



RISING SUN ENERGY CENTER

1900 Addison Street, Suite 100, Berkeley, CA 94704

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www.risingsunenergy.org

BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES THROUGH CLIMATE SOLUTIONS AND GREEN CAREER PATHWAYS

RISING SUN ENERGY CENTER EMPLOYER COUNCIL MINUTES NOVEMBER 3, 2011

MAIN POINTS DISCUSSED

1. Per employers' requests, Rising Sun Energy Center should consider **adding commercial components to their GETS curriculum** which currently focuses on residential.
2. Employers are **concerned about the end of energy efficiency subsidies**.
3. Employers would like to see **simpler and more attractive financing options for energy efficiency retrofits being promoted to the general public**.
4. Employers are interested in **local banks offering energy efficiency financing**.
5. Employers are interested in seeing **local government permitting administration processes simplified**.

JOIN US FOR THE NEXT EMPLOYER COUNCIL ON MAY 10, 2012

GOALS OF THE EMPLOYER COUNCIL

The goals of the Rising Sun Energy Center Employer Council meeting are to give key Bay area green industry stakeholders:

- **an overview of Rising Sun Energy Center's mission, programs and results.**
- **a forum to openly discuss green industry trends and employer needs with the goal of identifying opportunities for Rising Sun Energy Center.**
- **an opportunity to network and share resources with each other.**



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ATTENDEES

	Name	Organization
1	Larry Giustino	A1 Sun, Inc.
2	James	Advanced Home Energy
3	Julie Sinai	Berkeley Mayor's Office
4	Matt Savage	Build It Green
5	Gavan	Build It Green Construction
6	Ioana Anghel	Building Performance Institute
7	Tiger Adolf	Building Performance Institute
8	Robert Meyer	California State Employment Training Panel
9	Martin Bond	CESC
10	Neal De Snoo	City of Berkeley
11	Julie Sinai	City of Berkeley, Chief of Staff, Mayor Tom Bates
12	Roy	Clean Air HVAC
13	Andrew Lee	Division of Apprenticeship Standards
14	Leo Portugal	Elecix Electrical & Lighting Services, Inc.
15	Calvin Waldrup	Integrity First Construction
16	Gabe Baradat	Johns Manville Insulation Manufacturing
17	Bill Holloway	PG&E
18	Pam Murray	PG&E
19	Alison Freeman	Rising Sun Energy Center
20	Elena Foshay	Rising Sun Energy Center
21	George Kopf	Rising Sun Energy Center
22	Jodi Pincus	Rising Sun Energy Center
23	Pat Madarang	Rising Sun Energy Center
24	Chris Melhus	Service Partners Supply
25	Mark Alexander	Spanish Speaking Citizens Foundation
26	Sandy Wallenstein	Strategic Energy Innovations
27	Dee	Training Route 3: Curriculum & Training Consultant
28	Kimiko Sakuma	Training Route 3: Curriculum & Training Consultant



GETS EMPLOYER COUNCIL MINUTES

1. Welcome and introductions by **George Kopf, Rising Sun Energy Center Training & Employment Manager.**
2. Welcome by **Jodi Pincus, Rising Sun Energy Center Executive Director.**
3. Agenda and meeting overview by George Kopf.
4. Overview of current GETS programs by George Kopf and **Alison Freeman, Rising Sun Energy Center Deputy Director.**
 - a. Rising Sun Energy Center's "[Green Energy Training Services](#)" (GETS) adult green jobs training program provides residential energy efficiency training opportunities for Bay area dislocated workers and adults with barriers to employment.
 - b. Rising Sun Energy Center's "[Rising Sun Energy Services](#)" (RSES), formerly known as GETS Energy Services, provides GETS graduates transitional employment in a supportive and professional environment while giving them "on-the-job" training in residential Building Performance testing and retrofitting.
 - c. Rising Sun Energy Center's "[California Youth Energy Services](#)" (CYES) program recently concluded its 12th summer of providing Bay area youth with green job training and employment while offering Bay Area homeowners and renters free energy efficiency and water conservation information, services and measures.
 - d. Rising Sun Energy Center's "[East Bay Green Job Corps](#)" (EBGJC) program provides some of the Bay area's most under-served young adults with green job technical training, job readiness training, internship experience, and academic courses for college credit.
5. Facilitated discussion on how to improve GETS led by George Kopf.
 - a. **Martin Bond of [Community Energy Services Corporation \(CESC\)](#)**, spoke about his experience in hiring GETS graduates. Martin commented that overall he was very pleased with the amount of technical knowledge and experience the GETS graduates had received in their training. However, much of the work CESC does is on commercial structures and most of the training GETS graduates receive is focused on residential structures. While CESC plans to continue to hire GETS graduates, **Martin**



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believes it would be valuable to integrate commercial components into the GETS curriculum. George Kopf responded by saying Rising Sun Energy Center has begun considering adding a commercial component to GETS and comments like this let us know we are on the right path.

Leo Portugal, owner of [Elecix Electrical & Lighting Services](#), spoke about his experience in hiring Mark M., a GETS graduate. Leo has been very impressed by the GETS graduate's professionalism and work ethic. Leo was also impressed by the initial outreach efforts of George Kopf as well as the amount of follow-through. Leo is very pleased and looks forward to continuing to work with Rising Sun Energy Center.

