



Nicor Gas Evaluation Plans – 2026-2029 Compendium

Energy Efficiency Plan

Program Year 2026

Prepared for:

Nicor Gas

FINAL

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1 Introduction

This document presents evaluation, measurement, and verification (EM&V) plans for evaluating Nicor Gas energy efficiency programs in 2026 through 2029, which is Energy Efficiency Plan (EEP) 2026-2029 (Plan 5). The next sections include an overview of evaluation approaches and a proposed high-level schedule for program year evaluation tasks. The Appendix includes program-level evaluation plans.

When developing and implementing this plan, Guidehouse will coordinate with and/or seek input from other Illinois utilities (ComEd, Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas, Ameren Illinois) and their evaluators, the SAG, ICC staff, and the TRM administrator:

- When planning evaluation research and survey activities
- When conducting evaluation research where collaboration to achieve broader coverage and larger sample sizes may improve the research results

This portfolio EM&V plan will be updated annually to reflect updated research priorities. Specifically, Guidehouse will submit proposed updates to the portfolio EM&V plan annually by December 15. This updated draft evaluation plan shall be submitted to Program Administrators, the SAG Facilitator, and ICC Staff concurrently for review and comment, including a summary outline of actual evaluation activities that have occurred already, as well as tentatively planned and proposed evaluation activities for the four-year portfolio EM&V plan.

2 Core Evaluation Tasks

The next sections present an overview of the core evaluation tasks with summary tables. The Appendix provides detailed, program-level evaluation plans. The core evaluation tasks are:

- Impact Evaluation
- NTG Research and Framework Application
- Market Transformation Evaluation
- Portfolio Research
- Evaluation Portfolio Support and Reporting

2.1 Impact Evaluation

The primary goal of impact evaluation is to verify the gross and net savings claimed by Nicor Gas to be applied toward statutory goals. The effort has secondary goals of improving the accuracy of ex ante impact estimates, improving the accuracy and relevance of the TRM, improving the accuracy and usefulness of the program tracking systems, and verifying the number of customers served.

2.1.1 Guiding Principles

- Verify the gross and net savings to be applied toward statutory goals for all programs each Nicor Gas program year. Use gross savings calculated from the Illinois Technical Reference Manual (TRM) or custom impact evaluation research and calculate net savings by applying the Illinois Energy Efficiency Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) deemed net-to-gross (NTG) value. When programs are delivered jointly with electric utilities, calculate verified gross natural gas savings without interactive effects from the reduction of electricity usage.
- Where practical, conduct impact evaluations and measure research using randomized controlled trials (RCT) or quasi-experimental design (QED) and energy consumption data. When Guidehouse believes that RCTs or QEDs are not practical, as part of its evaluation plan, we will provide an explanation and support for its decision.
- Coordinate impact evaluation of jointly delivered programs with the ComEd evaluation team to reduce duplication of work, customer disruption, and evaluation spending.
- Conduct technical reviews and gather Illinois-specific data to update the TRM and recommend updated verification approaches for applicable measures.

2.1.2 Approach

The impact analysis of a program portfolio will typically include the following components:

- **Program Tracking Data Review.** Verify the type of measures installed and the quantities claimed, and the number of unique customers served, for accuracy as reported in the program tracking database and supplemental data provided by implementation contractors.
- **Savings Verification for TRM-Based Measures.** For TRM-based measures, Guidehouse will verify ex ante gross measure savings against the allowable input values and algorithms provided in the relevant ICC-approved version of the TRM.
- **Savings Verification for Custom Measures.** For non-TRM “custom” measures, Guidehouse will conduct evaluation research to verify gross impacts. For each project selected for the participant research sample, an in-depth application review is performed to assess the engineering methods, parameters and assumptions used to generate all ex ante impact estimates. For each measure in the sampled project, engineers estimate verified gross savings based on their review of documentation and engineering analysis. Validation of savings through gas consumption (billing) data analysis may be used in combination with the engineering review for individual sites. Site-specific data will be collected for a subset of sampled projects, either through telephone interviews with site contacts, or an onsite visit that follows required safety protocols. For most projects, onsite data collection includes interviews that are completed at the time of the onsite visit, visual inspection of the systems and equipment, recording EMS settings, and collecting energy management system (EMS) trend data or production records when available and necessary. To support this review, Guidehouse requests project documentation in electronic format for each sampled project.

