



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

Guidelines for Home Energy Professionals Project

SWS Maintenance Charter Version 1.0

Last Updated: December 4, 2013

List of Acronyms

DOE	U.S. Department of Energy
HEP	Home Energy Professionals
JTA	job task analysis
MF	multifamily
MH	manufactured housing
NREL	National Renewable Energy Laboratory
SF	single-family
SME	subject matter expert
SWS	Standard Work Specifications
WAP	Weatherization Assistance Program

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) and the DOE's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) established the Workforce Guidelines for Home Energy Professionals (HEP) project to support and promote high-quality work within the weatherization and home energy upgrade or "home performance" industry based on the whole-house approach to energy efficiency. One of the major components of the Guidelines effort is to define high-quality work through voluntary Standard Work Specifications (SWS) for single-family, multifamily, and manufactured housing energy upgrades in accordance with industry best practices. The overarching goal of the project is to promote the use of best practices to achieve high-quality outcomes.

A primary objective of the HEP project was to create consensus-based workforce guidelines in accordance with industry best practices. DOE WAP and NREL collaborated with trainers and subject matter experts (SMEs) from across the home performance industry to develop nationally recognized International Standards Organization (ISO) accredited personnel certifications and Interstate Renewable Energy Council accredited training centers.¹ While not directly addressed here, the HEP certifications were derived from the single-family SWS and are mentioned throughout the document. NREL holds the certification schemes and is responsible for convening the certification scheme committees.

1.2 Opportunity

Maintenance of the HEP resources necessitates the active engagement of industry to increase adoption, instill confidence, and thereby increase consumer demand for home energy efficiency retrofits. Additionally, SWS maintenance helps inform the scheme committees of when the HEP certification schemes need to be revised.

Collaboration with industry throughout the SWS development process ensured consensus across the WAP network and private industry. This collaboration was accomplished through the involvement of public, private, and federal sectors subject matter experts, feedback obtained through a multi-stage, iterative process, and stakeholder engagement. Continuing to provide a consensus-based centralized resource of current best practices, and a consensus-based revision process is needed to maintain the SWS.

Maintenance of the SWS ensures the resource stays current with industry best practices and continues to be a centralized resource for the home performance industry. SWS continuous maintenance will also promote consistency across the industry, including training centers and HEP certifying bodies. With the WAP's 2013 Quality Work Plan requirement of adopting the SWS, the WAP will continue to serve as the industry model and demonstrate the WAP's commitment to achieving high-quality work and safety.

¹ More information can be found at: https://www1.eere.energy.gov/wip/guidelines_certifications.html.

1.3 Goal

The goal of the SWS maintenance process is to ensure the SWS content continues to be a consensus-based, centralized resource for promoting best practices and maintaining consistency throughout the industry. The SWS were built by industry for industry and the process to create them was facilitated by DOE and NREL. The purpose of the maintenance process framework is to provide a structure to transition ownership of the SWS to the WAP network and home performance industry and to inform the certification scheme committee of SWS revisions that may affect the HEP certifications.

1.4 Charter Purpose

A SWS maintenance committee will be formed to revise the SWS in accordance with current home performance industry best practices. These best practices will continue to define quality work performance objectives for the WAP and home performance industry.

2 Maintenance Framework

The SWS maintenance committees will meet annually to discuss revisions to the SWS. The SWS maintenance committee event is an in-person gathering of SMEs to review comments and discuss recommended changes to the SWS technical content. NREL will coordinate the SWS maintenance committee meeting in 2014 and assist with the transition of the SWS content ownership to the WAP network and industry practitioners. In addition to organizing the meeting, NREL will follow up after the meeting to ensure all comments are reviewed and the SWS is revised through a consensus-based process. Separately, NREL will revise the SWS online tool according to recommendations made by the SWS maintenance committees.

Figure 1 shows an overview of the maintenance process.

