



COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP WEATHERIZATION CONFERENCE

September 16 - 17, 2025

DAY ONE - SEPT 16, 2025

9:00-9:45 AM

Conference Opening

Andrea Olson, Brandon Kjelden, and Rory Hoffmann, Room C/D

All Attendees

Join us for the opening session of the 2025 Weatherization Conference as we set the stage for two days of collaboration, innovation, and learning. This conference will highlight key weatherization strategies, the importance of energy efficiency, and the role these efforts play in improving housing stability and reducing costs for communities. You'll hear from industry leaders and experts, gain insights into new trends and resources, and have the opportunity to network with colleagues across the state. Don't miss the chance to kick off the conference with an inspiring start!

BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 10:00-11:30 AM

Identifying Issues with the Audit

Jake McAlpine, Room A

Recommended for: Crew, Foremen, Auditors

This session is designed to help auditors and crews work better together and avoid callbacks. We will walk through the basic steps of an energy audit as explain some of the key decisions that are made during and audit that effect measure SIRs and how a work order is created. We will then discuss things that crews can do when they arrive at a home to ensure that the work order calls for all the right things and that nothing was missed at the audit that could impact the cost effectiveness of the job.

WxPro Round Table - Training with General Q&A

Jayden Erdmann, Room B

Recommended for: Wx Administrators and all WxPro and CAP60 Users

This session is designed for both new users and those familiar with WxPro, the software used in our weatherization program. While not a basic tutorial, this roundtable provides an opportunity to revisit key features, clarify any uncertainties, and address specific questions that have come up since the recent WxPro trainings across the state. Whether you're new to the platform or looking to enhance your current knowledge, come prepared with your questions and challenges. This is your chance to engage in a collaborative discussion, share experiences, and ensure you're fully equipped to use WxPro confidently in your work.

ND Safety Council: Heat Stress Awareness

Jon, Room C/D

Recommended for: Crew, Foremen, Auditors, Coordinators

Heat Stress Awareness goes beyond the basic understanding of heat as a hazard. Learn how to assess worker exposure and the conditions that often lead to heat-related illness.

Basic Forced Air Gas Heating

Tom Andrews, Room

Recommended for: Crew, Foremen, Auditors, Coordinators, Estimators

One of the more common types of heating systems in America is forced air gas. For many job classifications, it would be nice to understand what happens when the thermostat is turned up and the system is operating. This basic fundamentals session intends to help demystify furnaces and their operation – after all, it's fire in a box with a fan and some controls. Ok, it's a little more complicated than that but we will work to make it as simple as possible while explaining construction, components and operation. By attending this session participants will: Identify furnace types by application and efficiency, Examine construction and basic operation, Look at individual components and their function, Review a typical unit sequence of operation document

Infrared Cameras for Wx: Fundamentals and Hands-On Demonstration

Brandon Kjelden and Doug Bakke, Room F

Recommended for: Crew, Foremen, Auditors

Discover the power of infrared cameras in Wx during this hands-on learning session. Trainers from SENDCAA will guide you through the basic fundamentals of infrared imaging, including how the cameras work, when and where to use them, and the valuable insights they provide for detecting energy inefficiencies. This is a unique opportunity to get a live demonstration of infrared cameras in action, showcasing basic operations that can be applied directly to your weatherization work.

LUNCH | 11:30 AM-1:00 PM

Room C/D - 128

BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 1:00-2:30 PM

Whole House Diagnostics

Jake McAlpine, Room A

Recommended for: Crew, Foremen, Auditors, Coordinators

The session will be a refresher on how and why we do the diagnostic tests we do in the Weatherization Assistance Program. We will start with the building science principles that cause issues in homes and how testing can help identify them. We will go deeper on when certain tests may not be useful and when some non-required tests may be helpful.

Estimator Round Table: Best Strategies and Brilliant Solutions with Jerry

Jerry Kapp, Room B

Recommended for: Estimators

This roundtable is a valuable opportunity for estimator staff to connect, share experiences, and discuss best practices for foundational work, basements, and other key weatherization techniques. We'll explore methods for tackling common challenges and look at creative solutions to deal with rising material costs. This session is designed for peer-to-peer learning and collaboration, not a space for complaints, but a chance to support each other in finding practical solutions. Come prepared to share what's working in your region, learn from others, and leave with fresh ideas to enhance your estimating process moving forward.

ND Safety Council: Team Safety

Room C/D

Recommended for: Crew, Foremen, Auditors, Coordinators

Whether you call them safety committees, workforce committees, or safety teams, this course is designed for safety, health and management personnel responsible for putting these teams together, but who may lack experience in team building.

