

PBSE Michigan Resident's Guide to **Home Energy Advisor Services**



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Who We Are	2
Our Vision	2
Our Mission	2
History	2
PBSE Membership	2
Become a PBSE Member today - it's easy!	2
Sign up for \$25!	3
Commitment to our Members	3
Home Energy Advisor	3
What is a Home Energy Advisor?	3
About PBSE Energy Advisor Services	3
What is a Home Energy Assessment?	5
What is a Home Energy Assessment?	5
Why is a Home Energy Assessment necessary?	5
What will happen during a Home Energy Assessment?	5
Step-by-Step: What You Can Expect	6
STEP 1: Initial Listening Consultation: Your Questions, Challenges & Goals	6
STEP 2: Schedule Energy Assessment	6
STEP 3: Perform Energy Assessment	6
STEP 4: Post-Assessment Plan	6
STEP 5: Plan Your Contractors, Resources & Funding Options	7
STEP 7: You're On Your Way!	7
Resources & Funding	7
Additional Resources	7
Funding Options	7
Preferred Contractor List	8
Join Our Mailing List!	8
Contact Us	8



Who We Are



Our Vision

PBSE Cooperative seeks to provide innovative, accessible, and affordable energy solutions to member-owners' homes and communities that improve household health, wealth, resilience, and education.

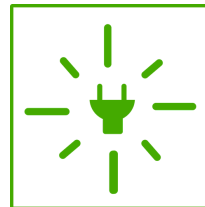
Our Mission

Polar Bear Sustainable Energy (PBSE) is a cooperative based in Highland Park, Michigan, serving members in Detroit, Highland Park and Hamtramck. Our primary mission is helping members become more energy efficient and energy independent through home efficiency retrofits, and electrification projects.

History

PBSE was incubated by Soulardarity to be a vehicle for equitable access to holistic energy services, and our founding members are committed to advancing racial and economic equity in the energy system. PBSE conducted extensive feasibility work which identified that residential energy efficiency was the most viable initial program for the cooperative, and secured funding for an initial pilot program. PBSE board members have identified community solar and rooftop solar bulk purchasing as key points of program development.

PBSE Membership



Become a PBSE Member today - it's easy!

Benefits & Savings Include:

- FREE Home Energy Audit (\$800 savings perk!)
- Up to 10 free hours of Professional Energy Advisor Services & Support
- Access to our Trusted Contractor's List
- Access to our PBSE Resource Library

Sign up for \$25!

(you'll receive up to \$800 of energy services during the first 12 months of your membership!)

- It's easy to sign up and we work to keep our membership affordable for everyone.
- It only takes 5 minutes! <http://pbse.coop>

Commitment to our Members

PBSE is dedicated to executing its short-term and long-term plans diligently, always keeping its members at the heart of our efforts. PBSE will regularly review progress and adjust strategies to ensure the needs of members are met effectively. PBSE is continuously seeking donations, grants, and other funding sources. These efforts help keep PBSE's services affordable and accessible, so more members can benefit from energy efficiency and clean energy projects.

Home Energy Advisor



What is a Home Energy Advisor?

A Home Energy Advisor is a PBSE team member who offers direct support to PBSE members to access funding and help them navigate the home energy improvement process. We know that each home has very different needs, so we start with an initial conversation to learn more about your home energy goals and how we can support your self-determined path.

About PBSE Energy Advisor Services

PBSE is committed to providing its members with the following comprehensive energy advisory services:

- 1:1 Listening Consultation: Your Questions, Challenges, and Goals
 - Energy Assessment
 - Recommendations for Energy Retrofits
 - Trusted Contractors List
 - Project Financing Support
 - Assistance with Identifying Grants and Incentives
1. **1:1 Listening Consultation & Goal Setting:** Through an initial listening consultation, we'll help you organize a list of energy improvement goals, learn more about your energy challenges, and answer your questions. At this session, we'll schedule your energy assessment.
 2. **Energy Assessments:** PBSE's team of experts will conduct thorough energy assessments of members' homes. These assessments will help identify areas where members can save energy, reduce bills, and improve comfort.
 3. **Recommendations for Energy Retrofits:** Based on the energy assessments, PBSE will provide personalized recommendations for energy retrofits. These recommendations may include upgrading to energy-efficient appliances, improving insulation, sealing leaks, and other measures that will enhance home energy performance. PBSE's goal is to help members make informed decisions that will yield the most significant benefits.
 4. **Trusted Contractors List:** To make the implementation of energy efficiency projects as smooth as possible, PBSE provides a list of trusted contractors. These contractors are vetted by PBSE to ensure they are reliable, skilled, and provide

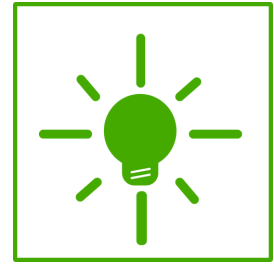
high-quality service. Whether members are looking to install solar panels, upgrade HVAC systems, or make other improvements, they can rely on PBSE's recommended contractors to get the job done right.

