



**CEESP Goal 1: WHPA Compliance Online Permitting Working Group
Teleconference Summary Notes
Monday, March 20, 2017
Scheduled for 9:00am – 10:00m PDT**

Call to Order

Committee Co-Chair Allison Paul (CHF) called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. PDT. The meeting audio was recorded.

Roll Call

WHPA Staff (Wendy Worrell) conducted roll call based on the current WHPA Online Permitting Working Group roster. As no voting panel has been assigned in favor of consensus voting, members are organized by voting eligibility status. The meeting was attended by 10 participants (or proxies) as clarified in the following table. A quorum (8+) of eligible members was not reached.

Organization	First Name	Last Name	WHPA Category	Attendance
Voting Eligible				
ACCA (Air Conditioning Contractors of America)	Todd	Washam	Contractor Association	A
CALBO (California Building Officials)	Mark	Meyers	Codes & Standards Official (Association or Jurisdiction)	P
CalCERTS, Inc.	Charlie	Bachand	Certifying Body	A
CalCERTS, Inc. (standing Proxy)	Susan	Davison	Certifying Body	A
CHEERS	Bob	Johnson	Certifying Body	A
CHF-CIRB (California Homebuilding Foundation, Construction Industry Research Board)	Allison	Paul	Research Organization	P (Co-Chair)
DNV GL – Energy	Amber	Watkins	Energy Efficiency Program Consultant	A (Maternity Leave)
Duct Testers	Dave	Hegarty	Other Stakeholder	A
Enalasy	Eric	Taylor	Third Party Quality Assurance Providers	A
Enalasy (standing Proxy)	Michael	Thompson	Third Party Quality Assurance Providers	A
EnerGtech Experts	Brent	Locke	Other Stakeholder	A
The Energy CA, LLC	Eric	Berault	Third Party Quality Assurance Providers	P
Energy Cloud Inc.	John	Carrieri	Other Stakeholder	A
IHACI (Institute of Heating and Air Conditioning Industries)	Bob	Wiseman	Contractor Association	Y
Indio Cooling & Heating Supply	Tim	Mann	Distributor	P
PG&E (Pacific Gas and Electric Company)	Jill	Marver	California IOU	A
SCE (Southern California Edison)	Gary	Shushnar	California IOU	A
Not Voting Eligible				
CBIA (California Building Industry Association)**	Bob	Raymer+	Codes & Standard Official (Association or Jurisdiction)	A
iPermit ERaters**	Ian	Jacoby+	Third Party Quality Assurance Providers	A
USERA	Don	Charles+	Third Party Quality Assurance Providers	A
Guests				
CALBO (California Building Officials)	Bob	Barks	Codes & Standards Official (Association or Jurisdiction)	P (Compliance Chair)
Conserva Alliance	Alex	Trochez	Other Stakeholder	A
CSE (Center for Sustainable Energy)	Marcus	Gilmore+	Energy Efficiency Program Consultant	P
CSE (Center for Sustainable Energy)	Marissa	Syata	Energy Efficiency Program Consultant	P (Speaker)
Selby Energy Inc	Brian	Selby	Educator, Trainer	A
WHPA Staff				
CLEARresult	Paul	Kyllo	Other Stakeholder	P (Work Product)
Empowered Solutions	Shea	Dibble	Energy Efficiency Program Consultant	A
InfoPlast	Wendy	Worrell	Other Stakeholder	P (Host/Scribe)
Opinion Dynamics	Ellen	Steiner	Other Stakeholder	P (Surveys)

** Organization is Not a Member of the WHPA; + Individual is NOT Registered with the WHPA; (P) = Member Organization is Pending Approval from the WHPA Executive Committee.

Agenda

The following agenda was distributed to the Working Group by WHPA Staff prior to the meeting.

