

Home Modernization Program Update

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EmPower +
Virtual Energy Assessments (VEA)
Comfort Home

September 11, 2026



NYSERDA
New York State Energy Research
and Development Authority

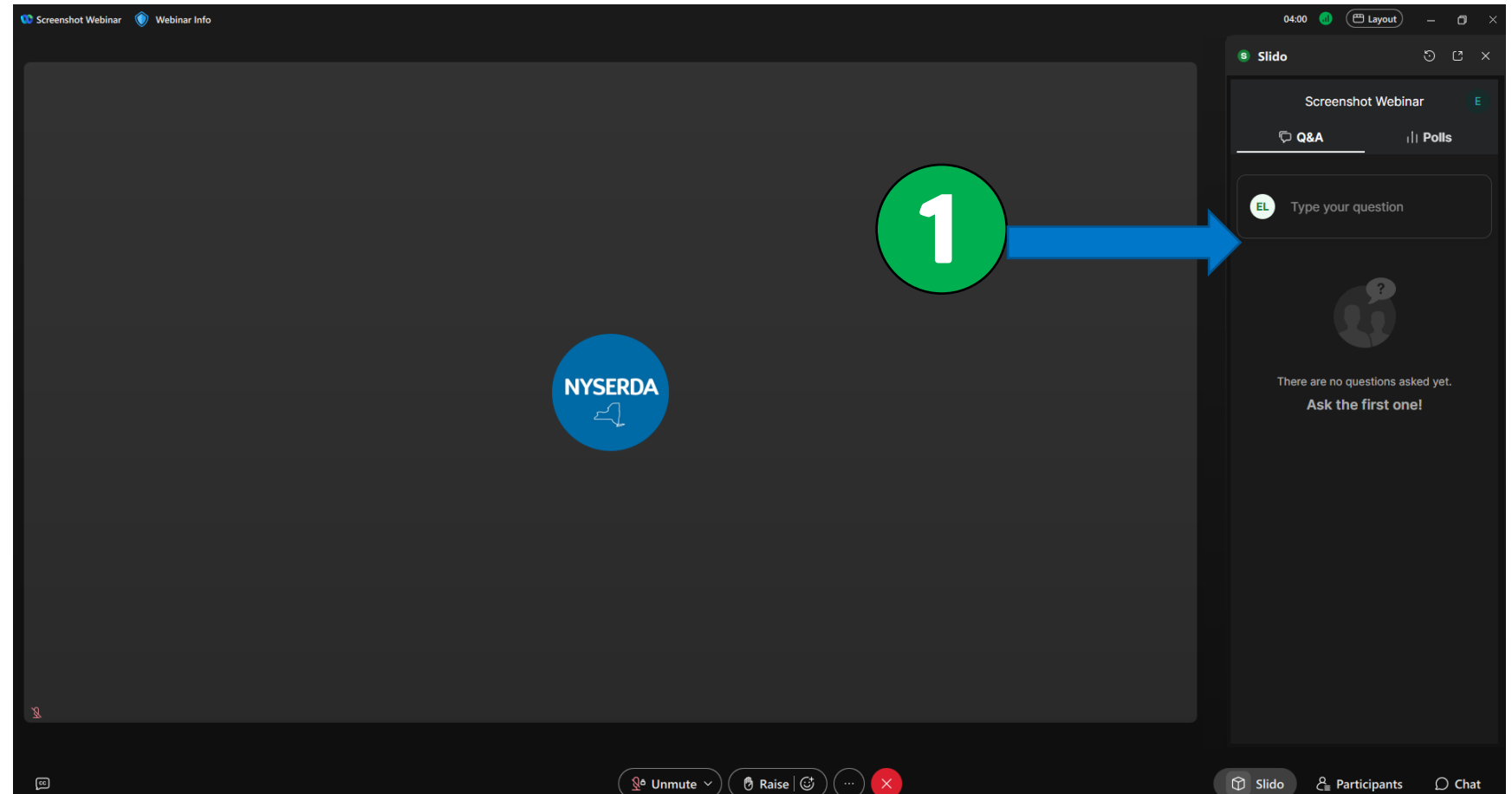
**Let us take a moment of Silence in
memory of September 11th, 2001**



Options for Q&A During Today's Webinar - Text

OPTION 1 - TEXT

- Locate **s**lido panel in the right portion of your webinar panel.
- Type your question as prompted into the text field and click "send."



