other

Attendees were asked...

What information did you learn today that you will use in your day-to-day work?

- Utilize PSC when NYSEG rep is unhelpful
- Clearer understanding of Cornell
- Changes in Weatherization program
- HEFPA guidelines
- Various resources
- Information regarding shut-off timeline
- Energy saving tips
- Specifics about EmPower
- Consumer protections was awesome
- New programs
- Energy fact and stats

What questions did you still have at the end of today?

- Are new employees trained in Weatherization required to be union?
- In HEFPA slide 29, what do additional state payments include?
- What is out there for the middle class?
- How can renters in sub-standard housing take advantage of these programs if their landlord will not cooperate?

What would be some good follow-up sessions for next year?

- What can be done with slumlords?
- Helping people weatherize homes
- Reducing energy costs for everyone – not just programs
- Results from today's conference
- Follow-up on WAP
- More info on how lifeline works
- More actual cases
- Discuss senior specific cases
- More middle income info

Name any of the speakers you heard from today that you would like to hear more from in the future.

- (2) Dave Pitel
- (2) Ken Schlather
- (2) EmPower Speakers
- Paul Suarez

- Beth Ryan

What speakers would you like to recommend for LIFE to invite to present next year?

- Dave Pitel
- Someone from Tioga Opportunities
- Speakers more specific to the counties that I work in
- I would like to hear from the Consumer Protections Panel re: oil and propane
- NYSEG Rep
- Anne Gifford
- DSS to explain the purpose of HEAP
- Roy Matthews – Tioga Opportunities 687-0707
- Code Enforcers

How can LIFE better serve your organization and your clients as we work to address the challenges and opportunities facing low-income New Yorkers seeking safe, affordable and reliable energy?

- More interactions with panels
- Continue networking
- Newsletter is great
- Keep the Forums going
- Make CFL bulbs available to low-income at cost
- 15 year eligibility for WAP is too long

Logistics

Note: attendees were asked to rate session content using the following scale:
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Timeliness of meeting notification	Rating: 4.50
Ease of pre-registration	Rating: 4.50
Ease of on-site registration	Rating: 4.60
Meeting facility, food & beverage	Rating: 3.93

General Suggestions / Comments

- Lots of good and useful info – Thanks
- Not sure how Family Enrichment Network related to this meeting
- Skip the hypothetical family at the end
- Great meeting
- Too much time for Paul Suarez

And Comments on Refreshments and Logistics....

- Tables were too close
- Room was too cold
- Good service and great food
- Parking was horrible

