

NEEA and regional utilities successfully train the region to think smart about energy savings

Organizations and companies in the Northwest gain competitive advantages while cutting costs through NEEA's training and certification programs

Portland, Ore. –Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (NEEA), in collaboration with its utility partners, continues to successfully train the region through training and certification initiatives that span industries, from commercial building owners to trade organizations that represent thousands of members.

Building Operator Certification (BOC®) is a credential program offering hands-on training in HVAC, lighting and energy benchmarking for the region's building maintenance employees, developed and initially funded by NEEA from 1997 to 2002. Through BOC training, employees gain the experience and competitive knowledge to help facilities improve their building energy performance. BOC has become a self-sustained credential program now available in 28 states as well as Canada, and has certified more than 9,000 professionals nationwide.

In an effort to reach more organizations and companies that operate buildings in the Northwest, NEEA partnered with BOC's national program. NEEA's Regional BOC Expansion initiative aims to accelerate adoption of energy efficiency practices by addressing market barriers to participation in BOC, such as lack of time, ability to pay, lack of service in rural markets, lack of awareness, and product performance standard. The goal of the initiative is to increase the value placed on BOC by employers and operators, which will lead to persistent energy savings over time.

By developing a regional market for educated and certified building operators, NEEA will work to achieve lasting improvement in the energy-efficient operation and maintenance (O&M) of commercial buildings serving K-12, government, higher education, healthcare, commercial real estate, hospitality, and manufacturing across the Northwest.

"BOC positively impacts the commercial building and commercial facilities sector in the Northwest and is critical to saving energy throughout the region," said Susan E. Stratton, NEEA's executive director. "The region's commercial building owners and facilities managers now know the value of energy management, understand the business case for energy efficiency and have the knowledge to stay competitive."

BOC teaches facility managers, building operators, maintenance personnel, and others who monitor commercial building systems how to reduce energy and resource consumption in the facilities that they operate. BOC not only provides training but also lets participants take advantage of local utility initiatives and programs and the knowledge base of these programs for guidance.

"NEEA's role in training our building-owner and maintenance customers gives them the knowledge to save energy usage in their buildings in our service area and the region, and to effectively leverage local utility energy efficiency programs," said Sheryl Anayas, program manager on PSE's Building Performance Team. "BOC training is very hands on, requires the completion of specific projects for certification, and

offers specialized classroom training in HVAC, lighting and benchmarking. Bringing these skills into the commercial marketplace is crucial to our customers' success."

Chris Hunsaker, HVAC lead, building engineer for the Seattle Mariners, at Safeco Field, enrolled in BOC and scored great success from the training he received. By taking courses while on the job, Hunsaker was able to complete his certification while applying his BOC training knowledge to his role at Safeco. "I learned a lot about energy usage, gained competitive information about utility costs, and received a broader knowledge on the costs to run a facility," said Hunsaker.

One example of his success was real-time energy savings at Safeco. "We had domestic water boilers that weren't running efficiently. We installed a control system at a very small cost and within six months saved almost a quarter of a million dollars," said Hunsaker.

At 16 years, BOC is the longest-running energy-efficiency training and certification program in the industry and has demonstrated increased energy savings. Regionally, based on the estimated 286,000 square feet managed by each certified operator, estimated annual savings are \$20,000.

To learn more and watch video case studies of successful graduates of NEEA's BOC initiative, please visit neea.org/BOC.

About the Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance

The Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (NEEA) is an alliance of more than 100 Northwest utilities and energy efficiency organizations working on behalf of more than 12 million energy consumers. NEEA leverages its strong regional partnerships to effect market transformation by accelerating the adoption of energy-efficient products, services and practices. Since 1997, NEEA and its partners – including Avista Utilities, Bonneville Power Administration, Chelan County PUD, Clark Public Utilities, Cowlitz PUD, Eugene Water & Electric Board, Energy Trust of Oregon, Idaho Power, NorthWestern Energy, Pacific Power, Puget Sound Energy, Seattle City Light, Snohomish County Public Utilities, and Tacoma Power – have saved enough energy to power more than 600,000 homes each year. Energy efficiency can offset most of our new demand for energy, saving money and keeping the Northwest a healthy and vibrant place to live. www.neea.org

About Puget Sound Energy

Washington state's oldest local energy utility, Puget Sound Energy serves 1.1 million electric customers and more than 760,000 natural gas customers in 10 counties. PSE meets the energy needs of its customers, in part, through cost-effective energy efficiency, procurement of sustainable energy resources, and far-sighted investment in energy-delivery infrastructure. PSE employees are dedicated to providing great customer service that is safe, dependable and efficient. For more information, visit www.PSE.com, or follow PSE on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

About Building Operator Certification

The Northwest Energy Efficiency Council (NEEC) administers the national Building Operator Certification (BOC®) program, which has been educating, training, and certifying building operators to perform

energy-efficient operations and maintenance since 1996. For more information, visit www.theBOC.info.