Format of Q&A During Today's Webinar

Topic: [Type your question]

- > Please list your topic first followed by a colon sign.
- > Type your question pertaining to the topic after the colon sign.
- > This will allow the Host to align the questions with the topic being presented.
- > ***Please note that specific inquiries and topics not covered during today's agenda, i.e., enrollment number or client name can be addressed through the standard customer or contractor support options (Slide 4).***

Topic

Comfort Home: will the deadline for the new incentives be extended?

from Uthman Aziz to everyone: 1:24 PM

Topic

EmPower+: How will new applications be processed after MyEnergy roll out?

from Uthman Aziz to everyone: 1:28 PM

Topic

NYHEP: How do we confirm if a customer is getting OTDA funding or IRA funding?

from Uthman Aziz to everyone: 1:34 PM

Topic

REA: How will the new testing requirements be implemented?

from Uthman Aziz to everyone: 1:35 PM

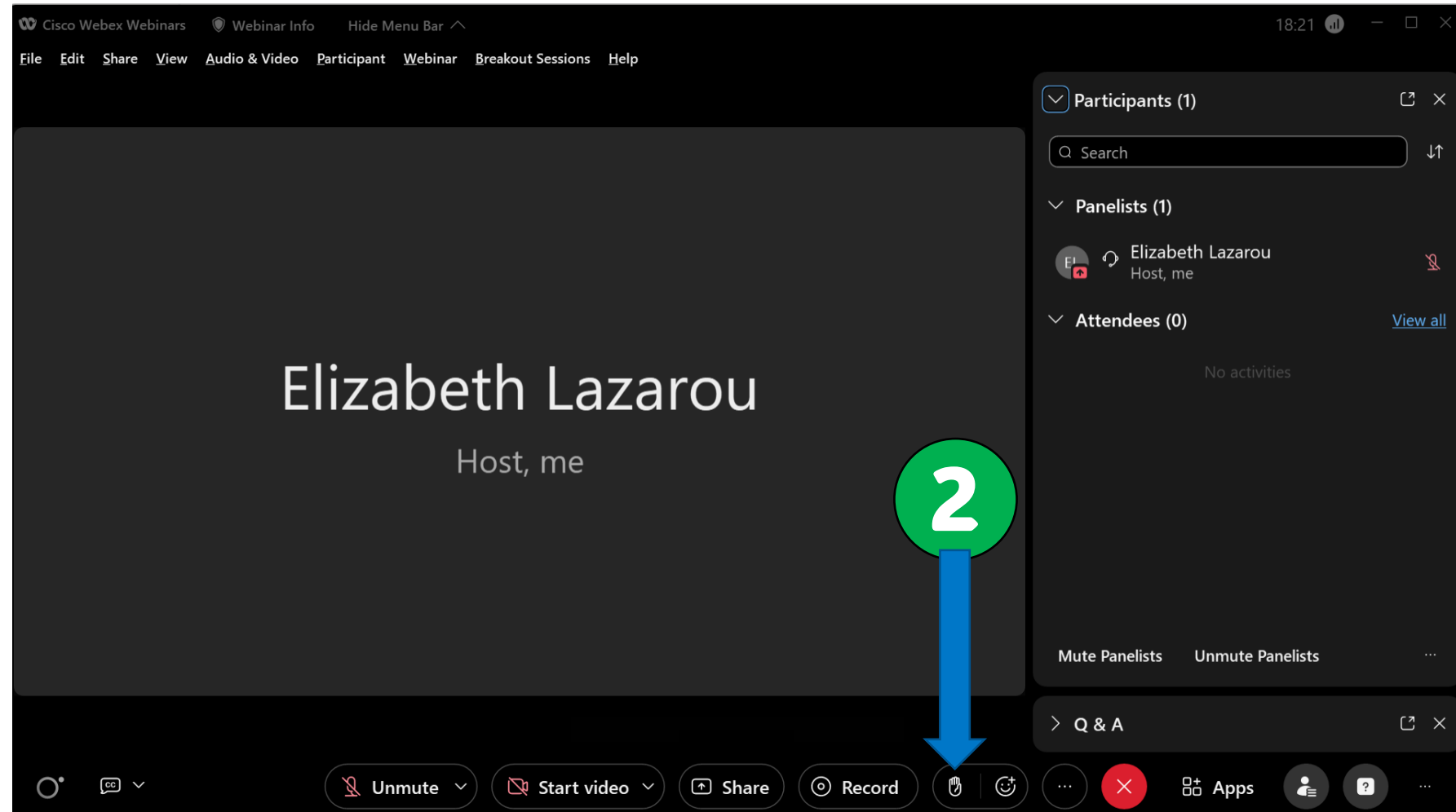
Topic

GJGNY:

Options for Q&A during today's webinar Mic/Phone

OPTION 2 - MIC/PHONE

- > Locate the “raise hand” icon in the toolbar at the bottom of your screen.
- > Click on the raise hand icon to let the host know you have a question.
- > The Host will indicate when you have been sent a request to unmute. Click on the unmute request to ask your question verbally.



Support questions should be directed to:

Please send your email to only ONE of the email addresses listed below, using both causes duplicative work for the implementation teams.

Customer Engagement and Enrollment Contractor

- Implementor: **TRC**
- 1-866-NYSERDA
- 1-877-NYSMART (Customer Support)
- info.residential@nyserda.ny.gov
- Call-center support for customers to answer questions about program offerings and assist with customer enrollment and applications to EmPower+. Process customer applications for EmPower+ and provide income verification services for program incentives.

TRC



