



Guidelines for Home Energy Professionals: Standard Work Specifications (SWS) Maintenance Procedures

**Guidelines for Home Energy Professionals Project
SWS Maintenance Procedures Version 1.0**

Last Updated: February 3, 2014

List of Acronyms

DOE	U.S. Department of Energy
MF	multifamily
MH	manufactured housing
NREL	National Renewable Energy Laboratory
SF	single-family
SWS	Standard Work Specifications
WAP	Weatherization Assistance Program

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1 Standard Work Specifications (SWS) Maintenance

The U.S. Department of Energy’s (DOE’s) Weatherization Assistance Program and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) established the “Guidelines for Home Energy Professionals” project in 2010 to support and promote high-quality work within the weatherization and home energy upgrade industry. One of the major components of the Guidelines effort is to define high-quality work through Standard Work Specifications (SWS) for single-family (SF), multifamily (MF), and manufactured housing (MH) energy upgrades.

The SWS for single-family, multifamily, and manufactured housing energy upgrades define the minimum acceptable outcomes for any weatherization or home performance task to be effective, durable, and safe.

A primary objective of the Guidelines project is to provide consensus-based SWS in accordance with industry best practices. Collaboration with industry throughout the SWS development process promoted consensus across private and public industry. This collaboration was accomplished through the involvement of public, private, and federal sector subject matter experts, with feedback obtained through a multi-stage, iterative stakeholder engagement process.

To ensure the SWS continue to be a consensus-based, centralized resource for promoting best practices and maintaining consistency throughout the home performance industry, an SWS maintenance committee performs regular revisions of the SWS (“maintenance events”) in accordance with current home energy upgrade industry best practices.

1.1 Organization and Structure

The organization that reviews and recommends updates to the SWS is composed of an executive committee and four subcommittees. The subcommittees include subject matter experts for sections of the SWS.

The subcommittees are the working groups that adjudicate comments received in the comment review period prior to an SWS maintenance event, a meeting of the executive committee and the subcommittees to review comments for the SWS. Subcommittee members discuss and determine a response to each comment received. The subcommittees are responsible for revising the technical content of each section of the SWS and relevant addenda.

1.2 Distribution of Policies and Procedures

Each member of the executive committee and the subcommittees shall receive a copy of the SWS Maintenance Procedures at the commencement of their service. Revisions shall be disseminated to the public upon completion.

2 Submittal of Proposed SWS Changes

Proposed changes to the SWS must be submitted by the public via the SWS online comment tool at [sws.nrel.gov](https://www.nrel.gov). Specific changes in text or values are required and must be substantiated. Supplemental background documents to support changes submitted may be included, preferably in Microsoft Word or pdf format, or as scanned files.

Upon receipt of a comment, an automated response is generated by the system providing information regarding the review process, timeline, and when to expect SWS updates.

Comments are not made public prior to the maintenance event. All comments along with comment resolution and any applicable reasoning will be published after the maintenance event.

A deadline for comments for each maintenance event is posted on the SWS online comment tool. While comments are accepted after the deadline, such comments will not be addressed until the next maintenance event.

2.1 Late Comments

Comments received after the deadline for the current maintenance event may be held for consideration at the next maintenance event.

2.2 Appeals

Appeals are made by submitting a new comment to the SWS online tool in opposition to the change made.

3 SWS Maintenance Event

Prior to the maintenance event, the facilitator, NREL for 2014, will work with subcommittee chairs to prepare for facilitating the meeting, including organizing comments and assigning each comment to a subcommittee.

3.1 Notice

Timely and adequate notice of the SWS maintenance event shall be posted on the SWS web site. Notices should include a clear and meaningful description of the purpose of the proposed activity.

3.2 Meeting Admission

Subcommittee and executive committee meetings are open to all industry members and members of the public who are directly and materially affected by SWS activities. Attendees may only participate during open times or as requested by the subcommittee chair or executive committee chair.

4 Membership

Membership is discussed here for both subcommittees and the executive committee.