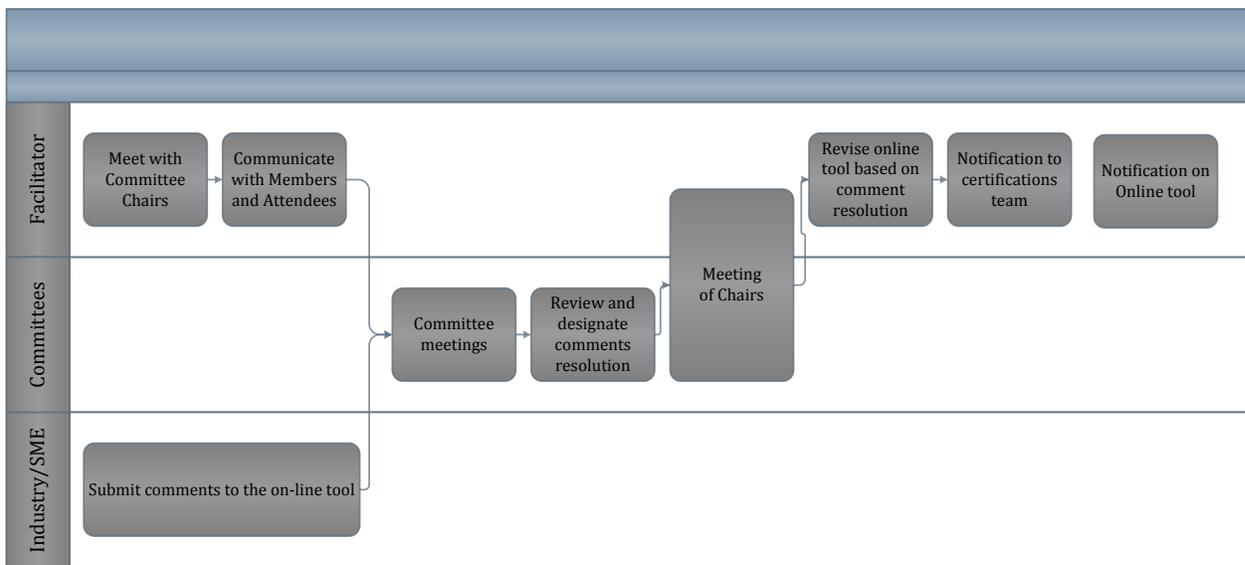


Figure 1. SWS Maintenance Process Overview

The committee structure is comprised of one executive committee and four subcommittees. The executive committee members are the chairpersons of the subcommittees. The subcommittees include SMEs for each section of the SWS.

Subcommittees are organized by housing type and subject area from the SWS. For the breakdown, major topic areas are grouped together with single-family (SF) housing, manufactured housing (MH), and multifamily (MF) housing being addressed with the same subcommittee. The SF and MH SWS have similar content, while the MF may vary because of unique building characteristics. Figure 2 shows the organization of the subcommittees by housing type and topic area.

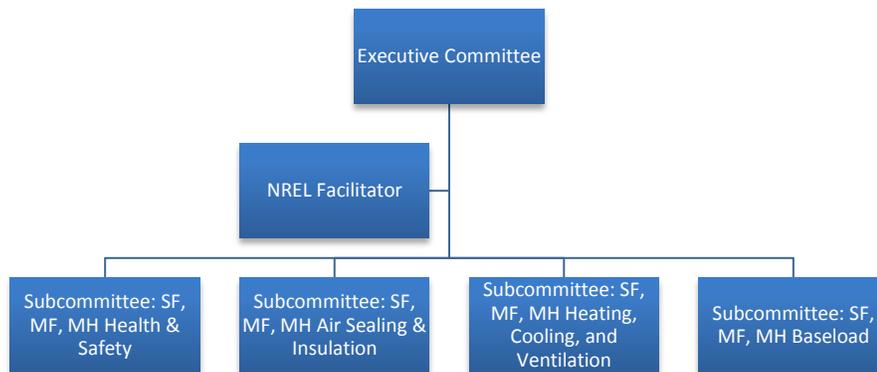


Figure 2. SWS Maintenance Committee Preliminary Organization

Prior to the first maintenance event, NREL, as the 2014 SWS maintenance facilitator, will work with the executive committee to prepare for leading all executive committee and subcommittee meeting discussions. NREL will also be responsible for organizing comments received during the committee meetings and then assigning each comment to the appropriate committee to be addressed by the committee members. Finally, NREL will continue to facilitate the committee discussions as these comments are addressed.

