

MiSustainable Holland

About this series

The MiSustainable Holland column is a collection of community voices sharing updates about local sustainability initiatives.

This Week's Sustainability Framework Theme:

Community Knowledge: The collective knowledge and energy of the community is an incredible resource that must be channeled to where it is needed.

Community collaboration brings free Home Energy 101 efficiency

By Marianne Manderfield
City of Holland

We want our home to be warm inside when it's cold outside. When the temperatures rise, we like our home cool inside. No matter the case, none of us want to see our money go out the window.

A home can leak air from several areas – windows, doors, outlets, and small openings around pipes. For the average home, these air leaks are the equivalent of a small bathroom window being left open.

Understanding and implementing a home energy efficiency plan is the most effective way to achieve a comfortable living environment and lower your utility bills. Knowing where to begin and understanding the most efficient way to accomplish this can be difficult to navigate if you're not well-versed in home energy efficiency.

The City of Holland and Holland Board of Public Works (HBPW) created the Home Energy 101 Program for this very purpose. This program is designed to help educate homeowners on how to make their home energy efficient, save money on utility bills, and ultimately make a home more comfortable. The program is free and available to all HBPW electric customers.

Being an energy-efficient community is a goal for the City of Holland and HBPW, and developing the Home Energy 101 Program was a big step toward that goal. To help educate the widest range of customers, they partnered with local non-profit organizations to be the program's home energy training partners.

The more people that understand the nuts and bolts of energy efficiency, the more it can cascade to everyone. Energy efficiency is truly a community collaboration.

The trained energy educators are staff members with the partner agencies. The Holland Energy Fund provides financial resources to the training partner agencies for staff time spent with the Home Energy 101 Program, as well as the technical support and staff training.

Homeowners can enroll in Home Energy 101 at no cost and will work with a home energy educator. During their initial 60- to 90-minute session, the educator will find the best areas for utility savings and efficiency improvements and identify up to \$300 worth of free energy-saving supplies.

The Home Energy 101 Program is about "neighbors helping neighbors." Becoming an energy-efficient community means educating the community as a whole, making it easy and affordable, one home at a time, and striving towards being #MiSustainableHolland.

To enroll in Home Energy 101 or learn more about the program, visit hollandenergyfund.com.

■ *Marianne Manderfield is public information coordinator for the City of Holland.*