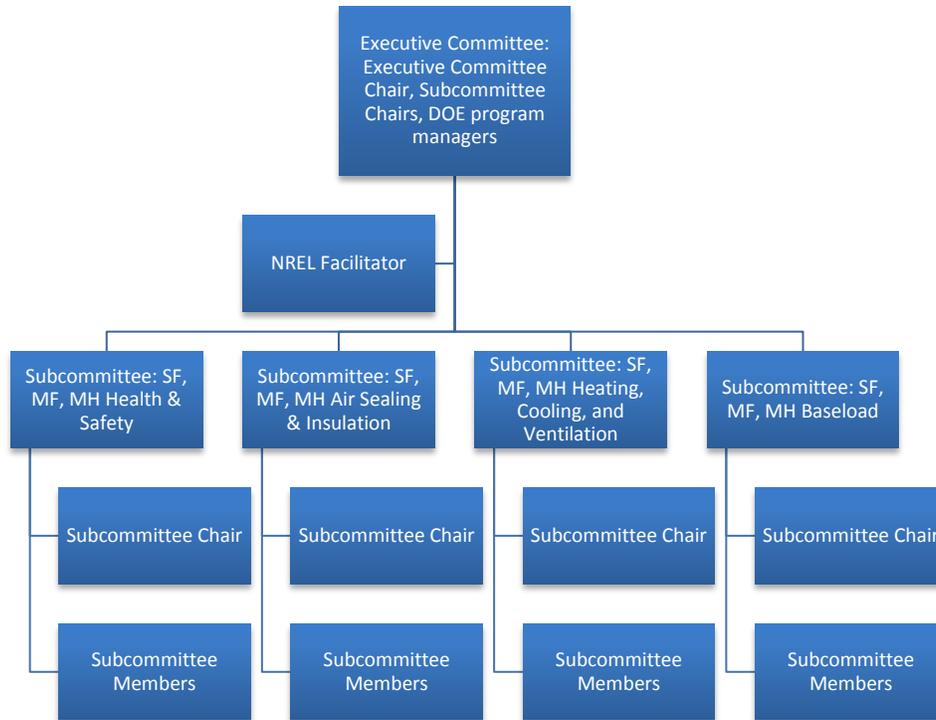


Figure 1. SWS maintenance preliminary organization

4.1 Committee Composition

The subcommittees shall consist of no fewer than 3 or more than 12 persons each, including the subcommittee chair.

The executive committee shall consist of the four subcommittee chairs plus the executive committee chair and two DOE program managers, for a total of seven members.

4.2 Balance and Lack of Dominance

Balance shall be maintained within the membership of the committees. Unless it is claimed in writing (including electronic communications) by a directly and materially affected party that a single interest category, individual, or organization has dominated the standards development process, no test for dominance is required.

4.3 Removal of Members

The executive committee may remove any member of the committees for cause. The executive committee will consider removal after receiving a petition from 20% of the members of the subcommittee or the executive committee. Failure to return virtual voting may be considered a cause for removal. Termination may be effected only by a vote of at least 75% of the executive committee at a duly called and convened (in-person or virtual) meeting. The affected member or representative shall receive 30 days written notice from the executive committee prior to such a meeting. The decision of the executive committee regarding a member or representative's termination shall be conclusive, and no right of rehearing or administrative or judicial appeal shall exist as to the terminated member or representative.

4.4 Non-Discrimination

The facilitator of the SWS maintenance event and all committee members shall not discriminate among persons on the basis of age, gender, race, religion, national origin, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation.

4.5 Terms

Terms of the subcommittee chairs shall be for three SWS maintenance events. Terms shall commence at the next SWS maintenance event after the chair has been selected.

4.6 Organizational Representation

During a term, only one person from an organization, excluding DOE on the executive committee, may serve on the executive committee. During a term, only one person from an organization may serve on each subcommittee.

4.7 Initial 2014 Committee Selection

Initial 2014 subcommittee chairs and subcommittee members are selected by DOE and NREL staff to facilitate and participate in the first maintenance event. The selection process begins with a “call for members” announcement. Drawing from the resulting applications, candidate subcommittee members are recommended in consideration of their personal expertise and their effect on subcommittee balance. Recommended members are approved or disapproved by DOE. Selection of the executive committee chair takes place along with the recommendation of the other subcommittee members.