The subcommittees will function as the working group for adjudicating comments received about the SWS, specifically those comments received during the comment review period prior to the annual SWS maintenance event. Subcommittee members will discuss and designate a response to each comment received. The subcommittees will be responsible for revising the technical content of each section of the SWS and relevant addenda. The SWS Maintenance Procedures manual outlines the conduct for the committee order of business, voting methods, and other procedures.

At the conclusion of all the subcommittee meetings, the executive committee will convene, summarize actions to be taken, and discuss major crosscutting issues in the SWS. The executive committee will also revise the maintenance process for the SWS resource according to input from subcommittee members for future revision periods.

The NREL certification lead will provide feedback in a final report summarizing the outcomes of the executive committee and subcommittee meetings. This report will detail the nature of the revisions to the SWS resource that were made to keep the HEP certifications aligned with the

SWS. NREL, as the manager of the SWS online tool, is responsible for ensuring the changes are made to the online SWS.

2.1 Scope

All SWS detail sections, down to the specification level, are considered for inclusion in the maintenance scope for revisions, including:

- Introduction
- Details
- Specifications
- Glossary Terms
- Appendices.

If a subcommittee identifies a need for changing an entire detail or changing other major sections, the subcommittee will make recommendations to the executive committee for final decision. The executive committee chair will be responsible for assisting NREL to develop the content of the final report for the facilitator to submit to DOE.

The executive committee will address crosscutting issues and report its findings and recommendations to DOE in the final report. Examples of topics to be captured and included in the report to DOE include enhancements to the online comment tool, additional details to the SWS, or requests to complete a full code review.

Because the job task analyses (JTAs) for the HEP certifications were derived from the SWS, notification via the final report will be given to the NREL certification lead to ensure that the certifications are current with the SWS. The facilitator is responsible for this notification. While feedback will be provided to the NREL certification lead with changes from the maintenance committees, the revisions to certification materials are not included in this process. These include:

- JTAs
- Certification schemes / blueprints
- Certifying body materials
- Interstate Renewable Energy Council material
- Training material
- Test questions.

2.1.1 Challenges

Maintaining the current SWS resource will ensure WAP stays true to its core practices: quality, safety, and results. Continuous maintenance will instill the ability within the WAP network for innovation in its practices and methods and guarantee WAP's role in the industry as a leader for best practices.

Because the SWS is a collaborative document, communicating maintenance activities to all stakeholders is critical. Revisions require effective communication of comment deadlines, changes to the text, and plans for future iterations of revisions.

2.1.2 Assumptions

The following assumptions were made on this project:

- Users regularly refer to the SWS resource.
- Comments are received under each category of the SWS resource for review.
- Participants in the process will identify a facilitator for future years.

2.2 2014 Facilitator Resources

NREL, as the facilitator, is responsible for overseeing the committee meetings and overall event. The facilitator is responsible for:

- Procuring meeting space located near the corresponding event;
- Ensuring committee chairs and members receive the comments to be reviewed during the event;
- Compiling the meeting minutes and notes from the meetings during the event into a summary report for DOE;
- Conducting webinars and preparation materials before the first maintenance event.

2.3 2014 NREL Resources

As the manager of the SWS online tool, NREL is responsible for ensuring the SWS online tool is updated in accordance with the decisions made by the committees.

3 Proposed Timeline

Table 1 shows the project timeline for SWS maintenance.