- **Gross Realization Rates.** The evaluation team will calculate gross savings realization rates to adjust ex ante savings based on verified gross savings estimates. The realization rate is defined as the percentage of ex ante gross savings achieved as determined through the independent evaluation review. A realization rate of 1.0, or 100%, indicates no difference between the ex ante gross and verified gross savings for a particular measure. For 2026, the evaluation team will consider applying the 2025 realization rates to reported savings for programs that have a history of measures or overall program with realization rates near 100%. In such instances, the evaluation team will confirm the program tracking data is consistent with the previous year and calculate verified net savings by applying the previous year’s realization rate to the program tracking data review results. If the program tracking data is inconsistent (for example, due to a substantial savings calculation change or new measure added to the program), the evaluation team may adjust the plan to re-evaluate the identified discrepancy (at the measure, end use, or program level, as appropriate, based on the program and portfolio savings impact).
- **Parallel Path / Large Project Review.** Guidehouse will conduct project file reviews that fall under a “Parallel Path” designation. These are projects that the implementation contractor has identified early in the project application cycle that may pose a risk to realization of verified gross impacts, either due to the size of the project, the complex technical nature, or difficulty in baseline determination. As budget allows, Guidehouse conducts a review of project documentation and energy saving estimates and prepares a brief response that identifies further questions or revisions to the gross savings estimates. The findings are discussed with the implementation contractor, who then adopts the findings going forward or proceeds as originally intended with a better knowledge of evaluation risk for the project.
- **Impact Sampling.** For custom measures, impact-related sampling will be designed to achieve a 90%/±10% level of confidence and precision at the program level and may also include selected high priority measures at the 90/10 level. Savings verification of TRM-based measures is performed on a census of claimed installations (not sampled).
- **Consumption Data (Billing) Analysis with Statistical Validation Check.** A standard regression approach for estimating program natural gas energy savings is a preferred method for the evaluation of the energy use impacts of certain programs and measures. Guidehouse will perform billing analysis to evaluate programs, projects, and measures when appropriate. Where practical, program evaluations will be conducted using RCTs or QEDs. When Guidehouse believes that RCTs or QEDs are not practical, we will provide an explanation and support for this decision as part of the program’s evaluation plan.
- **Net Savings Verification.** The net savings impact evaluation for each measure will apply the net-to-gross (NTG) ratio deemed through the Illinois SAG consensus process.
- **Jointly Implemented or Coordinated Programs.** Evaluations of joint or coordinated programs will be designed to meet the needs of Nicor Gas and ComEd, as well as other Illinois utilities, when appropriate. When programs are delivered jointly with electric utilities, Guidehouse calculates verified gross natural gas savings without applying an interactive effects penalty from the reduction of electricity usage.

2.1.3 Deliverables and Timing

- **Interim Impact Evaluation.** Where necessary, Guidehouse will conduct mid-year impact evaluation for some programs if data are available prior to the end of year. Programs that have a history of measures or overall program with realization rates near 100% may not receive interim impact review.¹ For programs with TRM-based measures, Guidehouse will conduct an interim review of per-unit savings from tracking data during the third quarter (results by September 16 if data is available by July 5). For programs with non-TRM custom measures, Guidehouse will draw savings verification samples one to three times during the program-year, depending on the number of completed projects, with the first sample drawn about July 1. Guidehouse will review implementer developed ex ante savings calculations if requested or when a new delivery channel is added to the portfolio. Guidehouse will conduct annual adjustable savings goal review in December (if available) and January, checking for correct adoption of updated TRM algorithms and inputs before Nicor Gas files the information with the ICC.
- **End of Year Impact Evaluation.** Final program year impact evaluation will take place after the program-year ends when we receive final tracking data, expected by January 30. The target delivery for draft joint reports is March 15, with all joint reports final by April 30. For Nicor Gas only programs, best efforts will be made to deliver a draft report by March 15 and a final report by April 30. However, this schedule is dependent on delivery of final tracking data by January 30 of each year and adherence to review schedules. For Nicor Gas only programs with only TRM-based measures, we expect draft delivery not later than April 15, with final reports by June 3. For programs with custom measures, we expect draft delivery not later than May 6, with final reports by June 24. We expect billing usage analyses will occur after the end of the program year when final billing data is available (which may be several weeks after January 30) and may include multiple program years to accommodate a full heating season.
- **End of Year Summary Report, Cost Effectiveness, and Economic Impacts.** Work on the annual summary report and cost-effectiveness spreadsheet reports will begin May 1, with draft results available thirty days after all annual impact evaluation reports are final and receiving final program cost data from Nicor Gas. Assuming all final reports and cost data are received by July 15, the first draft of the Cost Effectiveness test and Job and Macroeconomic Impact Reporting will be delivered August 31 and the final report by October 30, or best efforts.
- **IQ Reporting Metrics.** Data collection and evaluation of the Income Qualified Multi-Family⁴ and Single-Family Equity and Affordability⁵ Reporting Metrics will begin during the end of year impact evaluation and report will be delivered by June 30. Guidehouse will provide monthly reporting of Tier 2 direct spend to support Nicor Gas' Diverse Contracting (Tier 2 Suppliers) reporting to the ICC.

