

On track for energy efficiency

Grant recipients attended and hosted events across the province and brought the energy efficiency message to communities across the province



Grants in action

Energy efficiency hits the road to help Albertans save energy and money

Summer in Alberta is about getting together, enjoying the few short months of beautiful weather, outdoor activities and festivals. Prior to COVID restrictions, our grant recipients attended and hosted events across the province and brought the energy efficiency message to communities across the province. Through a mix of thoughtful, engaging and fun programming, they impactfully drew people in to demonstrate how important energy is in our everyday lives, and how easy it is to use it better.

Empower Me, Open Streets Events, The Battle River Watershed Alliance and the Alberta Native Friendship Centres Association know the power of a good road trip. Going to where people already are makes it more convenient for them to come along on your journey. These organizations hit the road to help Albertans save money and energy in their homes and businesses.



Attendees at the Ismaeli Seniors Wellness event learn about power generation.

Last year, the Battle River Watershed Alliance (BRWA) literally brought people along for the ride. They loaded up a bus full of energy efficiency and renewable power impassioned community members and toured energy facilities around the Battle River Region. This region is no stranger to energy production. It is home to the Hardisty oil terminal and the Forestburg coal mine. The tour included wind power, solar, efficiency measures and biogas, demonstrating alternative production. The experience of seeing where our energy comes from was so inspirational for one

participant, it resulted in the planned curation of a museum exhibit demonstrating types of energy in the province among other community projects.



BWRA's energy efficiency champions on a tour of renewable energy production facilities.

The staff at the Alberta Native Friendship Centres Association saw all four corners of the province through their "Indigenous Energy Efficiency Champions" workshops at Friendship Centres in Bonnyville, Edson, Slave Lake and Pincher Creek. All attendees received an energy efficiency toolkit to take home with them and an edict to take it to their community. As an unexpected outcome of workshops, the friendship centres saw incredible value in a collaborative agreement for building energy retrofits. They will partner with fellow Energy Efficiency Alberta grant recipients SAIT, NEWO Energy and the Energy Futures Lab, to see out this vision and provide energy and utility savings to the friendship centres. This project also resulted in participants enthusiastically hosting their own within their communities, including off-grid housing tours and an introduction to solar power, fulfilling the intent of the workshops.

"After hosting my community teaching to members of my reserve, I was reminded of how energy efficiency can be utilized by anyone. The people who attended my teaching were encouraged and inspired when they learned that First Nations people can work on renewable energy projects." ~ Participant, ANFCA "Indigenous Energy Efficiency Champions" workshop

"Our youth group visited an off-grid homestead where our kids learned about solar panels, how much energy different things use and the pros and cons of simpler living. The youth and their family really enjoyed this hands-on experience! Several families are considering buying solar panels for their home and were able to learn more about how many they would need." ~ Participant, ANFCA "Indigenous Energy Efficiency Champions" workshop

Open Streets Events is a master at drawing people in at large events. Their bright, colourful, interactive set ups not only demonstrate how much of energy it takes to power everyday electronics, but gives you the experience of powering them yourself so you can literally feel the energy it takes. The understanding of how much effort it takes to power light up bikes, live music, pedal powered games or blenders that make smoothies for the crowd leaves lasting impacts. With grant funding, they brought their electrifying programming to over 50 events last year, including the Calgary Stampede, the Lilac Festival in Calgary, the Renfrew Community Association's Zero Waste Holiday Party, Pincher Creek's sustainability event and the Ismaeli Seniors Wellness event.

Empower Me takes their message to a multitude of multicultural events around the province. Their energy efficiency champions speak 16 languages, connecting with diverse populations and communities across the province. They connected with people at events like the Heritage Day Festival and Multicultural fall Festival in Calgary and the Edmonton Region Immigrant Employment Council Smart Connections event over the past two summers. The events are a great place introduce Empower Me and their services, and start conversations about understanding energy bills and choices, so new Albertans, indigenous people, seniors and anyone struggling to pay energy bills can save energy, save money, and increase the comfort and safety of their homes.

Hero image: Participants at Open Streets Pedal Power Tower learn how much effort it takes to power lightbulbs.