



Helping a Hard-to-Reach Segment Save on Energy

About Puget Sound Energy

Puget Sound Energy (PSE) serves communities in 10 counties across the state of Washington. PSE is the state's largest utility, supporting more than 1.1 million electric customers and nearly 900,000 natural gas customers across 6,000 square miles. PSE's mission today is deep decarbonization, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and transforming its business to deliver on the objectives of Washington's Clean Energy Transformation Act. PSE will be coal free by 2025, and the utility's electric system will be carbon neutral by 2030.

Identifying Manufactured Home Customers as a Priority

Within PSE's service territory, there are at least 65,500 manufactured homes, the vast majority of which only receive electric service from PSE (Only three percent receive PSE natural gas service). Of these manufactured homes, about one-third are in a manufactured home park, and over half are in an urban setting.

An estimated 41 percent of these customers are at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Compared to residents of site-built, single-family homes, PSE's manufactured home customers are less likely to be in the labor force, more likely to have a lower income and more likely to be below federal poverty thresholds.

These circumstances present unique challenges in serving manufactured home customers, particularly around alleviating financial barriers, building trust and removing motivational barriers. Manufactured home customers are likely time-stressed and are more likely to have fixed or gig-based income sources, which means they do not have the means to cover the upfront costs of energy-efficient upgrades.

A renewed focus on manufactured home residents in the Pacific Northwest

While manufactured home customers are eligible for all of PSE's residential, single-family rebate programs, PSE historically offered only one program specifically for these customers, the Mobile Home Duct Sealing program. This free program served about 34 percent of eligible customers from 2010–2016 with free duct sealing and direct-install compact fluorescent lightbulbs and showerheads.

Over the last decade, however, there has been an emerging interest in the Pacific Northwest on energy efficiency for manufactured housing. The Northwest Power and Conservation Council's Seventh Power Plan¹ identified manufactured homes as a disproportionately hard-to-reach customer segment but one with considerable energy efficiency potential.

In 2019, PSE engaged with interested stakeholders to develop a research study to better understand the manufactured home market in its service area and determine additional opportunities to provide cost-effective energy efficiency services. The study grew out of joint interest expressed by PSE and its Conservation Resource Advisory Group and was an important step in formulating a plan of action.

PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

To help manufactured home customers save on energy, PSE conducted market research to assess needs, upgraded and added programs, and developed a multi-channel communications campaign.

RESULTS SO FAR

In 2019, the campaign increased the participation rate in rebates for this customer segment by 54 percent, which directly translated to a 199-percent increase in kWh savings in tandem with PSE's Home Energy Assessment program.

¹ The 1980 Northwest Power Act authorized Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington to develop a regional power plan and wildlife program to balance the Northwest's environment and energy needs.

An Integrated Engagement Strategy for a Hard-to-Reach Segment

Organizational changes and program updates to meet strategic goals

Key findings from the study showed that targeted programs and increased rebates that account for the specialized needs of manufactured homes and residents might increase participation in PSE's programs.

In early 2019, PSE formed a committee to design and manage programs identified as key opportunities. The committee worked together to design an ideal customer journey, take inventory of the resources needed to connect customers with appropriate programs or services, and set metrics for each program and for the initiative.

A dashboard was developed to capture data from 24 different metrics, compiling the results into seven overall indicators of success. The committee met every other week to review program status, discuss activities and determine any needed adaptations to continue meeting goals.

PSE made the following changes to its portfolio of programs:

- Increased rebates for insulation, duct sealing, ductless heat pumps, windows and heat pump water heaters.
- Focused Home Energy Assessment (HEA) door-to-door outreach efforts on manufactured home parks.
- Developed a referral system to funnel leads from HEAs to PSE's Weatherization Assistance program.
- Launched a manufactured home version of the Home Energy Report providing tailored tips about HEAs, Weatherization Assistance and rebates.
- Set up a contractor referral network specifically for manufactured homes.

PSE made a concerted effort to tailor the customer journey to manufactured home customers in order to address pain points and barriers to participation. The primary entry point into PSE's programs is a free Home Energy Assessment, which provides a customized energy efficiency roadmap, no-cost direct install measures (like showerheads, aerators and LED lightbulbs) and pre-screened contractor referrals. PSE also piloted a program to install smart thermostats.