5. **Project Financing Support:** Financing energy projects can be challenging, but PBSE is here to help. PBSE will offer support in securing financing for members' projects. PBSE has partnerships with institutions like the Clean Energy Credit Union, which offers favorable loan terms for energy efficiency and clean energy projects. PBSE will guide members through the financing process, ensuring they have access to the funds needed to complete their projects.
6. **Assistance with Identifying Grants and Incentives:** Navigating the landscape of local, state, and federal grants and funding mechanisms can be overwhelming. PBSE provides assistance to homeowners in finding and applying for these opportunities. PBSE will help members understand what's available, determine eligibility, and complete applications, making it easier to access the financial support needed.

Want to learn more? See these examples of energy advisory service programs from across the country:

- a2zerohea.org
- <https://yorkreadyforclimateaction.org/energy-coaches/>
- <https://wellesley.ma.gov/2086/Energy-Coaching>
- <https://www.cleanenergyresourceteams.org/community-energy-ambassadors>
- <https://www.mncee.org/inflation-reduction-act-faqs>

What is a Home Energy Assessment?



What is a Home Energy Assessment?

A home energy assessment provides a comprehensive overview of your home's energy consumption, comfortability, and safety. It should be the first step before starting any improvement projects or installing new renewable energy systems for your home, such as geothermal heat pumps or solar panels on the rooftops.

Why is a Home Energy Assessment necessary?

Think of a home energy assessment as a checkup for your home. It helps you find out where your house is losing energy, such as through wall cracks, drafts, or old appliances. This assessment shows you various ways to make your home more energy-efficient and comfortable, cut your energy bills, and improve indoor air quality, which is great for your health.

What will happen during a Home Energy Assessment?

A certified home assessor will visit your home and conduct a thorough check of your energy use. They might do tests to find air leaks, check insulations, and evaluate your heating and cooling systems. Some experts will also give you a detailed report with their findings and recommendations on how to make your home more energy-efficient.

(source: [Residential Energy Coaching Guidebook](#))

Step-by-Step: What You Can Expect



STEP 1: Initial Listening Consultation: Your Questions, Challenges & Goals

- ☐ We'll organize a list of your questions, challenges, and goals
- ☐ Walk through a [home energy survey](#) together. We'll talk through things like:
 - Basic home details (size, age, type of home, etc.)
 - Current electricity and gas providers
 - Energy habits
 - Source of household electricity
 - Existing appliances and systems
- ☐ Create and plan and timeline together
- ☐ Answer your questions

STEP 2: Schedule Your Home Energy Assessment

- ☐ Schedule an energy auditor to come to your home
- ☐ Provide you a checklist to help you prepare for the visit.
- ☐ Clear communications, including a reminder of the visit to ensure it goes smoothly

STEP 3: Perform Home Energy Assessment

- ☐ You should be home at the time of the assessment, and it can take about 2 to 4 hours. You can expect:
 - Walk around your house and locate the air leaks
 - Request your copies of your energy bill over the past months
 - Upload data to create the assessment report

STEP 4: Post-Assessment Action Plan

- ☐ Review the assessment findings and explain your PBSE Home Energy Member Report & Action Plan
- ☐ Share options and recommendations on home improvements
- ☐ Provide a list of resources tailored to your goals and situation

- ☐ Consider various funding options. Some questions to consider:
 - How long do you plan to own your current home?
 - What is the value you want from your home?
 - Do you need to hire a contractor, or can you do it yourself?
 - What is your estimated budget?
 - How much time do you have for maintenance and repairs?

STEP 5: Plan Your Contractors, Resources & Funding Options

- ☐ In following the plan outlined with your energy coach, you will receive support to:
 - connect with funding and finance partners
 - connect with preferred contractors
 - connect with additional resources and community partners
 - navigate and adapt your plan as needed

STEP 7: You're On Your Way!

Congratulations! You'll be on your way to reach your home energy improvement goals!

(This list is modified from the [Residential Energy Advising Guidebook](#))

Resources & Funding



Additional Resources

- [Residential Energy Coaching Guidebook](#)
- [About Professional Home Energy Assessment](#)
- [Rewiring Energy Incentives Calculator](#)
- [State of Michigan - MI Healthy Climate Plan](#)
- [Green Home Institute](#)
- [Your Guide to Energy Assistance Resources in MI](#)
- [ACEEE State and Local Policy Database - MI](#)
- [Energy Star](#)®

Funding Options

National

- [Financing Single-Family Electrification and Clean Energy Projects](#)
- [Residential Clean Energy Credit](#)

State of Michigan

- Weatherization Assistance Program
- [Home Energy Rebate Program](#)
- [Home Electrification and Appliance Rebate Program](#)
- [Michigan Saves](#)
- [Clean Energy Credit Union](#)
- Coalition to Keep MI Warm
- The Heat and Warmth Fund
- MI Energy Assistance Program (MEAP)
- State Emergency Relief
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program
- [DSIRE Michigan](#)
-

Metro Detroit

[DTE Rebate Center](#)

[Wayne Metro - Weatherization Assistance Program](#)

Preferred Contractor List

In coordination with **Michigan Saves**, we identify preferred contractors through its approved contractor database: <https://michigansaves.org/find-a-contractor/>

If you're interested in joining the clean energy workforce, check out these links:

- [We Want Green Too](#)
- [EcoWorks](#)
- [Green Door Initiative](#)
- [State of MI: Building Your Energy Efficiency Career](#)
- [Detroit Training Center](#)
- Green and Healthy Homes Initiative

Join Our Mailing List!

Signup on our website! <http://pbse.coop>

Contact Us

Email: gm@pbse.coop

Website: <http://pbse.coop>

Facebook: