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# The Beginning of Otter Tail-Wadena Community Action Council, Inc.

Seventy five local residents met on March 12, 1965, to discuss the Economic Opportunity Act. Forty one years later we are still in operation helping to end poverty and assisting hard working, low income families, individuals, and communities become successful.

## ■ Programs established

- Head Start
  - Fuel Assistance
  - Energy Savers (1st weatherization project in the nation)
  - Rural Resource Coop
  - Family Planning
  - Senior Centers
  - Economic Development
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# Board Structure

- One Third County Government
  - One Third Low Income Representatives
  - One Third Business and Industry
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# Mission Statement

Otter Tail-Wadena Community Action Council, Inc. is a locally controlled, non-profit resource agency striving for the success of the community empowering people to live, learn work and govern themselves

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## OTWCAC Programs

- **Child Care Resource & Referral**
  - **Energy Assistance**
  - **Family Planning**
  - **Head Start/Early HS**
  - **Housing**
  - **RSVP**
  - **Weatherization**
  - **21<sup>st</sup> Century**
  - **Homeless Prevention**
  - **Family Services**
  - **Loans (car/other)**
  - **Emergency Services**
  - **Fathers Resource Program**
  - **Tax Aide**
  - **Mortgage Foreclosure**
  - **Home Stretch**
  - **FAIM**
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# OTWCAC WX Program

Steve Connell Weatherization Director

- One Director
  - Three Auditors
  - Six Contractors
  - 112 Homes WX & Energy Audit  
(Utilities/Cities)/ year
  - 22 HRA/City Energy Audits per year
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# Weatherization Program Selection Criteria

- Must be eligible for Energy Assistance (50% State median income, \$39,414 family of 4)
  - High Consumption
  - Disabled
  - Senior Citizen
  - Families with Children
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# Residential House Audit

- **Select and Interview Client**
  - **Visual site analysis**
  - **Blower Door and Pressure Diagnostics for air infiltration**
  - **Based on assessment the following may be done:  
Attic and wall insulation, weather stripping around doors and windows, caulking foundations, sealing attic/wall bypasses, correct health and safety issues, furnace and water heater replacement, solar panels if acceptable.**
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# OTWCAC Weatherization

## Irene and George Walter Solar Heating Collector Project

### ■ Partners

- ❑ Department of Commerce
  - ❑ Local Utility Companies/ Cities
  - ❑ RREAL
  - ❑ Donations
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# Renewable Energy Equipment Grant Program

- **Started with approximately \$120,000**
  - **Approximately \$40,000.00 rolled over to begin new projects.**
  - **Additional funds will be available for 2009.**
  - **Project maximum has been raised to \$4,700.00.**
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# Renewable Energy Equipment Grant Program

- Grant applies to Solar Air and Bio-fuel systems.
  - Clients must have current EAP eligibility.
  - Projects must be associated with a weatherization project or can be done on previously weatherized homes.
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## Solar- Air Checklist

- Client is interested and site has good potential.
  - Client has current Weatherization Assistance Program eligibility.
  - Client has been scheduled for weatherization conservation work or was previously weatherized.
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# Solar- Air Checklist

- The Rural Renewable Energy Alliance, (RREAL), is contacted by the Weatherization Agency and a solar site analysis is requested.
  - RREAL completes the solar site analysis and determines feasibility of project.
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# Solar Heating Collector Project

## Initial House Data

- Cumulative SIR
  - Mechanical/HVAC
  - Building Insulation-Attics
  - Heat Waste/Air Infiltration
  - Doors and Windows
  - Fuel Consumption
  - Diagnostics
  - Solar Panel Savings
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# Cumulative SIR

<u>Name</u>	<u>Est. SIR</u>	<u>Actual SIR</u>
House 1	1.5	3.1
House 2	2.4	3
House 3	1.6	1.9
House 4	1	2.4
House 5	3.8	5.3

# Solar Heating Panels Projected Savings

Solar Heating Offset	Therms	WX Saving	Total Saving
12%	65 Therms	17%%	29%
9.0%	68 Therms	25%	34%
6%	34 Therms	19%	25%
11%	66 Therms	21%	32%
5%	61 Therms	26%	31%

	Renters		Home Owners	
Household Income	# of Households Paying over 30% in Rent	% of Households Paying over 30% in Rent	# of Households Paying over 30% for Ownership Costs	% of Households Paying over 30% for Ownership Costs
Less than \$19,999	<b>1,259</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>818</b>	<b>41%</b>
\$20,000-\$34,999	<b>159</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>21%</b>
\$35,000-\$49,999	<b>6</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>8%</b>
\$50,000 & over	<b>2</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>3%</b>

Chart illustrates that the burden of housing costs weighs more heavily on lower-income families.

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## Low Income Expenses as % of Gross income for Housing, Child Care, Utilities

- Low income families spend about 30 to 50 % on Housing
  - Low income families spend about 28% on child care
  - Low income families spend about 9% on utilities
  - Total 67 to 87 % of income for the basics not including food, medical care, transportation, or taxes
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# What have we learned.

- Pick homes with delivered fuels (fuel oil, propane, wood) to maximize impact.
  - Pick homes with families that have one or more persons at home during the day e.g. families with young children, families with a disabled person, retirees.
  - Be sensitive to homeowner comfort and satisfaction with the solar collectors and their placement.
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# Anticipated Plans

- Train auditors to do the site analysis and home selection
  - Train contractors to install the solar heating collectors
  - Carry out a two year study on the homes to determine the actual energy savings due to the solar collectors and weatherization done to the home
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# Remember

- Weatherization, Rehabilitation and new construction are the only programs that Community Action does that permanently change a family's energy burden. We need to let this secret out and press for full funding of Weatherization programs. They work.
  - Renewable energy will create new jobs for weatherization and rural America.
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