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**EPA HONORS the NORTHWEST ENERGY EFFICIENCY COUNCIL
WITH 2016 ENERGY STAR® AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN
ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAM DELIVERY**

NEEC recognized for increasing adoption of energy-efficient products

Seattle, WA, March 24, 2016 – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has recognized the Northwest Energy Efficiency Council (NEEC) with a 2016 ENERGY STAR Award for Excellence in Energy Efficiency Program Delivery for its outstanding efforts to increase adoption of energy-efficient products. NEEC's accomplishments will be recognized in Washington, D.C. on April 13, 2016.

NEEC, an ENERGY STAR partner since 2002, will be honored for work in promoting ENERGY STAR programs and products that meet ENERGY STAR specifications for energy efficiency through its Building Operator Certification (BOC) program and support of the City of Seattle's Benchmarking ordinance with the Energy Star Portfolio Manager Help Desk.

As a non-profit energy efficiency industry association, NEEC is an active supporter of ENERGY STAR products and programs.

Since 2011, NEEC has also administered the Help Desk for the City of Seattle Energy Benchmarking and Reporting Program. NEEC coordinates and provides hands-on energy benchmarking workshops, drop-in sessions and in-depth email and phone support to help customers navigate the U.S. EPA's ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager to benchmark buildings to meet City of Seattle's benchmarking requirements. For two years, in 2014 and 2015, compliance rates reached 99% and a similar compliance percentage is anticipated for the 2016 reporting deadline. The Help Desk continues to take next steps in engaging customers in a discussion of energy efficiency improvements and promoting the National Building Competition, ENERGY STAR certification as well as sending referrals to local utility incentive and rebate programs.

NEEC also administers the Building Operator Certification (BOC®) program which trains and certifies commercial and institutional building's facility staff in best practices for energy efficiency. This includes benchmarking building performance through ENERGY STAR's Portfolio Manager software tool and in specifying the purchase of ENERGY STAR products and equipment. Over 12,000 building operators have received BOC certification across the United States. The national BOC® program is administered through a network of licensed providers who train building technicians in BOC best practices in 35 states and D.C. with diverse climate zones in the East, Midwest,

Southeast, and Pacific Coast. These providers contributed to the achievements recognized with this award. They include City University of New York, Gwinnett Technical College, IBOA- International Building Operators Association, Lakes Regions Community College, Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance, Northwest Energy Education Institute, , Pennsylvania College of Technology, South Carolina Technical College System, SPEER – South-central Partnership for Energy Efficiency as a Resource, Santa Fe Community College, and University of Hawaii.

“The Northwest Energy Efficiency Council (NEEC) values our long term partnership with ENERGY STAR,” said Stan Price, Executive Director. “Our work supporting the City of Seattle’s very successful energy benchmark and disclosure requirement along with NEEC’s ongoing training of building operators rely on this partnership with ENERGY STAR.”

Price continued, “Together, we are making a difference in improving the bottom line performance of buildings and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.”

Since its inception in 1992, ENERGY STAR and its partners have helped prevent a total of more than 2.4 billion metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions. In 2014 alone, ENERGY STAR and its partners provided more than \$11 billion in societal benefits due to reducing damages from climate change.

“The Northwest Energy Efficiency Council’s push to promote ENERGY STAR products is teaching consumers to make smarter and more energy-efficient buying decisions,” said EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy. “NEEC is encouraging Americans to save money, save energy, and do their part to reduce our nation’s greenhouse gas emissions that drive climate change.”

ENERGY STAR has 16,000 partners working to protect the environment through greater energy efficiency, including manufacturers, retailers, public schools, hospitals, real estate companies, and home builders.

For a complete list of 2016 winners and more information about ENERGY STAR’s awards program, visit www.energystar.gov/awardwinners.

About NEEC

The Northwest Energy Efficiency Council (NEEC) is a non-profit business association of the energy efficiency industry. NEEC’s mission is to promote policies and programs that enhance market opportunities for energy efficiency. NEEC is a national provider of a range of services from Energy Benchmarking technical support to training and credentialing through the Building Operator Certification (BOC®) program.

About ENERGY STAR

ENERGY STAR® is the simple choice for energy efficiency. For more than 20 years, people across America have looked to EPA’s ENERGY STAR program for guidance on how to save energy, save money, and protect the environment. Behind each blue label is a product, building, or home that is independently certified to use less energy and cause fewer of the emissions that contribute to climate change. Today, ENERGY STAR is the most widely recognized symbol for energy efficiency in the world, helping families and businesses save \$362 billion on utility bills, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions by more than 2.4 billion metric tons since 1992. Join the millions who are already making a difference at energystar.gov.