Water Heating and Simplified Vent Inspection

Tom Andrews, Room E

Recommended for: Crew, Foremen, Auditors, Coordinators, Estimators, Wx Administrators

This session is a two-for-one special! First, we are going to look at residential water heating. Even if you think you know all about water heaters, there is likely something to learn here. Whether a rookie or a pro, the intent is to fill gaps in your knowledge base. Next, it is logical to consider venting. Proper vents are critical to safer operation of gas fired water heaters – especially in tighter, weatherized structures. This portion intends to help make visual inspections of vent systems easier and more comprehensive for the average inspector. Presented will be 5 simple rules to follow for vent installations. By attending this session participants will: Be exposed to construction details, components and operational characteristics of residential water heaters, Look at safety concerns, installation considerations and options for tight buildings, Review fundamentals of vent system operation, Examine code and “better than code” aspects of vent installations

Trauma-Informed Care - Part One

Jennifer Schlinger, Room F

Recommended for: Crew, Foremen, Auditors, Coordinators, Estimators, Wx Administrators

This two-part series introduces the foundational knowledge, principles and awareness of trauma and its impact. The second session builds on this foundation by examining factors that promote resilience and well-being, highlighting practical interventions, supports, and self-care practices. Together these sessions will provide useful tools that can be used personally and professionally to better support themselves and others.

BREAK | 2:30-2:45 PM

BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 2:45-4:15 PM

Air Sealing Techniques

Jake McAlpine, Room A

Recommended for: Crew, Foremen, Auditors

Of all the retrofit work done in the Weatherization Assistance Program, air sealing is one of the most complex measures. It takes building science knowledge to accurately measure air leakage, policy knowledge to model and create meaningful work order details, and real world experience to effectively implement those work orders in the home. In this session we will step you through the entire process from audit to final inspection and cover key things you can do to improve air sealing results in your organization. We will be covering the physics of how air leakage works, why air sealing is so important, specific policies that impact how work orders are created, how to set air sealing goals, and how specific construction details in homes should be approached in order to get them properly air sealed.

OPEN SESSION

Room B

Recommended for: Crew, Foremen, Auditors, Coordinators, Estimators, Wx Administrators

This session is designed to help you get comfortable with basic technology and digital tools that can enhance your work. Whether you're new to technology or looking to build your digital literacy skills, this session will introduce you to key tech concepts, including how to use AI and other digital tools effectively in your job. We aim to create a stress-free, non-judgmental atmosphere where you can learn at your own pace, ask questions, and gain confidence in using technology. The goal is to help you integrate these tools into your daily tasks, increasing efficiency and making your work easier and more effective.

Innovative Outreach: New Strategies for Weatherization Workforce Recruitment

Absolute Studios, Room C/D - 128

Crew, Foremen, Auditors, Coordinators, Estimators, Wx Administrators

Join us for an engaging breakout session as Absolute Studios showcases the new strategies and tools developed for our statewide weatherization workforce recruitment campaign. This session will highlight a range of innovative outreach tactics, including virtual reality, alongside other key communication strategies designed to attract skilled workers to the field. Learn how these new approaches will make a significant impact on our recruitment efforts and discover how you can be an active part of driving this initiative forward. This is your opportunity to understand the campaign's full scope and explore ways to engage with these exciting new tools.

Carbon Monoxide and Combustion Analysis

Tom Andrews, Room E

Recommended for: Crew, Foremen, Auditors, Coordinators, Estimators

As Indoor air quality is an important aspect of today's tighter buildings, carbon monoxide (CO) is an important aspect of IAQ. This fundamentals session looks at CO characteristics, health effects, CO poisoning and alarm function along with the basics of the combustion process and burner operation. We will also look at combustion analyzer results from a "what do the numbers mean" perspective. By attending this session participants will: Review the direct connection between CO production, the physiological aspects of poisoning and how CO alarms actually work, Hopefully gain a more comprehensive understanding of the combustion process including equipment operation and "air-free" CO measurements, Look at how to use your combustion analyzer as a diagnostic tool to assist in repair.

Trauma-Informed Care - Part Two

Jennifer Schlinger, Room F

Recommended for: Crew, Foremen, Auditors, Coordinators, Estimators, Wx Administrators

This two-part series introduces the foundational knowledge, principles and awareness of trauma and its impact. The second session builds on this foundation by examining factors that promote resilience and well-being, highlighting practical interventions, supports, and self-care practices. Together these sessions will provide useful tools that can be used personally and professionally to better support themselves and others.

GROUP SESSION | 4:15-5:00 PM

Wx Workforce Recruitment: CAPND's Statewide Campaign with Absolute Studios

Andrea Olson, Brandon Kjelden and Absolute Studios

Room C/D

All Attendees

Join us for an in-depth look at CAPND's partnership with Absolute Studios as we launch an aggressive, statewide weatherization workforce recruitment campaign. Thanks to the financial support from LiHEAP and additional backing from the Department of Commerce, CAPND is able to implement this ambitious initiative. This session will showcase the new strategies, tools, and promotional efforts designed to attract skilled workers to the weatherization field. We'll discuss the goals behind the campaign, highlight key tactics, and open the floor for questions and feedback. This is a great opportunity to learn more about how we are addressing workforce challenges and creating opportunities for growth in the industry.

