



## HELIX Virtual Summit Q&A

November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017

### HELIX Structure/Function

**Q: Is the HPXML language adopted in the BPI world integrated into HELIX?**

A: Yes, there's a mapping that exists inside the system between the BEDES standard and the RESO standard. We can easily create an export in HPXML standard as we did for the RESO standard during the demo.

**Q: Can multiple certifications and information from different sources all be pulled together into one record in HELIX (e.g. HERS, LEED, PV characteristics, etc.)?**

A: Yes, if we can automatically connect to another system providing other information (such as solar) that record can get pulled in. The address record is normalized and HELIX looks for the existing address in the system. Then HELIX checks for that specific piece of information. If the address already has a HERS rating it will update with the new information. If it doesn't have solar PV data, it will add that information.

**Q: Is the database of certifications already integrated within the platform? Or is this something that you have to manually upload?**

A: We set up a 'starter list' of certifications to be available and it is very easy to add a certification type that is specific to your organization. Any record that then references that certification type will get mapped to it.

**Q: Does HELIX integrate utility costs in auto population?**

A: At this point no. However, we do have estimated utility consumption that we can pull in from the HES data set. From a structural standpoint, we've set things up so that we can capture annual consumption, production, and utility cost. HELIX's structure allows this information to be pulled in. Discussions should be had about who will pull in this information.

### Opt in/opt out

**Q: Who will control opt in/opt out in HELIX?**

A: The final decision is made by the property owner. Within the system itself, the party (state agency, utility) will be responsible for tracking and managing the information, and can flip from opt in to opt out or vice versa. That information then becomes part of the fields contained in HELIX itself. Opt in opt out will happen at the certification level. We are able to screen this information so that data is available for viewing but so that it is not available for export.

**Q: If they are opting out of only a piece of the data, shouldn't the opt-out control be on each data element level?**

A: We put opt out at level of certification (beneath the property level) because of this scenario: it may be that a home gets a HERS rating, and subsequent to that they install solar – we want them to expose this solar but this may mean that their previous HERS rating is no longer appropriate.

**Q: How much is this anticipated to be geared toward the real estate transfer market/MLS versus retrofit market?**



A: We're interested in all of the above – we're trying to gather/access the right level of information to push out to the MLS market.

**Q: Why did Rhode Island decide to go with opt in rather than opt out language for its home energy score program?**

A: This was a decision made by RI's legal counsel. This is their standard practice for their way of dealing with customers. The opt-out approach is more conducive for gathering more numbers faster; but opt-in approach is necessary for RI right now.

**Q: Shouldn't we encourage customer consent during the program's enrollment phase?**

A: RI thought about including as a part of enrollment process and whether or not this language would potentially deter someone. Our alternative proposal is to provide a consent form at a 'kitchen table conversation' when the assessor is in the house, providing education to homeowner – this makes sense as a good way to establish trust and understanding. Providing this consent form might make sense.

## Resources

**Q: When do you anticipate state approval for the HELIX course?**

A: We anticipate that we're probably a couple of months out from having something to put before states. We wish to partner with appropriate state associations (appraisers and Realtors®) to acquire state approved continuing education (CE) credits and instructor approval as well as to market, host, and administer HELIX CE credits. Funding for instructors will likely vary by participating state; however, by providing the course and instructor at no cost to local associations we'll likely increase association interest as this should provide them with important non-dues revenue in addition to supporting their members.

**Q: Is there a listing of inspectors that have incorporated HEScore into their inspection?**

A: Find a Home Energy Score Assessor with DOE's [tool](#).

## Trouble Shooting

**Q: How do you envision resolving conflicts such as different solar information coming in from multiple sources?**

A: The default rule in HELIX right now is that the last data input wins. If there's a 4kW that came from one place, followed by a 4.5kW coming from someplace else, the 4.5kW by default would be shown in the system. However, HELIX is good at showing a history of the data that has been put in. The key is to find ways to flag up conflicts as they are created... this is something that will need to be worked. Also, HELIX will allow you to edit lines in the system.

**Q: How would a user search for the presence of a HERS score if they don't know the score, i.e. search for how many properties have a score at all?**

A: Right now the issue is that there can be multiple certifications within a property level – down the line we will look at HELIX as a reporting tool and look at ways to build out features.



### Misc.

**Q: When you refer to the VT MLS, does this solar information also include NH's given that the MLS NEREN covers both states?**

A: So far, NH's data isn't as readily accessible. We're only talking about VT solar listings.

**Q: In Connecticut, are home energy scores issued to Income Eligible customers as well as market-rate customers?**

A: Yes, if you meet income requirements, you may receive services at no cost.

<https://www.energizect.com/your-home/solutions-list/save-energy-and-money-all-year-long>

**Q: Can a user on Zillow see NEREN's green fields?**

A: If the listing agent has entered any info at all available on our listing input form, they do get the power production, green marketing and third party verification field from NEREN. If that data is populated they are getting it. To our knowledge, Zillow isn't using these fields on their website right now.

**Q: Does NEREN use the same tax aggregator for VT as you do for other states such as MA or NH?**

A: We use CRS for MLS wide tax program. We currently have the ability to search and auto populate data in NH, VT, ME, and MA. We are working with them and looking into others. RI and CT are currently unavailable through the NEREN database. CRS is not the source of PV data – VT's PV data comes from VT public service.

**Q: Can you elaborate on CT Green Bank?**

A: [CT Green Bank](#) was established by state legislator ~5/6 years ago, it is ratepayer funded and provides financing packages for a variety of renewable energy programs (i.e. Smart e program, low income solar package, renewable on commercial and industrial). They finance and leverage projects primarily using the small portion of ratepayer funds they receive.

**Q: Are lenders using the Home Energy Score in underwriting criteria (other than for Green Bank lending)? How is the score having an impact outside of EE/RE circles?**

A: The HELIX team is interested in hosting a webinar to take a deeper dive on this topics. For more information feel free to reach out to the team. Fannie May's [Duty to Serve Rule](#).