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WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
SUCCESS STORIES

Scaling Energy Efficiency and Savings in South Carolina

South Carolina's Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP), administered by the South Carolina Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), aimed to weatherize more than 925 homes during 2025–2026 using annual U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) funding and funding provided through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). To reach more households efficiently, OEO and its subgrantees targeted multifamily housing and used a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) property list to identify potential projects.

Project Details

The HUD list pointed Palmetto Community Action Partnership (PCAP) to a 42-unit complex in Yemassee, South Carolina, owned and managed by the Beaufort Housing Authority (BHA). The property consisted of duplex, triplex, and quadplex buildings with similar layouts and construction, allowing PCAP to coordinate weatherization work across multiple homes.

The project represented about 38 percent of PCAP's goal of weatherizing 110 homes with IIJA funds during 2025–2026, illustrating how one coordinated project could support a substantial share of the agency's planned work.

PCAP contacted BHA in October 2024 and conducted energy audits in spring 2025. Weatherization work began in October 2025 and was completed in December 2025.

Weatherization measures included attic insulation brought up to R-38, air sealing, timed ventilation fans, and health and safety improvements such as smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. The improvements were expected to reduce heating and cooling demand, improve indoor air quality, and make residents' homes more comfortable.

Because the homes needed similar improvements, PCAP's contractor could complete the same tasks across multiple units in succession, reducing setup time and improving efficiency. Estimated project costs ranged from $4,000 to $5,000 per unit.

A resident described the impact in a thank-you message to PCAP's weatherization team:

"It has already made a noticeable difference in my electric bill. Your team's professionalism and the quality of your work are greatly appreciated. Thank you so much for making my apartment a more comfortable and energy-efficient place to live."

Building Relationships

PCAP built on its longstanding community presence to establish trust with BHA. "It had to do with our reputation as a Community Action Agency here in Charleston. We've been around for over 50 years. [Property managers] have to really understand that you are for real," explained Ray Neal, PCAP's WAP Program Manager.

Early in the project, PCAP and BHA signed a memorandum of understanding outlining their responsibilities and shared goals.

Completing intake paperwork for 42 households was an early challenge. PCAP replaced door-to-door intake with open-house events at the property's community center, where residents could receive help with documentation at times that fit their schedules. This approach made participation easier and helped the project move forward.

Future Partnerships

Looking ahead, the success of this project laid the groundwork for future collaboration. OEO and PCAP identified another BHA-owned property, an 80-unit complex with similar characteristics, as a potential candidate for weatherization. Established relationships, clear expectations, and a tested approach to intake and implementation could help a future project move forward more quickly and serve additional South Carolina residents.

Together, these projects demonstrated how IIJA funding could be used strategically to deliver measurable energy savings, improve household comfort and safety, and strengthen energy security for low-income renters. By combining efficient project design with trusted local partnerships, South Carolina's WAP scaled its impact while ensuring that residents experienced lasting benefits from energy efficiency investments.

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