DAY TWO - SEPT 17, 2025

8:00-8:30 AM

Breakfast & Celebrating Wx Successes: A Look at 2024-2025 and Our Network's Impact with Wx Readiness Funds

Andrea Olson and Brandon Kjelden, Room C/D

All Attendees

Join us as we reflect on the successes and milestones achieved in 2024 and 2025 through our weatherization programs. This session will highlight key achievements, including a feature in NASCSP that showcases our network's success with Wx Readiness funds. We'll review the impact these funds have had on our operations, share best practices, and discuss how we can continue to build on these successes in the years to come. This is an opportunity to celebrate our progress, learn from our accomplishments, and prepare for even greater achievements moving forward.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 8:45-10:15 AM

Crew Member and Foreman Round Table: Techniques, Challenges and Opportunities, and Peer Learning

Rory Hoffmann, Room A

Recommended for: Crew, Foremen

This roundtable is a focused opportunity for crew members and foremen to discuss what they need to be successful in their roles. It's a chance to share positive strategies, solutions, and techniques that help improve efficiency and job satisfaction. We'll explore the importance of understanding program goals, meeting performance targets, and why it's crucial to complete jobs on time. While Wx coordinators are not part of this session, we'll engage in open dialogue to help crew members understand the bigger picture, from meeting averages to having a personal stake in the success of each project. This is a solutions-oriented discussion aimed at enhancing teamwork and ensuring we're all aligned in achieving our goals.

LiHEAP Programmatic Updates: Overview and Key Insights

Dr. Rachel Iverson Schafer and Josh Haugen, Room B

Recommended for: Crew, Foremen, Auditors, Coordinators, Estimators, Wx Administrators

Join us for a session featuring essential programmatic updates from the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LiHEAP). This session will provide an overview of the latest funding developments, key program updates, and what to expect moving forward. Weatherization coordinators have already submitted questions in advance, and these will be addressed during the training. Please note, this is not a forum for complaints, but an opportunity for constructive dialogue and to ensure everyone is up-to-date on important program changes. Don't miss the chance to clarify any uncertainties and strengthen our collective efforts.

Innovative Outreach: New Strategies for Weatherization Workforce Recruitment (REPEAT SESSION)

Absolute Studios, Room C/D

Crew, Foremen, Auditors, Coordinators, Estimators, Wx Administrators

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Recognizing and Preventing Safety Hazards - Part One

Dave Gutterud, Room F

Recommended for: Crew, Foremen, Auditors

This class will provide discuss recognizing and managing the wide range of faced by North Dakota weatherization workers. Participants will learn how to identify and protect themselves from cold weather stress, fall hazards, confined spaces, and electrical dangers, while also addressing biological and chemical risks such as mold, asbestos, rodent and insect infestations, and contamination from methamphetamine and fentanyl residue. The course emphasizes practical safety strategies, proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE), and adherence to DOE, OSHA, and EPA guidelines to ensure worker health and safety in diverse residential and commercial environments.

BREAK | 10:15-10:30 AM

BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 10:30-12:00 PM

Reporting with Purpose: Understanding the ‘Why’ Behind the Data

Alyssa Kroshus, Room A

Recommended for: Coordinators, Wx Administrators

In this session, we'll explore the critical importance of diligent data collection and tracking. Understanding the “why” behind the data is essential for making informed decisions, securing funding, and measuring the effectiveness of our programs. We'll dive into how accurate reporting supports accountability, drives program improvements, and ensures transparency. By the end of this session, you'll have a clear understanding of the purpose behind the data you collect, and how it plays a pivotal role in achieving our mission and demonstrating impact to stakeholders.

Building Long-Term Careers in Weatherization: Opportunities, Growth, and Certification Pathways

Panel of Speakers, Room B

Recommended for: Crew, Foremen, Auditors, Coordinators, Estimators

This panel discussion will focus on what it takes to build a lasting career in the weatherization industry. We'll explore the growth potential within the field, including career advancement, certifications, and the variety of roles available throughout a weatherization career ladder. Panelists will share their personal career journeys, discussing challenges, transitions, and the skills needed to succeed long-term. We'll also highlight the importance of continuous learning and how staying committed to personal and professional growth helps not only employees but also the clients we serve. This is a solutions-focused session, where we'll focus on strategies for encouraging long-term career development and creating a work environment that fosters growth and retention.

