



## **SPEER Joins Federally Funded Clean Energy Education Initiative**

**September 18, 2023, Austin, Texas** – SPEER has recently partnered with the Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC) to join the [EMPOWERED](#) program, a U.S. Department of Energy-funded initiative providing free education and training on clean energy safety and installation to building professionals. SPEER’s participation in the project will accelerate the adoption of energy efficient and clean energy technologies as we build an affordable, sustainable, and resilient energy future.

“SPEER is thrilled to enter this partnership with IREC and further our mission of expanding the adoption of energy efficient products and services in the south-central region. We recognize that residential and commercial buildings are responsible for over 30% of the nation’s energy use and this does not include electrical system energy losses. A large amount of energy consumed is wasted through inefficient heating and cooling systems, inadequate insulation, lack of automation and controls, and this is especially true for SPEER’s region where many homes and small buildings were built prior to the adoption of energy codes. This collaboration will enable our organization to reach a larger audience and provide essential education focused on energy saving policies, energy codes, and new technologies to help consumers and alleviate stress on our aging grid” said SPEER’s Managing Director, Liz John.

Fact based education is critical to the safe, widespread, and rapid deployment of technologies that reduce energy usage and make the grid more sustainable and resilient. These include grid-interactive energy efficient building technologies, solar, energy storage systems, and electric vehicles. The EMPOWERED program unites and informs stakeholders across the country on the implementation of energy efficiency, clean energy codes and standards, and innovative adoption of technologies.

“Giving building and safety officials the tools they need to work with distributed energy resources is essential to the clean energy transition,” said **Larry Sherwood, President and CEO of IREC**. “We are excited to have SPEER join the EMPOWERED program; by connecting their regional networks with its valuable educational resources, they will further expand the already significant reach of this important initiative.”

The EMPOWERED program has already created widely-accessed resources that are in active use across the nation. Over 75,000 professionals in all fifty states have utilized the resources found on the program’s two websites: [CleanEnergyClearinghouse.org](#) and [CleanEnergyTraining.org](#). Downloadable guides and checklists as well as webinar recordings are housed on the Clearinghouse. [CleanEnergyTraining.org](#) hosts on CEU-bearing permitting and inspection courses. All resources are free to the public, vetted by industry professionals, and designed for practical application in the field.

SPEER joins a roster of expert organizations working collaboratively on the program. In addition to IREC, which leads the initiative, that includes the International Code Council (ICC);

International Association of Electrical Inspectors (IAEI); National Association of State Fire Marshals (NASFM); Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL); Florida Solar Energy Center (FSEC); Southface Institute, New Buildings Institute (NBI), Southeast Energy Efficiency Alliance (SEEA), SouthWest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEET), Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships (NEEP), and the Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (MEEA).

EMPOWERED stands for [Educational Materials for Professional Organizations Working on Efficiency and Renewable Energy Developments](#). It is a collaborative grant program funded jointly by the Department of Energy Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE)'s [Solar Energy Technologies Office](#), [Building Technologies Office](#), and [Vehicle Technologies Office](#).

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**About SPEER:** The South-central Partnership for Energy Efficiency as a Resource (SPEER) recognizes that energy efficiency is the most cost-effective resource available and can be quickly implemented to meet the growing needs of the energy market. Many of the nation's fastest growing cities are located in SPEER's region of Texas and Oklahoma and as temperatures continue to soar and population rapidly grows, accelerating the adoption of energy efficient products and services can strengthen local economies, improve public health, and protect the environment. To learn more about SPEER's work and program areas visit [www.eepartnership.org](http://www.eepartnership.org)

**About IREC:** The Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC) builds the foundation for rapid adoption of clean energy and energy efficiency to benefit people, the economy, and our planet. Its vision is a 100% clean energy future that is reliable, resilient, and equitable. IREC develops and advances the regulatory reforms, technical standards, and workforce solutions needed to enable the streamlined integration of clean, distributed energy resources. IREC has been trusted for its independent clean energy expertise for over 40 years, since its founding in 1982. For more information, visit [www.irecusa.org](http://www.irecusa.org) or follow IREC on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), or [Facebook](#).