- 1) **Roll Call** – WHPA Staff (Wendy Worrell) – 5 min
- 2) **Presentation: HVAC Permit Compliance Study & Best Practices for Building Departments Report Updates** – CSE (Marissa Syata) – 15 min
- 3) **Presentation: Contractor Survey Pilot Results Overview** – WHPA Staff (Ellen Steiner) - 15 min
- 4) **Update: WHPA Executive Committee Feedback on Key Questions** – Chair (Allison Paul) & WHPA Staff (Ellen Steiner) – 8 min



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- 5) **Best Practices in Online Permitting Memo Update** – Subgroup Lead (Allison Paul) – 5 min
- 6) **Legislative and Regulatory Policy Issues Memo Update** – Subgroup Lead (Allison Paul) – 5 min
- 7) **Minimum Legal Requirements Memo Update** – Subgroup Lead (Eric Beriault) – 5 min
- 8) **Meeting Next Steps Overview** – Chair (Allison Paul) - 2 min
 - a) Next Meeting (**Tentative**): Monday, March 27, 2017 from 9:00am – 10:00am PDT
 - b) Next Agenda (TBD)
- 9) **Adjournment** by 10:00am PDT – Chair (Allison Paul)

Prior Meeting Notes

The [February 13, 2017 summary meeting notes](#) were email distributed to the roster for approval prior to the meeting.

ACTION: WHPA Staff to post the final version of the February 13, 2017 meeting notes reflective of any received edits to the [WHPA Online Permitting Webpage](#).

Presentation: HVAC Permit Compliance Study & Best Practices for Building Departments Report Update

REFERENCE DOCUMENT: CSE Slides ([Residential HVAC Alterations Permit Compliance and Financing Pilots](#)). Additional information is available at: <https://energycenter.org/program/hvac-permit-compliance-financing-pilots>

Marissa Spata (CSE) presented the reference document. Key points beyond slide content follow:

- Slide 3: Los Angeles County is the prime contact area.
- Slide 5: Task 3 was an attempt to calculate a more current HVAC compliance percentage as there is a low percentage of permits pulled in California. The calculation was not workable however due to low data capture.
- Slide 7: This is a common slide that CSE uses in outreach and explanation of projects. The content is a little dated as it is based on prior California Long Term Strategic Energy Efficiency Plan (CLTSEEP) targets. The purpose of project is to identify barriers to compliance and opportunities to improve or enhance the desire to pull permits with building departments. They were going off the premise that the lack of compliance was still 90% and were trying to determine if that level was still the case.
- Slide 8: The premise is that permit compliance can help inform the energy saving goals.
- Slide 9: Unfortunately, the Task 1 “Program Summary Report to Los Angeles County & CEC” for cool comfort financing from the homeowner perspective is not public. The Task 2 report for “Residential HVAC Alt: A Permit Process Overview & Permit Streamlining Best Practices Guide for Building Departments” is yet to be published as needed oversight for the final stage was unavailable within the project timeline. It is currently in CEC’s hands to get it ready for public release. A sub-report for “Best Practices for Residential HVAC Alterations Permits: A Toolkit for Building Departments” will be released soon. Task 3 was not able to be completed due to lack of data received, but CSE is willing to share their lessons learned in another forum.
- Slide 10: Checklists for energy efficiency code compliance are not widely used by building department staff at intake or in the field.

DECISION: There was unanimous agreement by those on the call to extend CSE’s presentation agenda item to allow overview of recommended best practices starting on Slide 11.

- Slide 11: Recommendation - Make sure the proper compliance forms are onsite and make sure the customer knows what is required upfront to ensure the needed steps happen.
- Slide 12: Recommendation - Knowing what is required is helpful in starting on the right path to ensuring the “walk thru the compliance process”. Use checklists to help ensure ownership of the process at the various levels. For example, EnergyCodeAce provides good checklists for building inspectors.
- Slide 13: Recommendation – Use HERS Raters as special inspectors to help address building department limitations on available inspectors.
- Slide 14: The recommendation to conduct final building inspections remotely via technology was based on CSE’s interaction with some jurisdictions successfully using virtual inspections.
- Slide 15: The recommendation to use Energy Code Coach for additional building department training on Title 24, Part 6 (and ideally Part 11/CALGreen) would be a no cost option.



