

Mass Save Home Energy Services:

Demystifying the Program
&
Efforts to Improve Mass Save Accessibility, Public
Awareness & Participation on Nantucket



Presented by Lauren Sinatra, Energy Coordinator
Civic League "Energy Matters" Public Forum
January, 28 2013

TOWN OF
NANTUCKET
ENERGY OFFICE





What is Mass Save?

- Mass Save is a “utility-sponsored” energy conservation program
 - Funded by MA gas and electric utility ratepayers
 - Operated & regulated according to state law passed in 2008*
- It offers economic incentives for residents to make energy improvements to their homes to reduce their energy consumption.
- Program incentives are paid for by a surcharge included in our monthly utility bills.
 - National Grid’s “Energy Efficiency Chg” *for Nantucket residents* is currently 0.822¢/kWh
 - Average Nantucket residential customer pays \$63/year**
- Almost all Nantucket residents qualify for the Mass Save program

* Chapter 169 of the Acts of 2008; Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 25 §19

**Average monthly consumption for a MA residential customer is 633kWh, according to U.S. Energy Information Administration (www.eia.gov).



Why would Utilities want us to reduce our home energy consumption?

- Because they have economic incentive to do so!
- If energy usage continues to rise at its current rate:
 - Utilities will be forced to build power plants, OR
 - Buy energy from other sources to meet the demand
 - Both of these options are risky and expensive
- For Nantucket specifically, increasing energy demands could require the addition of a third submarine power cable, with a cost upwards of \$50million
- In addition, Massachusetts state law* requires utilities to provide energy efficiency programs and to employ demand reductions strategies before adding new supply to meet public's need for energy resources



Mass Save Program: Offerings available per year

- No cost home energy assessments
- Subsidized insulation: 75% up to \$2000 for the installation of approved insulation upgrades.
- Free air sealing (as part of insulation installation),
- Rebates on space heating and hot water heating equipment, including:
 - Heat-pumps Water heaters
 - Solar hot water systems
- 0% HEAT loan program for qualified home energy improvements.

Of course the program also has certain qualifications and restrictions



Your Home Energy Assessment (HEA): More than just Free Light Bulbs

This is an opportunity for you to learn how the systems in your house operate, as well as how to maintain and upgrade them

- Home Energy Assessments take approximately 1 1/2-2 hours. (*if done thoroughly!*)
- The assessor will “install” the following energy and water saving devices at no-cost:
 - Compact Fluorescent Lightbulbs (CFLs) , including specialty bulbs for candelabras or three-way switches.
 - Flow-reducing faucet aerators (reduces the gallons per minute)
 - Low flow shower heads
 - Programmable thermostats
- Also checks for:
 - Insulation in your home’s exterior walls, attic and basement
 - Mold, moisture and mildew problems in the basement and attic
 - The efficiency and safety of combustion appliances such as furnaces, water heaters, and gas ranges (combustion safety test)
 - eligibility for the ENERGY STAR® refrigerator rebate
- The assessor will prepare a customized energy audit report onsite, that summarizes all the findings of the home assessments, and explain all applicable energy rebates.



Sign-up for YOUR “no-cost” Home Energy Assessment for the week of March 11-15th!

- **Sign-up Online**
 - Energy Office Website: www.ACKenergy.org
- **Call Mass Save (www.Mass Save.com)**
 - 866-527-SAVE (7283)
- **Email or Call: Lauren Sinatra, Energy Coordinator**
 - LSinatra@nantucket-ma.gov
 - 508-325-5379



Mass Save Program on Nantucket: A Brief History

- Prior to 2012, Nantucket residents were not receiving equal access or opportunity
- Mass Save would visit Nantucket **once per year**
 - In 2011, only 32 homes received Home Energy Assessment
- Aside from bill inserts, Mass Save spent **\$0** on local advertising
- Problems existed with Mass Save Call Center
 - “Nantucket is not in our service territory, sorry.”
 - “Nantucket? Where is that? You are not on our map.”
 - “We’ve already visited Nantucket this year. We can add you on the waitlist for next year.”
 - “We will call you once we confirm a date to return” (And then never followed through)