The 2014 committee chairs will show previous experience supporting the SWS (creation event, commenter, early adopter, etc.). Applicants are not required to have obtained a Home Energy Professionals Certification, but it is preferable. Chairs must demonstrate facilitation, organization, and/or leadership experience. Additionally, chairs will need to commit to supporting at least two maintenance events.

Honoraria will be provided to subcommittee chairs only. Letters of appreciation from DOE/NREL will be available for chairs and members for their employers to encourage participation.

The nominees for vice chair will be nominated prior to the maintenance event by the executive committee members.

4.8 Continuing Member Selection

Subcommittee chairs will serve for up to three maintenance events. When the chair has facilitated three events or notifies the members that the chair will be vacating the position, the members will have the opportunity to nominate and vote for a new chair. All chairs must receive approval by DOE.

If a vacancy occurs within a subcommittee, the current membership of the committee should draw from consistent public attendees or by recommendation from current subcommittee members. Candidate subcommittee members are recommended in consideration of their personal

expertise and their effect on subcommittee balance. Recommended members are approved by a majority vote of current subcommittee members.

If a vacancy occurs for the executive committee chair, the current executive committee membership should draw from the existing subcommittee chairs and then from consistent attendees. The recommended executive committee chair is approved by a majority vote of current subcommittee members. If a vacancy occurs for the vice chair position, the current membership should draw from the existing subcommittee chairs.

4.9 Participation in Meetings

All members are responsible for participating in meetings. Failure to participate in meetings may result in termination of service.

5 Subcommittee Meetings

The subcommittee meeting is the working group for adjudicating comments received in the designated comment period. The subcommittee meetings will follow the procedures outlined below.

5.1 Meeting Participation

One person speaks at a time. Staying on schedule is critical. Everyone's opinion counts, and equal participation is encouraged.

5.2 Subcommittee Officers

Each subcommittee will have three officers:

- Subcommittee chair – The chair shall serve as the principal spokesperson for the subcommittee and shall preside at all meetings of the subcommittee. The chair verifies the review and approval of all reports and other documents from the subcommittee meeting.
- Subcommittee vice chair – The vice chair shall act for the chair in all respects during the temporary absence of the chair.

5.3 Subcommittee Responsibilities

A subcommittee will review each comment submitted. Any subcommittee member may propose language to address the comment and request that a vote be taken to implement the change in the SWS.

The responsibilities of the subcommittee are to:

- Review each comment submitted to the section
- Provide a response to each submitted comment
- Record adjudications to each comment
- Recommend enhancements to the online tool

- Recommend additional details or major changes to the SWS
- Recommend code reviews as needed
- Recommend topics of discussion for the executive committee as applicable
- Recommend new subcommittee members
- Confirm existing chair or select chair moving forward
- Ensure meeting minutes are recorded and sent to the executive committee.

5.4 Designations of Comments Received

In the subcommittee meeting, members shall discuss and designate each comment received as:

- Accepted
- Accepted with modification
- Further investigation required
- Rejected.

The response shall provide reasons for any recommendation other than “Accepted.” If further investigation is required, the investigation must be completed prior to the next maintenance event.

5.5 Quorum and Voting Requirements

The transaction of all business shall be governed by *Robert’s Rules of Order* (latest edition) unless otherwise set forth herein.

A quorum must be present to conduct business at a meeting of a subcommittee or the executive committee. A quorum exists if a majority of the voting membership is present. When all members are physically present in the same location, the majority opinion (greater than 50% of subcommittee members) decides the vote at hand. When all members are not physically present in the same location, voting may be conducted electronically via email or other electronic means.

5.6 Meetings

The subcommittees shall meet at least once annually. Attendance at the maintenance event meeting shall be in person. Other meetings may be in person or via conference call. Other meetings may be called by the executive committee chair by majority vote of the executive committee or by the facilitator.

5.7 Meeting Agendas

Meeting agendas shall follow this approximate outline:

1. Call to order by the subcommittee chair or presiding member
2. Approval of agenda
3. Consideration, correction, and approval of minutes of the previous meeting

4. Review of SWS comments
5. Review of cross-cutting issues
6. Review of policy and procedure changes
7. Unfinished business
8. New business
9. Adjournment.