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- **Slide 16:** The recommendation to promote the adoption of a statewide, state subsidized, hosted and implemented online permitting platform would allow smaller building departments without resources to implement their own online permitting system to access one without additional cost. This would be for various measures that jurisdictions want beyond just HVAC. CSE based the recommendation on work they did for Oregon’s model. They looked at how it might apply in the State of California. Having an online permitting platform is also expected to be an opportunity for improved compliance because it allows contractors and occupants to file remotely as well as across jurisdictions in a consistent manner.
- **Slide 18:** The [HVAC Permit Compliance Survey Results](#) slide presentation is available for review. It provides details about the survey questions asked and highlights some of the best practices formed during CSE’s working group process.

ACTION: Gather research on Oregon’s statewide, state subsidized online permitting model as part of the WHPA Online Permitting Working Group’s best practices research.

DISCUSSION

In reply to Ellen Steiner’s (WHPA Staff) inquiry about the number of people surveyed, Marissa Spata (CSE) clarified that she did not have the numbers in front of her, but that CSE surveyed over 100 jurisdiction staff, plus “roughly 50 contractors and HERS raters” total.

In reply to Eric Beriault’s (EnerGuy) question about whether the amount of jobs put through to completion was gathered as part of the Task 3 baseline compliance analysis, and if a comparison was done for the number of CF1Rs versus completed CF4Rs, Marissa Spata (CSE) clarified that they were able to get completion data from CalCERTS, but did not pursue the other registries due to the sales data gathering roadblock they encountered when working with HARDI and AHRI. They looked briefly into the forms used and found that there were more CF1Rs versus CF4Rs in their data set. If CSE had been able to complete the analysis with an appropriate data set, they would have addressed the possible reasons for the variance.

Eric Beriault (EnerGuy) commented that the CF1R form is almost the same information required for a building permit. He asked if there was discussion about adding it for use in a permit issuance as well. Marissa Spata (CSE) confirmed that while it is a good question and one that would have been helpful for use during the survey process, they did not discuss it much. She reported that some specific jurisdictions used some of the information. She never considered putting permit information on the CF1R, but agreed that combining the information is a good opportunity to explore and vet with jurisdictions.

ACTION: For feasibility analysis, consider asking jurisdictions about the idea of combining permit information on the CF1R form.

In reply to the Chair’s inquiry about the WHPA Online Permitting Working Group accessing CSE’s Best Practices Toolkit, Marissa Spata (CSE) confirmed that they have been working with CEC to try to get it approved for publication and will ensure the Working Group has it upon release.

Marissa Spata (CSE) clarified that CSE study defined permitting software as internal permitting software in which the physical forms were entered into the building department’s/jurisdiction’s internal software system. That includes anything from an Excel spreadsheet to a full database.

The Chair confirmed that the Working Group is a research gathering phase and that the information CSE provided is appreciated for those efforts.

Presentation: Contractor Survey Pilot Results Overview

WHPA Staff (Ellen Steiner) reported that Opinion Dynamics completed the contractor survey “cognitive pretest” pilot with four contractors via lengthy phone conversations. Key comments included the following:

- Respondents were confused about evaluating the potential for implementing a statewide permitting system since they thought there was already a system they just didn’t know about.
- The term changeout caused confusion. It was suggested that a new term synonymous with changeout be used, such as installation, etcetera.



