

WORK PARTIES! Steps for organizing and facilitating

These parties happen because members make them happen. The cooperative is successful because we work together to enrich ourselves and our communities. There is no work party that is too small or too big! Here are the easy steps to set-up a work party (PDF version of the following steps):

1. Set a date and location for the event: This will often be a house in the neighborhood, or possibly a local business that is interested in hosting. Remember that this may also be the location of a potluck or a place for games and fun and that people may get a little dusty from the energy saving DIY work they completed. It is recommended that you set a party date that is two to six weeks into the future. Assume that installation time depends on the size of the party and the install groups and types of installations. Thus, the length of the event will depend on the size of your party. See the following scenarios:

Standard Event – Scenario A

5-15 attendees – 3 hour duration (most common)

You invite 11 neighbors (households), eight of them attend the party (great!). They all live within one block of the host-house. The party starts at 3:30 on a Saturday and all attendees bring their dinner dishes at that time. Welcome and introductions, DIY training, and the organizing of small installation groups takes 30 minutes.

The party splits into two groups, one group going to three homes, the other to four homes, as two attendees live together. Group one is estimated to take one and a half hours, including walk time. Group two is estimated to take one hour and forty-five minutes. Partygoers are asked to be back at the host house at 5:45.

Upon returning, the potluck begins and people enjoy dinner and can't help but discuss what they learned and did over the last one to two hours. As dinner is slowing down, the host (or a CEF staff, if preferred) will start a group wide conversation about what other actions you would like to take as members of your neighborhood or of the cooperative, which will take 30-40 minutes. The party would end 7:00 pm, at which time all remaining party fees would be collected and materials purchases could take place.

Opening
30 min

**Breakout
Installation**
1 hr 45 min

**Food &
Closing**
45 min

Window kit installation event – Scenario B

5-15 attendees – 3.5 to 5 hour duration

Thirteen people show up to the half-day work party. All of the attendees live within three and a half blocks of the host house, so moving between homes takes less than 10 minutes. The party starts at 9:00 am, with training from knowledgeable CEF staff/volunteers followed by material and supply purchase time. This is when individuals decide what materials they want to purchase for DIY installations in their own homes.

Opening
45 to 60 min

**Breakout
Installation**
2 to 2.5 hrs

**Food &
Closing**
1 to 1.5 hrs

The party breaks into groups of twos and threes and disperses to homes between 9:45 and 10:00. The next two to two and a half hours are designated as field installation time. CEF experts will move between houses to show homeowners how the work is done and to supervise techniques. Each installation takes 25 to 50 minutes. After one install per home, groups will move to the next home. Homeowners can repeat the work on their own at a later time or if there is time remaining during the designated installation period before.

Partygoers are to return to the host home between 12:30 and 1:00 pm for the potluck lunch. Eating and conversation takes place at a leisurely pace, but a facilitated discussion about what other actions you, the residents, would like to take as a neighborhood starts around 1:30 and ends at 2:00 when the meeting is complete. Any other party fees or costs will be collected at this time.

Large or decentralized host site event – Scenario C

15-30 attendees – 4 to 5 hours; hosted at a decentralized community location (e.g. a community center)

Some neighborhoods are interested in organizing larger events that will draw bigger neighborhood crowds and be hosted in more public areas. While this might encourage more people to join in and see the good work, often times community center locations are not as close to attendee houses, and in many cases, transport between homes is more cumbersome and time consuming.

Opening
45 to 60 min

**Breakout
Installation**
2 to 2.5 hrs

**Food &
Closing**
1 to 1.5 hrs

Beyond having to coordinate with a public facility and coordinate more details around food catering and seating space, this party would be organized similarly to the ‘Scenario B’ party, with two and a half hours in the field for a group of three to four individuals/families. It is recommended that groups not be larger than four people, or at least be focused on visiting no more than four homes during one party. Parties of this size have enough time to do all types of installations, even window installs. Party fees will be collected again at the end of the event, after food, and facilitated conversation about future opportunities.



2. Create a loose plan for the event: Decide if the party will be held on the weekend or on a weeknight, depending on what might be best for you and your neighbors. Decide if the event will include a potluck or games so that you can ask partygoers to bring the necessary items. Call or email CEF and let them know when you plan to hold the party and where so that they can plan to be there to provide the DIY training and supplies.
3. Call or email your invitees: Call your party list at least 10 days in advance of the party (we recommend 14-16 days in advance). If you call them more than three weeks in advance, we recommend that you send reminder emails or calls the week of the party. Make sure to ask them if they can bring a potluck item, and keep a list of the types of items people are bringing so that you have a balance between appetizers, entrees, deserts, and beverages or plates and silverware.

Lastly, but possibly most importantly, inform people that they must look around their homes before coming to observe where there are spaces next two windows, missing weather stripping, or un-insulated piping. **Encourage them to take photos of these areas and to bring the photos to the party.**

4. Get a yard sign from CEF for the party: For the day of the party (and there after) get a CEF Work Party sign for the yard or side-walk to let people know they are in the right place and help indicate that this is an important and fun event! (CEF is working to make these signs available. Inquire about them at the time of your party planning.)
5. Send a reminder email: 3-7 days before the event send out a reminder email if possible, reminding people of the date, time, and location, as well as the food item they have committed to bring, cash or check to purchase materials, and to spend at least 15 minutes inspecting their home before coming so they know what materials to buy from CEF.
6. Have the party and have fun!: Arrange to have the CEF staff arrive 15-30 minutes early to help organize the host site, and prep supplies and tools. The CEF person will also set out a cooperative membership sign-up station for those interested in joining the cooperative for the one time fee of \$25.