Table 1. SWS Maintenance Timeline

Task	Start Date	Deadline
SWS resource open for comments	10/1/2013	4/4/2014
SWS online comment tool released	3/14/2014	3/14/2014

Task	Start Date	Deadline
Deadline for comments to SWS resource in online comment tool	4/4/2014	4/4/2014
Webinar for subcommittee chairs and members	3/3/2014	3/31/2014
Tag-ups for subcommittee chairs	3/3/2014	4/28/2014
SWS maintenance event	4/28/2014	5/1/2014
Event closeout and reporting	4/5/2014	7/1/2014
Summary report of maintenance event	7/1/2014	7/1/2014
Procedures for FY15	8/1/2014	8/1/2014

4 Organization

The committee chair and subcommittee members each have unique functions and have essential qualifications for the SWS maintenance event.

4.1 Stakeholders

The SWS maintenance event is open to all industry members and members of the public who are directly affected by SWS activities.

Stakeholders in this process of maintaining the SWS resource include the WAP, contractors, consumers, utilities, and financial institutions.

4.2 Members of Subcommittees

Subcommittee chairs and members have different qualifications and essential functions as are described below.

4.2.1 Subcommittee Chair Qualifications and Functions

Essential qualifications:

- Industry practitioner
- Current user of the SWS
- Previous experience acting in a leadership position.

Preferred qualifications:

- Hold a professional membership to a group within the industry
- Hold a professional certification within the industry
- Previous involvement with the Guidelines for Home Energy Professionals project.

Essential functions:

- Participate in a preparation webinar with all subcommittee chairs
- Participate in a 1:1 conference call with facilitator staff to review comment assignments
- Develop agenda for meeting
- Communicate with subcommittee members prior to the event as needed
- Attend the SWS maintenance event in person
- Facilitate the meeting (ensure all SWS maintenance procedures are followed).

4.2.2 Subcommittee Member Qualifications and Functions

Essential qualifications:

- Industry practitioner
- Current user of the SWS.

Preferred qualifications:

- Hold a professional membership to a group within the industry
- Hold a professional certification within the industry
- Previous involvement with the Guidelines for Home Energy Professionals project.

Essential functions:

- Review paperwork prior to event as provided by the subcommittee chair
- Attend the SWS maintenance event in person
- Participate in the meeting (follow all SWS maintenance procedures)
- Elect a subcommittee chair as needed
- Proposed new members as needed.

5 Key Deliverables

The key deliverables from the SWS maintenance event are divided by responsibility.

5.1 Subcommittee Deliverables

The major subcommittee deliverable is a comment adjudication spreadsheet or other document that records each comment and the subcommittee's adjudication and response (as required). The

comment adjudication list is the responsibility of the subcommittee chair to submit to both the executive committee and to NREL via the method prescribed in advanced (i.e. spreadsheet). In addition, the subcommittee may submit a list of requests for enhancements to the online comment tool, additional SWS details, or major changes to the SWS, or it may request to complete a full code review per section. Meeting minutes, as prepared by the subcommittee, will also be delivered to the event facilitator.

5.2 Executive Committee Deliverables

The executive committee is responsible for collecting the subcommittee reports. Additionally, the executive committee will deliver a summary of recommended revisions to the FY15 SWS Maintenance Charter and SWS Maintenance Procedures document, any crosscutting issues discussed, and recommended public statements. Meeting minutes, as prepared by the executive subcommittee, will also be delivered to the event facilitator.

5.3 Facilitator Deliverables

The facilitator will deliver a summary report to DOE that includes an attendee list, committee meetings, major decisions, discussion and voting records of committee meetings, and a list of all changes to the SWS. The report will be made available to industry with the SWS online resource, as well as the actual revisions made within the SWS resource. Because certifications are based on the SWS, the list of comment adjudication and additional requests, the executive summary of changes, and the report to DOE will be delivered to NREL to determine impact to JTA and certification schemes.

5.4 NREL Deliverables

NREL will deliver the revised SWS within the SWS online resource based on accepted changes.