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- It was suggested that Question #1 about the market segment be more specific to clarify more granular groups.
- For Question #2, respondents wanted more detail for how a standardized, online permitting system would work. They also want more flexibility in response options such as “possibly” or “maybe” with open ended responses so they could expand their answers.
- The benefits of an online permitting system were perceived as a quicker, standardized process, although some also expressed concern that it might make it more time consuming than the current processes.
- Respondents wanted an option for “already using” an online permitting system for Question #3.
- For Question #5 respondents wanted a 1 to 7 rating scale of “very easy” to “very difficult” and to factor “general experience with online systems” for the possibility of multiple, and differing, experiences with online permitting systems.
- Concerns were raised that contractors do not want to be the enforcers.
- None of the respondents saw potential barriers to using an online permitting system.
- The respondents felt that Question #12 didn’t really need to be assessed. They clarified that they understand the value of pulling permits to the customer, but that they don’t see value to the contractors.
- Respondents also suggested additional potential questions topics.
 - They suggested that asking how many jurisdictions the respondents pull permits from would provide more context to how people respond.
 - They suggested asking the respondent’s feelings toward the current system/processes.
 - They suggested asking a more open ended comments’ question for further thoughts they want to share to perhaps capture something we didn’t ask.

DISCUSSION

Mark Meyers (CALBO) commented that the response to question #12 of contractors feeling they have no value is most telling. It gives the appearance that compliance is optional. It will be difficult to get compliance with the perception that there is no value.

WHPA Staff (Ellen Steiner) confirmed that respondents indicated they would have different answers for a new installation versus a change out.

Eric Beriault (EnerGuy) noted that AOR (add on or replacement) is another industry term that could be used instead of change out. **ACTION:** Use “add on or replacement” instead of change out in the contractor survey to match industry language.

WHPA Staff (Ellen Steiner) confirmed that the next step is to get both the jurisdictional and contractor surveys fielded with the full distribution lists.

The Chair confirmed that some language will need updating in both surveys.

Update: WHPA Executive Committee Feedback on Key Questions

Chair Allison Paul (CHF) and WHPA Staff (Ellen Steiner) pushed this to another meeting in the interest of allowing more time for the above presentations.

Best Practices in Online Permitting Memo Update

Chair Allison Paul (CHF) reminded that the draft memo is due the end of June.

Legislative and Regulatory Policy Issues Memo Update

Chair Allison Paul (CHF) reminded that the draft memo is due March 31st.

Minimum Legal Requirements Memo Update

Chair Allison Paul (CHF) reminded that the draft memo is due March 31st.

The Minimum Legal Requirements Memo Lead Eric Beriault (EnerGuy) confirmed that he is working on updates from emails received and will be ready to present an update at the next Online Permitting Working Group meeting.



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MEETING NEXT STEPS OVERVIEW

The next Online Permitting Working Group meeting was confirmed for March 27, 2017 from 9:00am – 10:00am PDT. The agenda will focus on review of draft memos for “Minimum Legal Requirements” and Legislative and Regulatory Policy Issues”.

CLOSING COMMENTS/ADJOURNMENT

Chair Allison Paul (CHF) adjourned the meeting at 9:58 am PDT.

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SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS AND KEY DECISIONS (from above)

ACTION ITEMS

- 1) **ACTION:** WHPA Staff to post the final version of the February 13, 2017 meeting notes reflective of any received edits to the [WHPA Online Permitting Webpage](#). (Done)
- 2) **ACTION:** Gather research on Oregon’s statewide, state subsidized online permitting model as part of the best practices research. (Done)
- 3) **ACTION:** For feasibility analysis, consider asking jurisdictions about the idea of combining permit information on the CF1R form.
- 4) **ACTION:** Use “add on or replacement” instead of change out in the contractor survey to match industry language. (DONE)

FROM PRIOR MEETINGS

- 1) **ACTION:** WHPA Staff to combine the CIRB list and building official list for jurisdictional survey use. (In Process)
- 2) **ACTION:** WHPA Staff (Ellen Steiner as lead) and Co-Chair Allison Paul (CHF) to update the jurisdictional survey to incorporate result suggestions, including clarification of all acronyms, plus the addition of screening questions to target the correct respondents, and the addition of job category options for Building Official, Permit Tech, Plans Examiner, and Inspector. (In Process)
- 3) **ACTION:** CSE to help secure a guest speaker to update the impact of the California Solar Permitting Guidebook for best practices research assistance. (In Process)