Innovative Outreach: New Strategies for Weatherization Workforce Recruitment (REPEAT SESSION)

Absolute Studios, Room C/D

Crew, Foremen, Auditors, Coordinators, Estimators, Wx Administrators

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Infrared Cameras for Wx: Fundamentals and Hands-On Demonstration (REPEAT SESSION)

Brandon Kjelden and Doug Bakke, Room E

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Discover the power of infrared cameras in Wx during this hands-on learning session. Trainers from SENDCAA will guide you through the basic fundamentals of infrared imaging, including how the cameras work, when and where to use them, and the valuable insights they provide for detecting energy inefficiencies. This is a unique opportunity to get a live demonstration of infrared cameras in action, showcasing basic operations that can be applied directly to your weatherization work.

Recognizing and Preventing Safety Hazards - Part Two

Dave Gutterud, Room F

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This class will provide discuss recognizing and managing the wide range of faced by North Dakota weatherization workers. Participants will learn how to identify and protect themselves from cold weather stress, fall hazards, confined spaces, and electrical dangers, while also addressing biological and chemical risks such as mold, asbestos, rodent and insect infestations, and contamination from methamphetamine and fentanyl residue. The course emphasizes practical safety strategies, proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE), and adherence to DOE, OSHA, and EPA guidelines to ensure worker health and safety in diverse residential and commercial environments.

SPEAKER BIOS

Brandon Kjelden serves as the Executive Director of Southeastern ND Community Action Agency, bringing over two decades of experience in the Weatherization Assistance Program. He began his career in the field and continues to hold certifications as a Quality Control Inspector, Lead Paint Risk Assessor, and Certified Lead Renovator. Brandon's deep connection to building science drives his commitment to improving energy efficiency and housing safety. He is passionate about the lasting impact weatherization has on families, helping create healthier, more comfortable homes across the region.

Doug Bakke started working for SENDCAA back in the fall of 1998 as a WX technician. He was roughly a tech for 5 years, then became a WX crew foreman for roughly 12 to 13 years. When the opportunity came to become the energy auditor, he was in that position for roughly 4 to 5 years, and began as a coordinator for the last 3 to 4 years. Doug was part of the technical team in the early 2000s, and since becoming the energy coordinator has been on the coordinator's board ever since. He has been a QCI for roughly the last 10 years, and a NREL Multifamily Quality Control Inspector since 2017. Doug has also done multiple mobile home training in Delaware, Maine, Illinois, and Arizona. Doug grew up in a small town in North Dakota, being outdoors is still one of my favorite things to do or be. He enjoys hunting, fishing (mostly ice fishing) and in the spring and summer is trying to play golf and working and maintaining his grandparents' farm.

Dave Gutterud has been involved in the safety and environmental industry since 1984 when he began working for one the nation's largest hazardous materials remediation contractors. He has worked on both the contracting and consulting side of the industry ever since. His training experience began in 1988 as an assistant instructor for asbestos training classes for the University of Minnesota. He is now the director of the University of North Dakota's Environmental Training Institute and manages all training programs including OSHA safety training, asbestos, lead-based paint, mold, hazardous materials, and clandestine lab clean-up.

Jake McAlpine is the Training & Technical Support Manager for The Energy Conservatory (TEC). He has 12 years of experience in the Weatherization Assistance Program. He first worked as an energy auditor and program manager for a weatherization agency in the Minneapolis area. He then moved to the Minnesota Department of Commerce where he worked in training and technical assistance and later as the program supervisor. Jake has a Bachelor of Science degree in Residential Building Science & Technology from the University of Minnesota.

Tom Andrews' technical strategies and expertise developed through extensive experience in residential buildings, HVAC, and Weatherization. Training has helped Tom to shape innovative training programs in both the classroom and field on combustion appliance issues, building health and safety, and energy conservation. He has been working on all-things-mechanical since the '70s and is a licensed contractor, long time Wx instructor, and member of the National Fuel Gas Code committee.

Dr. Jennifer Schlinger has over 20 years of social work practice and teaching experience and has worked in a variety of settings including higher education, medical, military, state government, private, and non-profit. Her experiences have been the driving force to further research and learn more about trauma and its impacts on individuals, families, groups, and communities. Uncovering how the brain responds to trauma is essential for identifying effective interventions and supports so we may make a difference in the lives of those impacted by trauma. Dr. Schlinger graduated from the University of North Dakota with her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Social Work and later earned her Doctor of Education, focusing her dissertation on trauma education in social work curricula. Dr. Schlinger is the Director of Field Education and a Clinical Assistant Professor for the Social Work Department at UND. She developed a course dedicated to Trauma-Informed Care. She also teaches Human Behavior and the Social Environment, Social Work Task and Treatment Groups, Social Work Policy, Social Work Research, and Field Instruction Seminar. As a remote faculty member, she lives in Bismarck with her husband and two children.



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