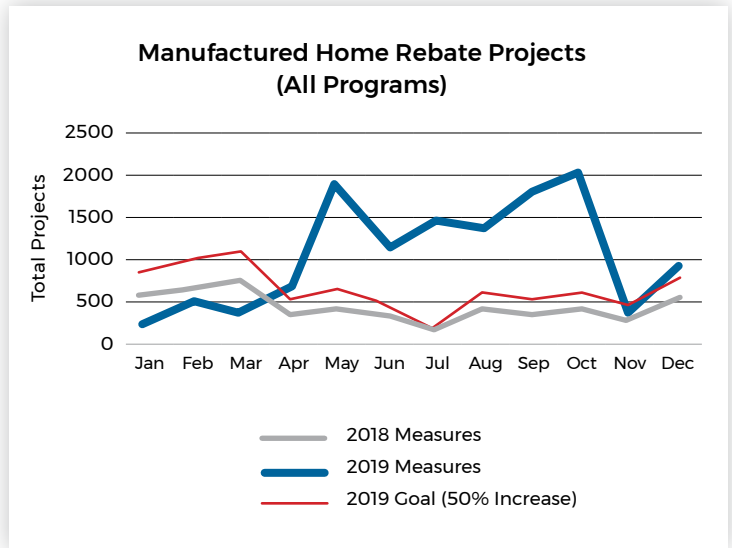
Educating manufactured home customers on energy-saving programs

To drive participants from awareness to completed projects, PSE developed a comprehensive, multi-channel education campaign. To start, PSE's Customer Insights team determined key insights into who these customers are, how they want to consume information and how they viewed their utility. PSE learned that they not only needed to build awareness but also trust.

In order to address barriers to participation, PSE utilized multiple channels of communication: digital (web and email), mail and door-to-door engagement. This multi-faceted approach contributed to a highly successful campaign that included these elements:

- A manufactured home webpage (www.pse.com/mh) that served as a digital showcase of all services and products for this segment in one place. This was the first time PSE focused on one customer segment and journey. The engagement metrics (how long consumers viewed the page, number of downloaded rebate forms and how many customers signed up for HEAs) showed that this was a more effective way to serve and educate these customers. The webpage also became a template for a new resource that housed all rebates and offers on one sheet.
- A marketing campaign (postcard and digital) to all 65,500 manufactured home customers that resulted in higher-than-average engagement rates and ensured participation by customers who do not live in manufactured home parks. PSE sent multiple emails throughout the year to prompt customers to take action depending on where they were on their customer journey. PSE was able to re-engage and prompt customers after their HEA if they received a referral for a contractor or to follow-up on a specific measure.
- English and Spanish signage in several Community Action Partner locations that drove interest and awareness in the weatherization program.
- Home energy reports to help drive participation in PSE's no-cost Weatherization Assistance and HEA programs. These reports have a readership and recall rate of more than 80 percent.
- Door-to-door outreach to manufactured home customers. A key part to the success of this outreach was the ability to schedule same-day appointments, which greatly increased participation and addressed two barriers — time constraints and a lack of email addresses for half of PSE's manufactured home customers.

Goal 1 – Improved Awareness	Percentage of customers who improved in awareness about the program from a postcard or email: 27%
	Customers who have had a PSE expert knock on their door: 9,694
Goal 2 – Increased Engagement	Number of clicks on Manufactured Home targeted email: 9,869
	Customers actions taken towards completing a project: 6,474
Goal 3 – Completed Projects	Customers who received a Home Energy Assessment: 2,831
	Customers who completed a rebate measure: 1,310
	Increase in kWh savings over the same timeframe in 2018: 199%



To support participation in the manufactured home initiative, PSE also provided trade allies with segment-specific classroom and in-field training. Classroom training included web-based informational sessions to introduce participants to the unique opportunities of the campaign, including clarifying the eligibility guidelines associated with structure type and applicable incentives. In-field training was provided to participants interested in the weatherization program and consisted of best practices associated with insulating attic cavities in manufactured homes.

Results and What's Coming Next

PSE's integrated strategy has had a positive impact on engaging manufactured home customers in energy-saving programs. The utility's efforts were driven by a cross-functional group representing energy efficiency, evaluation, low income, customer insights and product marketing.

The primary goal of this group was to increase the participation rate of this customer segment by 50 percent for manufactured homes rebate projects in 2019. The campaign exceeded this goal, resulting in a 54-percent increase in participation, which directly translated to a 199-percent increase in kWh savings in tandem with PSE's Home Energy Assessment program.

Other key metrics include:

- Manufactured home webpage: 13,391 customers have accessed the site, and 64 percent of those customers took an action towards saving energy.
- Marketing campaign resulted in higher-than-average engagement rates and led to a 27-percent increase in awareness of rebates.
- Home Energy Reports were sent to 25,000 customers, driving participation in PSE's no-cost Weatherization Assistance and HEA programs.
- Door-to-door outreach to 9,700 customers, which resulted in over 2,800 Home Energy Assessments.
- Over 1,500 contractor referrals.
- Over \$4,594,000 invested in incentive dollars through no-cost, low-income weatherization and other rebate programs (doubling incentive spend over the same timeframe in 2018).
- The smart thermostat assisted installation pilot resulted in 77 thermostats installed in manufactured homes by the end of 2019.
- Manufactured home replacement pilot in partnership with state agencies replaced four homes.

In 2020, PSE is replicating this initiative with all of its income-eligible customers. PSE is currently in the process of mapping the ideal customer journey, redesigning aspects of certain programs and setting overarching goals and objectives to track through the year.