

## **Installer Update–2024 #2** **2024-07-04**

We highlight below the key activities of the HeatSmart Alliance since our April 2024 update.

**Coaching:** In mid-April, 25 trainees completed our first coach training program for 2024, which consisted of five virtual training sessions, each with a homework assignment and break-out sessions to test trainees' new skills. Trainees evaluated the course very favorably, and we hope to run another training session this fall. We are granting access to the on-line training content [on request](#).

**Educational Events:** We've presented at 23 educational events in eastern MA communities so far this year, introducing homeowners to heat pumps, including available types, example energy-cost and emissions comparisons, incentives, and how to get started. Three of the events were in environmental justice communities (Quincy, Chelsea, and Randolph) and two of these were presented in dual languages, helping us reach a broader audience.

**Website:** In May, we retained a professional website developer to help us design, implement, and deploy a new website. The new website will be easier to navigate, more inviting to visitors, and easier to maintain. We plan to launch the new site this fall.

**Tools:** To date, 89 users have downloaded our [Heat Load Analysis tool](#), which uses a home's historical fuel use to benchmark its thermal integrity and estimate its design heating load (providing an independent check of installer estimates). We plan to release an updated version by August, primarily to update the weather data files. Code for Boston, a volunteer group, is continuing their work on an online version of the Heat Load Analysis tool that will be easier to support and that will access weather data for any U.S. location. We do not yet have a target date for release of this version.

Members of our Technology Working Group are investigating various fuel-use monitors that we hope will allow us to measure home fuel use in real-time (or near real-time), providing an alternative method for estimating home thermal integrity and design heating load when we don't have access to historical fuel use. We are testing various devices in Members' homes to determine if this approach is feasible.

**Policy:** In early June, we provided verbal and written comments to the MA Energy Efficiency Advisory Council (EEAC) on [The Massachusetts 2025 - 2027 Energy Efficiency and Decarbonization Plan](#) (April 1, 2024 draft). Our recommendations included:

- Provide comprehensive support for community-based coaching programs. As currently worded, the Plan suggests that some support may be provided, but it's not clear how much.
- Provide greater granularity in published program data—in particular, provide numbers of heat-pump rebates (both whole-home and partial-home) by zip code. We encouraged

the EEAC to collaborate closely with Connecticut's Energy Efficiency Board to share best practices.

**Progress Towards 2024 Goals:** We are generally progressing well towards meeting our 2024 goals (see table below), although we are behind on our coaching goal, primarily due to the complexities of managing a coaching program with volunteers.

We recently restructured the Alliance to accommodate our organizational growth, including establishing a Board of Directors to streamline decision-making and guide future areas of focus.

**Progress by the Numbers–2024 Current Status**

Description	2024 Start	Current Status	2024 Goal
Grow No. of Members	109	121	150
Grow No. of Communities Represented	43	46	60
Present/Table at Events	–	23	35
Coach Homeowners*	–	70	200
Train/Mentor New Coaches**	–	25	30

\* Excludes homeowners coached through community-based coaching programs.

\*\* Includes coaches for community-based coaching programs—not just Alliance coaches.

**Question to Installers–Please Reply with your Thoughts:** We're told that the EPA refrigerant phase down and the [U.S. Department of Energy's Cold-Climate Heat Pump Challenge](#) should lead to some significant technology advances this year. We are eager to stay abreast. **Please let us know if you currently offer, or plan to offer this year, any of the following—details are welcome:**

- **Central, ducted air-source heat pumps that:**
  - **Use outdoor units with horizontal airflow in nominal capacities ranging from 2 to 5 tons**
  - **Defrost on demand (not on a timer), and either a) use no supplemental heat during defrost, or b) modulate supplemental heat during defrost to minimize the supplemental heat needed**
- **Ductless multi-split heat pumps that maintain high heating efficiencies when only a single zone is calling for heat and avoid overheating in zones not calling for heat**
- **Air-to-water heat pumps that can deliver 170°F or higher water temperature at a 5°F outdoor air temperature**
- **Any other significant technology advances that should be of interest to MA homeowners.**

If you have any other questions, comments, or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Best regards,  
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**About us:** The [HeatSmart Alliance](#) is a volunteer organization whose mission is to accelerate the adoption of energy-efficient heat pumps in Massachusetts. We focus on air- and ground-source heat pumps, heat-pump water heaters, and weatherization. Our key organizational objectives are:

- Educate residents about heat pumps through community presentations, our website, and other channels
- Facilitate the growth of community-based heat-pump coaching programs
- Inform local, state, and federal government policies.

The Alliance does not accept donations or referral fees from manufacturers or installers.