Immediate Efforts to “Revive” Mass Save Nantucket

- Initiated and fostered relationships with key National Grid executives
 - Brought to light the “unacceptable” status-quo
 - Nantucket residents collectively pay over \$740,300/year in surcharges to fund the Mass Save program*
 - Established direct line of communication to report ongoing problems and signs of progress
- Recommended applying the “visiting physician” model to HEA scheduling
 - Secured National Grid commitment of designated “energy audit weeks” on a quarterly basis
 - Cost-effective approach to streamline outreach efforts & maximize limited resources

*Based on 2010 island-wide data profile: Residential use= 94,199 MWh



Mass Save: Progress made in 2012

- Increased Program Accessibility & Public Awareness
 - **176** Home Energy Assessments performed over three “energy audit weeks” → **550% increase from 2011**
 - Assisted residential sign-up process
 - Expanded Local Marketing: Newspaper Ads, Radio Ads & Interviews, Social Media, dedicated informational webpage, sponsored WPI student research project and most importantly...kick-started “word of mouth” viral marketing.
- Contractor Info Session: MassSave and National Grid presented ways that contractors on the mainland have received work under MassSave
- Community Open-House/Live-Demo
- Assisted National Grid to engage local banks to become Mass Save “0% Heat Loan” Lenders



Unresolved Issues

- Critical Flaws of “Audit Weeks”
- Logistical Problems
 - BottleNeck
 - Rushed appointments
 - Run out of materials CFLs, T-stats, etc.
- Little to no follow-up with Nantucket Residents
- Neglecting certain services (i.e. would not install programmable thermostats)
- Became aware of numerous reasons why contractor models that work on the mainland would not work on Nantucket, given our unique location, limited territory, supply chain and demographic



2012 WPI Student Research Project: “Evaluation of the Awareness & Effectiveness of the Mass Save Program on Nantucket”

Interesting Findings:

- 73% of general population were unaware that they were paying a mandatory surcharge to fund and participate in the Mass Save Program
- **100% of survey participants who received an HEA in 2012 would recommend the program, and 75% said they had already done so.**
- 86% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they consciously try to save money, and 74% agreed or strongly agreed that Nantucket residents should do more to save energy.
 - “The data indicates that...not only are Nantucket residents concerned about their own energy efficiency, but also about the efforts of others on the island.”
- 46% of respondents who received an HEA said “saving money” was the biggest motivator, followed by “saving energy” (22%) and “helping the environment” (18%)
- Many of the respondents who received an HEA said they felt “unprepared” or “unsure” of what to expect at their energy assessment.



WPI Project: Findings (Cont.)

“The geographic locations of the energy audits performed in 2012, mirror island-- -wide population distribution and highlight areas like Siasconset and Madaket on either ends of the island where few to no homes were assessed...” (p.31)





Top WPI Recommendations

- Hire one or more local contractors to conduct HEAs year-round
- Inform program participants about the process of the audit, program outcomes and necessary preparations prior to the assessment with clear documentation
- Utilize local internet and newspaper advertisements to reach the most amount of residents
- Include more information in bills and advertisements about the surcharge that all customers are currently paying



Improvements for 2013

- ☑ **Hire one or more local contractors to conduct HEAs year-round**
 - Mass Save has committed to directly hire a “local, Nantucket-based” Energy Analyst to perform Home Energy Assessments on a consistent and regular basis year-round. Onsite training for local contractors during upcoming audit weeks.

- ☑ **Inform program participants about the process of the audit, program outcomes and necessary preparations prior to the assessment with clear documentation**
 - As of recently, Mass Save now sends customized emails to residents who sign-up for an HEA with clear information on “how to prepare” and “what to expect” at the time of their energy audit

- ☑ **Utilize local Internet and newspaper advertisements to reach the most amount of residents**
 - Next “Audit Week” is March 11-15th, look for ads in the I&M and on local news & events websites, as well as local radio ads

- ☑ **Include more information in bills and advertisements about the surcharge that all customers are currently paying**
 - New outreach efforts to target caretakers, landlords and realtors that focus on this fact and how to help their clients, renters and home-buyers to save money through (entitled) energy saving opportunities



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