

Promoting Program Solutions

Electric and gas utilities in the United States invest billions of dollars annually to help their customers become more energy-efficient, generally by making repairs and improvements to customers' homes and buildings. Yet, studies show vast amounts of untapped cost-effective efficiency potential available in our nation's multifamily affordable housing sector. A lot of energy delivered to affordable housing is wasted—it simply goes out the window or up the chimney.



Anabell and Eva Aurora Martinez enjoy their redeveloped apartment at St. Dennis in Wash. D.C. The property received energy-efficiency upgrades and solar power that lowered operating costs and helped maintain affordable rents.

Why is this the case? Affordable housing is often viewed as a “hard to reach” sector. There are barriers that make this the case including split incentives between owners or managers and renters, lack of financing options, steep upfront costs of improvements, and lack of information. Fortunately many utilities have realized success with programs and there are models that work.

In 2015, Energy Efficiency for All published a [Program Design Guide](#) describing 12 best practices for programs to push through barriers to boosting the energy efficiency of multifamily affordable housing. EEFA has also published a [fact sheet](#) on successful “one-stop shop” model programs. These remain the lodestar for our advocacy across the U.S. Our partners collaborate with our coalitions and national network to guide policies and programs towards adoption and implementation of these solutions. Our team also works with partners and allies to research and develop new solutions.

Energy Efficiency for All (EEFA) unites people from diverse sectors and backgrounds, including housing, energy efficiency, environmental, health, and community leaders, to collectively make multifamily homes healthy and affordable through energy and water efficiency.

Priorities

- 1** Improve policies and practices by promoting: Performance goals for energy efficiency; coordination across electricity, gas and water programs; cost-effectiveness tests that treat affordable housing accurately; and better building owner access to energy usage information.
- 2** Support programs to specifically serve multifamily affordable housing and establish a “one-stop shop” for building owners to access integrated program services.
- 3** Help building owners finance efficiency projects and structure incentives for whole-building savings.
- 4** Build partnerships with key local market participants.
- 5** Support benchmarking, audits and other assessments.