5.8 Minutes

Minutes of all subcommittee meetings shall be kept by secretary and shall be approved by the members attending the meeting. Approved minutes shall be filed with the facilitator. Minutes shall include the following:

1. The date, time, and place the meeting was called to order
2. The type of meeting—regular, special, or continued
3. The name of the presiding officer
4. The names of subcommittee members present
5. The names of subcommittee members absent
6. The exact wording of all motions, whether passed or failed
7. Voting records—passed or failed
8. Notation of each comment
9. Notation of time of adjournment of the meeting.

The facilitator will provide or act as the secretary for all committee meetings.

5.9 Records

Records shall be maintained to provide evidence of the process. Records shall be retained by the facilitator for a minimum of three complete maintenance events.

6 Executive Committee Meetings

The executive committee shall be convened at the conclusion of all the subcommittee meetings to bring all the subcommittee chairs and facilitators together to provide a summary of actions taken and to discuss major overarching issues in the SWS. The facilitator will oversee the meeting of the chairs. A member of NREL's Home Energy Professional certification team may participate to relay actions taken by the SWS executive committee back to the certification team.

All subcommittee meeting requirements will be followed by the executive committee except where noted in the following sections.

6.1 Executive Committee Officers

The executive committee will have two officers:

- Executive committee chair – The chair shall serve as the principal spokesperson for the subcommittee and shall preside at all meetings of the executive committee. The chair verifies the review and approval of all reports and other documents from the subcommittee meetings. The chair is also responsible for the meeting agenda and overseeing subcommittee chairs.
- Executive committee vice chair – The vice chair shall act for the chair in all respects during the temporary absence of the chair.

6.2 Executive Committee Responsibilities

The executive committee has the following responsibilities:

- Report the progress of each subcommittee meeting
- Approve the subcommittee designations of comments via the summary of changes
- Review and recommend changes and approve the SWS Maintenance Procedures
- Oversee crosscutting issues between various sections of the SWS to ensure document consistency
- Recommend public statements on approved updates.

6.3 Amendments

Proposed amendments to any section of the *SWS Maintenance Policies and Procedures* may be approved by a majority vote of the executive committee. DOE will approve the proposed amendments.

6.4 Approval of SWS Comment Responses

DOE will have the opportunity to review the responses to comments prior to posting to ensure consistency in the Weatherization Assistance Program policies and program.

7 Summary Report

A summary report is issued by the facilitator within four months of the conclusion of a maintenance event. A portion of the report or the report in its entirety should be posted on the SWS online tool.

7.1 Changes to SWS Online Tool

The percent change of the SWS will be provided in the online tool (i.e., the number of details changed divided by the total number of details in the SWS).

7.2 Report Outline

The report shall follow approximately the outline below:

1. Executive summary
2. Summary of attendees
3. Publication and openness of event

4. Comments and their resolutions (spreadsheet)
5. Next SWS maintenance event preparation
6. Other actions taken
7. Recommendations for future actions
8. Appendix
 - a. Meeting minutes from executive committee
 - b. Meeting minutes from subcommittees.

Glossary

Balance	A condition existing when a) no single interest category (i.e., sector, company, region, etc.) constitutes more than one-third of the membership of a consensus body dealing with safety or b) no single interest category constitutes a majority of the membership.
Dominance	A position or exercise of dominant authority, leadership, or influence by reason of superior leverage, strength, or representation to the exclusion of fair and equitable consideration of other viewpoints.
Facilitator	The group of staff that facilitates the SWS maintenance event with responsibilities including organizing the meetings, the subject matter experts, and records of the meeting
Maintenance	Maintenance of a standard for which procedures have been established to consider and process proposed changes as they are received.
SWS maintenance event	Cycle of receiving comments on the SWS, convening subject matter experts in subcommittees to review the comments with overarching decisions made by the executive committee, and making approved changes to the SWS content
Standard	A document established by authority or rule that defines properties, processes, dimensions, materials, relationships, procedures, concepts, nomenclature, or test methods for rating purposes. Adherence to due process in the development of a standard and achievement of consensus are conditions of approval.

Appendix – Record of Changes to SWS Maintenance Charter

Table A-1. Record of Changes to SWS Maintenance Charter

Revision	Changes	Date
Preliminary Draft	Original Release	2/3/2014