Program Operations and Technical Support

- Implementor: **CLEAResult**
- 1-800-284-9069, calls will be routed to person best able to assist
- support.residential@nyserda.ny.gov
- Customer support once an application has been approved as well as programmatic and technical support for contractors in the EmPower+ and Residential Energy Assessment and Comfort Home programs.

CLEAResult



Today's Agenda:

EmPower+

- 2026-27 No Heat Guidelines
- Rental Property Services Agreement
- Vendor Responsibility Checklist
- Upcoming program modifications
- OTDA 2025 Closeout
- Contract Requirement Clarifications
- 2026 QA Snapshot
- Top 5 Nonconformances

Important Reminders

- NYHEP Project Type Selection
- Drilling Interior Walls
- EAG Pilot Eligibility
- Hub Coordination



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and Development Authority

EmPower+

EmPower+ No-Heat Guidelines

NYSERDA will update the No-Heat Guidelines, found in Section 5.7 of the Program Manual, to provide guidance on the submission of No-Heat projects through EmPower+.

The heating season is defined as the time period beginning October 1st of any given year through April 15 of any giving year, or until the No-Heat budget is exhausted, whichever comes first.

- As a reminder, EmPower+ may only be used as a last resort option for no-heat emergencies where the homeowner has already exhausted all other public assistance options to obtain a functioning heating system.

EmPower+ No-Heat Guidelines

The total available No-Heat funding for the 2026-27 heating season is \$1,000,000.

A No-Heat Resources page on the contractor support site will provide ongoing updates of the available funding.

The maximum No-Heat incentive is \$6,000, regardless of heating system type.

If the project cost exceeds the available funding, households are encouraged to access low-interest financing through Green Jobs Green New York or work with their Clean Energy Hub to see if other funding opportunities are available in their area.

Customers must first apply to OTDA Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement (HERR) Program before applying to EmPower+ for No-Heat assistance.

They must provide either a denial or approval letter to NYSERDA.

If they receive a denial letter, they can take advantage of the full \$6,000 amount of EmPower+ funding.

If they receive an approval letter, the amount they receive from HERR will be deducted from the cost of the heating system and NYSERDA will cover the remaining costs up to \$6,000. NYSERDA will monitor heating system costs to make sure they align with market costs.

Visit the No-Heat Resources page on the contractor support site.

- This page compiles program information on no-heat including links to the program manual, forms, and a tracker that shows how much the program has dedicated to no-heats so far this season.
- The Tracker will be updated once a week on Mondays at noon with remaining funds.
- [No-Heat Resources – Contractor Support](#)

Rental Property Services Agreement Update

Effective immediately, for rental properties with comprehensive workscopes and a signed Rental Property Services Agreement, **Participating Contractors are required to provide a copy of the agreement to each tenant where work was completed.** This can be part of the project closeout paperwork left with the customer at project completion.

An updated version of the [Rental Property Service Agreement](#) is available on the [contractor support site](#). The updated language has been incorporated into the Agreement and is included below.

It is understood that the present and future tenant(s) are meant as the persons to benefit from the Program. Upon project completion, a copy of this agreement will be provided by the participating contractor to each tenant where work was completed. In addition, the owner shall provide this Agreement to any tenant upon request. Tenants may contact the program implementer at 1-866-NYSERDA with any questions or concerns in association with the terms of this Agreement

Vendor Responsibility Checklist

- All EmPower+ and Comfort Home Contractors **must** complete and return a NYSERDA Vendor Responsibility Checklist.
- This document is available to download from the Contractor Support site.
- Please complete and submit to support.residential@nyserda.ny.gov by November 13th.

CHECKLIST

Vendor Responsibility



NYSERDA

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer yes or no to the following questions (as the Business Entity).

☐ Yes ☐ No

1. Do you wish to have any information submitted in your contract package treated as proprietary or confidential trade secret information?

☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Are you a Minority or Women-Owned Business Enterprise?

☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Are you a certified Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Enterprise?

☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Previous NYSERDA Contracts awarded?

☐ Yes ☐ No

5. Has the Business Entity or any of its principals been indicted/convicted of a felony in past 5 years?

☐ Yes ☐ No

6. Has the Business Entity or any of its principals been the subject of an investigation, whether open or closed, by any government entity for a civil or criminal violation for any business-related conduct?

2026 EmPower+ Program Manual

Home / Program Manuals

2026-2027 EmPower+ Program Manual and Residential Contractor Participation Agreement

2026-2027 EmPower+ Program Manual → rev. 09.01.2026

Residential Contractor Participation Agreement → rev. 05.19.2026

Vendor Responsibility Checklist → rev. 08.11.2026

Residential Programs Contractor Application → rev. 07.10.2023

Supplemental Information Form → rev. 04.30.2025

Serving Customers Outside Contractors' Designated Service Territory → rev. 05.11.2026

Contractor Status Designations → rev. 07.10.2023

Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures → rev. 08.16.2023

Quality and Market Standards Checklist Specifications → rev. 05.27.2025

1 of 3

EMPOWER+ AUDIT ONLY PROJECTS

Effective January 1, 2027, participating contractors must **submit and complete** comprehensive work scopes.

Standalone home energy assessment projects will be discontinued.

The Program has had an increase in home energy assessment only projects where another contractor weeks later completes another home energy assessment and submits a comprehensive workscope.

Having multiple home energy assessments for one project is not cost effective for the program and is confusing for the customer, who also needs to make time for multiple home visits.

The participating contractor can install the measures or use a subcontractor to install the measures.

A comprehensive work scope should include one of the following, air sealing, attic, wall, rim joist insulation or an upgraded HVAC system.

NYSERDA understands that there may be situations where a contractor will only complete a home energy assessment; however, the intention is to avoid these as a majority of a contractor's overall projects.

MEASURE UPDATES

LED Lighting

Effective January 1, 2027, LED lighting/bulbs will no longer be eligible for incentives through EmPower+.

Contact Contractor Support with questions support.residential@nyserda.ny.gov.

Pause For Questions

OTDA 2025 CLOSEOUT

2025 OTDA Funded Projects

Enrollments with OTDA funding must be submitted for Final Project Review by September 15, 2026.

- Prioritize the completion of OTDA enrollments.

OTDA enrollments that are not completed will be handled based if there were any prior reviews or approvals.

- All incomplete OTDA enrollments will need to be adjusted to remove the expired OTDA eligibility. This can only occur at the Workscope Submission step; therefore, some enrollments will need to be rolled back to that step.
- Enrollments with no workscope approval – maximum incentive amount will be adjusted to current EmPower+ levels.
- Enrollments with approved workscopes – currently approved incentive amount will be honored.

How to Identify OTDA Funded Enrollments in NYHEP:

Navigate to Main Menu and select

- **Enrollments** OR **To Do List**

Use the filters to identify Open OTDA enrollments

- **Referral Source** = NYS Agency 2025 OR NYS Agency

- **Enrollment Status** = Open

OR

- **Workflow Step Status** = All Open (default on To Do List)

2025 OTDA Funded Projects

Program will need time to manually adjust open enrollments. We ask that any OTDA (Referral Source = NYS Agency 2025) project **not being submitted for completion** to not be advanced until the updates have been completed. Goal is all previous OTDA enrollments will be updated by Oct 1. Updates will be posted to NYHEP.

1

Never submitted to Workscope Review

- OTDA Eligible = No
- Maximum Incentive = \$12,000/\$14,000
- Eligible for Sustainable Futures Funding (SFP)

2

Submitted to Workscope Review at least 1x (no approval)

- OTDA Eligible = No
- Maximum Incentive = \$12,000/\$14,000
- Eligible for IRA HEAR funding

3

Final Project Submission with approval

- OTDA Eligible = No
- Maximum Incentive = No change
- Eligible for IRA HEAR funding

CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS

Contract Requirement Timeline



August 2024

All EmPower+ projects must have contracts.

[July 2024 NYSERDA Monthly Webinar](#)



February 2025

Reminder: All EmPower+ projects including those with only Direct Install measures require contracts. Contract not required when only an energy assessment is completed.

[February 2025 NYSERDA Monthly Webinar](#)



June 2026

Added required contract language to Partnership Agreement to address instances when customer fails to complete required program paperwork.

[June 2026 Program Announcement](#)

CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS

General Contract Requirements [Residential Contractor Partnership Agreement](#)

Section 6.1 Contract Compliance

- All EmPower+ projects require a contract if any measure, including Direct Install measures, are installed in the home. No contract is needed when only an energy assessment is completed.
- The signed contract must align with the approved workscope and be signed by both the customer and contractor prior to the start of work. The signed contract is required at Final Project Submission.
- All workscope changes from the contract must be included in a change order.
- Contracts and other documents submitted must be clear and legible and include line-item detail for each installed measure, including nameplate and efficiency information and cannot contain mandatory arbitration clauses.
- All contracts and subcontracts submitted to the Program by the Participating Contractor must be written in full compliance with the General Business Law, Article 36-A “HOME IMPROVEMENT CONTRACTS” and any other applicable statutory or regulatory provisions.

Section 7.4 Customer Compliance

- The Customer is responsible for any balance of workscope costs, and the Participating Contractor must clearly state the Customer’s contribution, if any, on the contract. The Participating Contractors must not inflate costs to maximize program funding and must not change the required Customer contribution for loans; these actions may result in disciplinary measures.

CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS

Required Contract Language [Section 6.1, Residential Contractor Partnership Agreement](#)

All EmPower+ Contracts must include the following language:

- “Any holder of a consumer credit contract is subject to all claims and defenses which the debtor could assert against the seller of goods and services obtained pursuant hereto or with the proceeds hereof, recovery hereunder by the debtor shall not exceed amounts paid by the debtor hereunder.”
- “I understand that funding for this project will be approved by NYSERDA through the EmPower+ Program. The EmPower+ Program requires the completion of required paperwork as well as required testing upon project completion. I understand that EmPower+ Program funding will be withheld for this project if I fail to sign all required paperwork or if I do not allow the required testing to be completed at project completion. If EmPower+ Program funding is withheld for this project, I understand that I will be responsible for payment of the total project cost to the EmPower+ contractor.”

Additional required language dependent on NYSERDA's portion the EmPower+ funding:

- Entire project cost: “The contract price is being paid by NYSERDA through the EmPower+ program, for and on behalf of the customer.”
- Portion of project cost: “Part of the contract price is being paid by NYSERDA through the EmPower+ program, for and on behalf of the customer.”

General Requirement Clarifications

...include line-item detail for each installed measure

- Each measure being installed needs to be listed on the contract, along with relevant measure details – such as equipment make/model numbers and efficiencies.
- Each measure cost does not need to be listed on the contract. The project's total cost is acceptable.

Breakdown of material and labor costs

- Not required on the contract.
- When inputting measures into NYHEP, contractors may be prompted to provide a breakdown of material and labor costs based on select measures (i.e., IRA HEAR funded measures).
- Occasionally, Program staff may request contractors to provide additional detail regarding contractual terms and cost for the purposes of project review.

Should changes be made to contracts?

- Other than the specific language required, contractors should continue to submit contracts as is until further guidance is provided.
- NYSERDA is exploring opportunities to provide trainings on New York State contract law.

Pause For Questions

QA Snapshot

COMFORT HOME

Contractor Performance – Comfort Home 8/1/2025 through 7/31/2026

- Number of active contractors – 68
- Number of projects completed – 4,458
- Number of inspections completed - 251
- Average QA Score - 4.5 (out of a maximum of 5)

Top non-conformances

- Blower door test results are greater than 10% of contractors reported test out (12)
- Attic Insulation, storage area not dammed and clean (12)
- Attic Insulation, exposed rigid foam board or spray foam does not have the required barrier (9)

Contractor Performance – EmPower+ 8/1/2025 through 7/31/2026

- Number of active contractors - 194
- Number of full comprehensive projects completed – 17,772
- Number of inspections completed – 2,260
- Average QA Score - 4.4 (out of a maximum of 5)

Top non-conformances

- Insulation R-value and quantity installed match final invoice (99)
- Projects with a panel upgrade or other work requiring an electrical inspection have not been inspected by the AHJ, or the contractor/customer did not provide evidence a permit was obtained, and the inspection is pending. (92)
- Blower door test results are greater than 10% of contractors reported test out (71)

2026 TOP NON-CONFORMANCES

Top 5 Non-Conformances Jun – Aug 2026

Key Takeaways

- Top 2 findings increased in prevalence in the last month.
- 3 of the top 5 findings were related to improper insulation installment.
- **Insulation not matching contracted values remains more than twice as common as any other finding.**

# Occurrences	Category	Description
51	Insulation	Insulation R-value and quantity installed matches contract
16	Insulation	Exposed rigid foam board or spray foam has required thermal and ignition barrier
11	Roadblocks	Clothes dryers, regardless of fuel type, and bathroom exhaust fans must be vented directly outside using appropriate duct materials
10	General Requirements	Projects with a panel upgrade or other work requiring an electrical inspection have been inspected by the AHJ, or the contractor/customer provide evidence a permit was obtained, and the inspection is pending.
10	Insulation	Insulation has been dammed to maintain minimum clearances to heat sources such as chimneys, flues, recessed lights or bath fans with heat lamps.

2026 TOP NON-CONFORMANCES

Insulation R-value and Quantity Installed Matches Contract

- Contracted areas are missing insulation.
- Square footage differences between signed contract and NYHEP.

Non-Conformance Category: Major

Will result in measurable shortfall in energy savings.

Reference

NYHEP Work Order: Funding Allocations

[EmPower+ Quality and Market Standards Checklist Specifications](#)



Non-Conformance



Resolution

Non-Conformance

Attic knee-wall was not insulated.

Resolution

Return to dwelling and insulate area. Submit photos in Salesforce showing correction was completed.

2026 TOP NON-CONFORMANCES

Exposed rigid foam board or spray foam has required thermal and ignition barrier

- Inspector is unable to determine if thermal barrier paint (TBP) was applied.
- Product meeting NFPA 286 or R316 compliance was not identified on contract.

Non-Conformance Category: Major

Will result in measurable shortfall in energy savings.

Reference

NYS RC R316.4, R316.5.11, Program Requirement Section 5.16.5

[EmPower+ Quality and Market Standards Checklist Specifications](#)



Non-Conformance



Resolution

Non-Conformance

No thermal barrier on installed spray foam.

Resolution

Return to dwelling and apply thermal barrier paint (TBP). Submit photos in Salesforce showing correction was completed.

2026 TOP NON-CONFORMANCES

Clothes dryer and bathroom exhaust fans must be vented directly outside using appropriate duct materials

- Vent is severely damaged.
- Vent does not terminate outside the home.

Non-Conformance Category: Major

Presents an increased risk of system failure or hazard but not determined to be in imminent danger of failure or hazard.

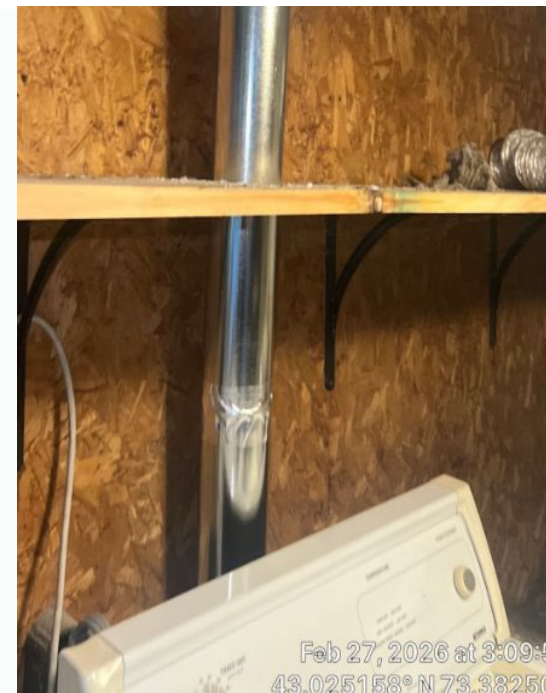
Reference

BPI Technical Standards for the Envelope Professional

[EmPower+ Quality and Market Standards Checklist Specifications](#)



Non-Conformance



Resolution

Non-Conformance

Vent for the dryer was venting into the dwelling.

Resolution

Return to dwelling and re-vent with proper materials. Submit photos in Salesforce showing correction was completed.

2026 TOP NON-CONFORMANCES

Projects requiring electrical inspection have been inspected by the AHJ, or evidence provided a permit was obtained, and inspection is pending

- Final submission paperwork does not include AHJ documentation
- There are no stickers visible on the panel or meter.

Non-Conformance Category: Major

Presents an increased risk of system failure or hazard but not determined to be in imminent danger of failure or hazard.

Reference

NYS RC R105.2, E3403.2

[EmPower+ Quality and Market Standards Checklist Specifications](#)



Non-Conformance

UPSTATE ELECTRICAL INSPECTION AGENCY

Certifies that the electrical equipment listed below has been examined and is approved as being in accord with the National Electrical Code, applicable Governmental, Utility, and Agency rules in effect on the date noted below and is issued subject to the following conditions.