DISCUSSION TOPIC: George Kopf asked the Employer Council, **"How many employers were planning on hiring in the next 6-12 months?"**

- Of the 11 private for-profit companies present, **3 employers indicated they were planning on hiring new employees in the next 6-12 months.**
- b. **James Kelly**, Marketing Director for [Advanced Home Energy \(AHE\)](#), said employers are leery of bringing on additional staff because so much of the industry is presently being supported by incentives. The strategic question companies like AHE are dealing with is **how to plan for the end of the subsidies**. Neal DeSnoo, Energy Program Manager for the [City of Berkeley](#), addressed how the City of Berkeley is addressing this problem. While there are no clear-cut long-term answers to the question of how the entire residential energy efficiency industry is going to transition *en masse* from models based on subsidies, local governments like the City of Berkeley are aggressively pursuing several strategies to facilitate the local market transformation. (Details on the City of Berkeley's strategies and best practices are available by clicking [here](#).) Neal commented that one source for ideas is to analyze successes achieved in the solar (photovoltaic & thermal) industry and model future energy savings programs on these programs.
- c. **Roy, Clean Air HVAC, commented on low interest financing playing a vital role in residential energy efficiency retrofit work. James Kelly of AHE added that even though [California Homebuyers Fund \(CHF\) Residential Energy Retrofit Program](#) loans have a very attractive interest rate (3%), AHE is processing relatively few CHF loans. Several members of the Employer Council expressed interest in seeing local banks offer residential energy retrofit loans. The Employer Council agreed there was a**



- general lack of knowledge in the general populace of energy efficiency financing programs.**
- d. **Gavan from Build It Green Construction** raised questions about worker's comp. and how it relates to his small business. **Robert Meyer of California Employment Training Panel** commented on resources from the State of California. Robert directed Gavan to the [Small Business Development Centers \(SBDC\)](#) for assistance, specifically helping to provide a voice to Gavan and other small businesses to government.
 - e. Several members of the Employer Council had questions about wage reimbursement programs. Specifically, "On-the-job" (OJT) funds available through local [Workforce Investment Boards \(WIB\)](#). George Kopf directed these inquiries to [Bouakhay Phongboupha](#) at the City of Richmond.
 - f. **Bill Holloway of PG&E's Energy Training Center in Stockton** spoke about [Energy Upgrade California](#), PG&E's residential energy efficiency rebate program, and the marketing efforts of that program. While the marketing efforts have been substantial, Bill mentioned that PG&E, as always, is open to suggestions on improving their outreach and marketing.
6. George Kopf asked if Employer Council members would be interested in Rising Sun Energy Center adding the following types of training programs:
- a. English as a Second Language (ESL) programs focused on preparing workers to outreach to Chinese speaking and Spanish speaking populations. **3 Employer Council members were interested in seeing a program like this happen.**
 - b. Building Performance training for incumbent workers. **3 Employer Council members were interested in seeing a program like this happen.**
7. **Julie Sinai, Chief of Staff for Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates**, facilitated a discussion focused on gauging the Employer Council members' awareness of and interest in the **East Bay Green Corridor Partnership**. Specifically, Ms. Sinai's discussion focused on:
- a. What do businesses need in order to hire and how the **East Bay Green Corridor Partnership** can assist.
 - b. Workforce development efforts by the **East Bay Green Corridor Partnership**.



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- c. Business development and expansion issues such as permitting.
 - d. Solar permitting & financing issues were brought up by several Employer Council members. Specifically, differences between commercial and residential permitting process were addressed and **Larry Guistano of [A-1 Solar](#) spoke about the needs for the City of Berkeley's administrative processes for permitting to be simplified.**
8. George Kopf opened the floor for questions and comments:
- a. **Gavan of [Build It Green Construction](#)** asked about opportunities for training for contractors and expressed that training expenses for the employer were an issue for many employers. **Tiger Adolf**, West Coast Representative for [Building Performance Institute \(BPI\)](#), echoed these concerns and relayed that BPI is working with industry trainers to facilitate the resolution of training issues.
 - b. **Martin Bond of [Community Energy Services Corporation \(CESC\)](#)** talked about CESC's involvement with PG&E's [Smart Lights](#) and [SmartSolar](#) commercial energy efficiency programs as being very positive.
 - c. **Elena Foshay, [Rising Sun Energy Center](#) Director of the [Green Energy Trainings Services \(GETS\)](#) and the [East Bay Green Job Corps](#) programs**, spoke about Rising Sun Energy Center's "[California Youth Energy Services](#)" (CYES) program substantial marketing efforts to the general population. Elena echoed earlier comments and expressed interest in expanding GETS to include training in the commercial sector.
9. **Robert Meyer, Economic Development Coordinator with the [California Employment Training Panel \(ETP\)](#)**, spoke about ETP's programming at the state level. **ETP works with a wide range of training recipients including existing workers, new hires (from programs like GETS) and job creation programs.** Training topics include BPI, LEED, job specific skills, leadership skills, equipment, software and others. **Robert announced a new program by the ETP to cover training costs for OSHA 10 and OSHA 30 trainings.**
- a. From the ETP website: "Funding for OSHA 10/30 certificate training is now available from ETP through a single-employer or MEC contract. This training will be treated in the same manner as HazMAT, as an exception to the 10% limit on safety training, with an explanation of why this training is needed. OSHA 10/30 will only be funded as part of a larger vocational training Curriculum. It may be delivered as class/lab or CBT, and may be added to an active Curriculum by Modification so long as there is no increase in the approved amount of



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funding. Contact your monitoring analyst for further information on the Modification process.”

Employers can also get reimbursed by ETP for classroom as well as on-the-job training. The amount of the subsidies depends on the size of the company (smaller companies tend to get more assistance from ETP). For more information, contact Robert Meyer at

Robert.meyer@etp.ca.gov.

10. **George Kopf, Rising Sun Energy Center Training & Employment Manager**, asked for volunteers to assist with Rising Sun Energy Center program participant preparation. Several Employer Council members expressed interest in assisting.
11. **George Kopf, Rising Sun Energy Center Training & Employment Manager**, closed the meeting and thanked the attendees for their participation. Members of the Employer Council then engaged in networking.