

## **Strategies & Tips for Continuing Operations During Suspended Production**

### Ideas for **Subgrantee crews** during suspended production:

- Office cleaning, painting and reorganizing
- Shred and purge old files and documents (following appropriate retention guidelines by HCR and DOL, etc.).
- Agency maintenance
- Clean vehicles and re-design vehicle storage. Build or buy new bins for tools and materials. Get creative on a budget (e.g., pull out generator racks, ceiling mounted hose storage, exterior side mount ladder racks, expanded machine hoppers). Improved efficiency means quicker production.
- Reconcile material inventories.
- If you don't have them, design and build drill shrouds.
- Do a comprehensive safety review of tools and equipment. Repair and maintain equipment as needed and able (e.g., clean tools, rewiring frayed cords, rebuild power tools, sharpening auger bits, change filters on vacuums). Make sure to follow lead safe practices!

### Ideas for **Subgrantee Auditors** during suspended production:

- Scrub audits- Do you have completed audits and the work has not been started. Take some time to review them. Is there more we can do?
- What can I learn from the Energy Savings Tab? Have I captured the information correctly? Pre and post usage tell you anything?
- Improve computer skills in Excel. Everyone can do more in excel to track jobs and costs and data. Spend some time either online learning or searching the net for answers to questions on how to perform specific tasks. It's a powerful tool and dramatically underutilized.
- Analyze pre and post blower door numbers. Simple analytics can improve your program. Are we doing better than last year or the year before? What were your home runs? Where did you miss the boat? See any patterns in housing styles? Is one crew performing better than another?
- Build a work order template- Can you improve communication with your crew and save time too with simple drop downs? A template in Word or Excel with standard wording can save time.
- Post fuel analysis- Do some follow up with clients on their usage post-WAP. Call the client and review their bills from last winter. If you are not impressed by the results, look into reasons why; poor air sealing results, are you seeing housing style trends, client habits changed, change in household status. Flag the good jobs as well as the bad and meet to talk about the results.
- Do person to person client education sessions- It's one of the weaknesses in the program. We rarely have the time. Who's on your waiting list? Call clients and run through some energy savings ideas. Seniors will probably enjoy and appreciate the call!
- Reinvent your audit data collection tool. Is it in a format that still works for you? Contact NASCSP for samples of tools from other states.
  - Create a tablet version of your audit tool using Apple Numbers or other software programs. How can this save time for your energy auditors and staff doing data entry? Test the software using a simulated audit or previously completed audit.
- If you are using NEAT/MHEA and would like to beta test the online version of Weatherization Assistant, contact your State Program Manager for more information. Oak Ridge National Laboratory has a test version available.

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Allowable uses of T&TA (note, you may need to contact your Project Officer if these are not in your T&TA Plan):

- Complete online training. See the “Other Resources” on the [NASCSO COVID-19 webpage](#) for a list of available online WAP Trainings.
- For NASCSO Members and State staff, view NASCSO webinars and regional calls on our [Member Portal](#) under WAP Resources > Webinars.
- Customer Education:
  - Phone surveys and emails to follow up with past customers – are furnace filters being changed, refrigerators and fan grills being kept clean, etc. What questions does the customer have for WAP staff about how they can save energy and the services that were installed? Develop a script and use this opportunity to gauge customer satisfaction with your programs.
  - Develop or revise existing customer education tools. See new samples specific to Health and Safety on the [NASCSO WAPTAC page](#) and additional resources and state samples on our [Energy Education](#) page.
- Program Evaluation:
  - Realized savings – select a sample of completed jobs and obtain actual energy usage post-weatherization from the customer or your LIHEAP program (if available). Compare the actual savings to the estimated savings from your energy audit. Did you hit your targets? Why or why not? Discuss this as a team and identify opportunities for fine-tuning your operations and delivery of services.
  - Equipment and quality studies – would it be beneficial to know whether a specific measure is performing in the field as anticipated? For example, is installed ventilation running as intended and is the timer switch still functioning as installed and set? Design a telephone or electronic survey that can be used to gather information from clients.
  - New measure research – What additional technologies or equipment could you add to your weatherization measures list? Research specifications, pricing, any barriers to installations. Perform a cost analysis and review the DOE [WPN 19-4](#) guidance on Special Material Requests.

Additional meeting and project ideas during suspended WAP production:

- Review internal controls- What can we do better? How can we improve our operation? Look at ALL of it; inventory control, vehicle usage and maintenance, dispatching jobs, ordering materials, crew operations, reporting, coordination with your fiscal shop. There is always room to improve and rarely time to talk about and fix it.
- Review internal forms- What do you use internally and how can you improve them?
  - Review and refine your RFP templates and process for WAP. Prepare for your upcoming program year procurements. Reach out to potential contractors and develop your solicitation lists. Samples are available on the NASCSO [WAPTAC page](#).
- Update tracking systems for deferral reasons, as needed and develop a consistent policy for all agencies and staff to follow.
- Review and revise your quality assurance monitoring tools. See samples from other states in our [NASCSO Member Portal](#) under WAP Resources > Monitoring Tools.
  - See the presentations from our 2019 Annual Conference State WAP Monitor’s Training [here](#). The Password is littlerockAC2019

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- Review and revise program manuals and field guides. Samples from other states are available on the [WAPTAC WAP Network Resources](#) page.
- Prepare for a Weatherization Day event. Review the [Weatherization Day](#) toolkits available from NASCSP and start creating a timeline for social media. Consider hosting a demonstration project and start planning now. Find a house and contact NASCSP for samples from other local agency events. Create handouts and brochures with data from your agency – have your auditors or office staff create charts and graphs that showcase your results. Grab “tell all” photos from your client files that highlight our great work and enlarge/frame them.
- Develop success stories to share with local stakeholders, on your website and via social media. Share your success stories with NASCSP via our [online submission form](#). Review our [Story Telling Manual and WAP and Social Media](#) resources for tips.

Strategies for preparing for carryover funds and an increase in production:

- Contact eligible households and building owners. Start assembling a pipeline of jobs for the upcoming program year.
  - Focus on multi-family buildings as much as possible as a strategy to level out ACPU.
  - Review and analyze deferral data. Identify homes where a deferral reason may be resolved and follow up with the clients.
- Strategic planning- Long-term planning will set your program up for success when production starts. Plan for an infusion of additional WAP funding. Meet with your staff, including your fiscal staff and executive management, and discuss options for success. Develop production goals together and get buy-in for your strategies to achieve those goals.