Owner: [Redacted]	Date: 1/19/2026
Occupant: Same	Applicant: [Redacted]
Certificate Number: [Redacted]	Occupancy: Hot Water Heater
Address: [Redacted]	Inspector: [Redacted]
Equipment: 1-2 Pole 30 Amp Breaker	

Resolution

Non-Conformance

No documentation provided confirming AHJ permitted or accepts the changes to the home.

Resolution

Provide AHJ sticker/certificate or letter/email from AHJ confirming no permit required.

2026 TOP NON-CONFORMANCES

Insulation has been dammed to maintain minimum clearances to heat sources

- Dam was not installed.
- Improper damming material utilized.
- Damming had insufficient clearance.

Non-Conformance Category: Major

Presents an increased risk of system failure or hazard but not determined to be in imminent danger of failure or hazard.

Reference

BPI Technical Standards for the Envelope Professional

[EmPower+ Quality and Market Standards Checklist Specifications](#)



Non-Conformance



Resolution

Non-Conformance

Cellulose insulation was installed in direct contact with an actively used chimney.

Resolution

Return to dwelling, installing an appropriate dam while pulling insulation from contact. Submit photos in Salesforce showing correction was completed.

Pause For Questions

Reminders

NYHEP Step-by-Step Resource Guides

Program has created several step-by-step guides for contractors that are located on the [NY Home Energy Portal Resources page](#) on the Contractor Support website.

- Knowledge Base Articles for NYHEP – Quick Start Guide, Terminology, Training Video and NYHEP Measures List
- Replacing Electric Utility Account Number in NYHEP Steps – Recording
- Replacing Gas Utility Account Number in NYHEP Steps
- **Selecting the Correct Project Type in NYHEP Steps**

Correct Project Type Selection (Effective August 31, 2026)

- Contractors are required to select the correct Project Type (Full Comprehensive, Audit Install) in NYHEP that aligns with the work being performed in the home.
- NYHEP will enforce this requirement at Final Project Submission based on the measures selected.
- Enrollments with Full Comprehensive selected for the Project Type with only assessment and direct install measures completed will need to be rolled back to Workscope Submission and updated.

Drilling Walls for Insulation Installation

Drilling directly into exterior siding or drilling into the interior walls of the home is prohibited unless Participating Contractor obtains written permission from the homeowner and approval to proceed from Program implementation staff.

As part of the written permission, the Participating Contractor must provide a detailed description of the expectations for sealing the holes (i.e., plugged and 1 coat of spackle and or ready to paint).

ENERGY AFFORDABILITY GUARANTEE (EAG) PILOT ELIGIBILITY

EAG Pilot Eligibility

By the end of the project all approved EAG Pilot enrollments must have:

- Air Source Heat Pump and Heat Pump Water Heater installed via EmPower+.
- The equipment could have been installed on a past EmPower+ project.
- Achieve an ACH50 of 10 or less.

New projects are welcome!

- The [Energy Affordability Guarantee \(EAG\) Pilot reservation form](#) has been updated to ease the process of applying to the program.
- Submit enrollment information via the new Zoom form for consideration.

EAG projects must be completed, including payment by December 31, 2026.

- Prioritize submitting enrollments for Final Project Review by mid-December 2026.

Visit the [Energy Affordability Guarantee](#) page on the Contractor Support site for more information.

CLEAN ENERGY HUB COORDINATION

- Coordinating with your Clean Energy Hub where possible, helps make your job easier!
- The Hubs have been tasked with assisting NY residents navigate this space. If you are reached out to by one of the Hubs, please be responsive.
- <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/All-Programs/Regional-Clean-Energy-Hubs>



**Regional Clean
Energy Hub**
Partnering Organization

Final Questions