Table 2-1 and Table 2-2 summarize the impact evaluation approach by program and market offering.

¹ If a program has completed an interim impact review and measures or program realization rates are consistent with historic values, the evaluation may use the interim realization rates for the end of year evaluation.

Table 2-1. Income Qualified and Residential Programs Impact Evaluation Approach for 2026

Program/Market Offering	Gross Impact Evaluation Approach	Custom Project Parallel Path Review	Interim Review Type
Income Qualified Programs			
Single Family Weatherization			
IHWAP*, Retrofits*, and Healthy Home	TRM	--	TRMs
Energy Efficiency Offering (EEO)	TRM	--	TRMs
Multi-Family Weatherization			
IHWAP*, Retrofits*, and Healthy Home	TRM	If Requested	TRMs
Public Housing Authority*†	2025 RR	If Requested	TRMs
Affordable Housing New Construction†	Custom	If Requested	--
Energy Saving Kits*‡	2025 RR	--	TRMs
Home Energy Assessment*	TRM	--	TRMs
Residential Programs			
Outreach			
Energy Education Kits*‡	2025 RR	--	TRMs
Energy-Saving Kits‡	2025 RR	--	TRMs
Home Energy Reports	RCT Pop. Consumption Data Analysis	--	--
Home Energy Savings			
Self-Assessment Program	TRM	--	TRMs
Air Sealing & Insulation	TRM	--	TRMs
Air Sealing & Insulation Inflation Reduction Act	TRM	--	TRMs
Home Energy Efficiency Rebates			
Space & Water Heating Rebates	TRM	--	TRMs
Smart Thermostats†	TRM	--	TRMs
Ducted Heat Pump (DFHP)	TRM	--	TRMs
Market Transformation Initiatives	TRM & Custom	--	TRM & Custom§
Smart Neighborhood Builder	TRM	--	TRMs
Multi-Family Program			
Assessments and DI	TRM	--	TRMs
Prescriptive	TRM	--	TRMs
Custom	Custom	If Requested	Q3, Q4 Samples
Air Sealing & Insulation	TRM	--	TRMs
Central Plant Optimization	TRM	--	TRMs

Source: Guidehouse.

* Jointly implemented with ComEd

† Coordinated with ComEd

‡ Programs where evaluation may use previous year's realization rate.

§ Interim review will be conducted only if our review of the tracking database finds substantial changes from 2025.

Table 2-2. Business and Public Sector Programs Impact Evaluation Approach for 2026

Program/Market Offering	Gross Impact Evaluation Approach	Custom Project Parallel Path Review	Interim Review Type
Business and Public Sector Programs			
Business Energy Efficiency Rebates			
Assessment and DI	TRM	--	TRM‡
Prescriptive Rebates	TRM	--	TRM‡
Business Optimization	TRM	--	TRM‡
Commercial Food Service*	TRM	--	TRM‡
Business New Construction†	Custom	--	Q3 Sample
Business Custom Rebates			
Custom Incentives	Custom	If Requested	Q3, Q4 Samples
Combined Heat and Power	Custom	If Requested	--
Stand-Alone Retro-Commissioning	Custom	If Requested	Q3, Q4 Samples
Coordinated Retro-Commissioning†	Custom	--	Quarterly Sample
Small Business†			
Assessments and DI	TRM	--	TRM‡
Rebates: Prescriptive	TRM	--	TRM‡
Rebates: Custom	Custom	--	Q3, Q4 Samples
Strategic Energy Management	Custom	If Requested	--
Building Operator Certification†	TRM	--	--

Source: Guidehouse.

* Jointly implemented with ComEd

† Coordinated with ComEd

‡ Interim review will be conducted only if our review of the tracking database finds substantial changes from 2025.

2.2 NTG Research and Framework Application

The primary goal of the NTG research is to estimate the change in energy consumption that is attributable to a particular energy efficiency program or to the combined influence of the energy efficiency portfolio. The net savings analysis requires the evaluator to assess the influence of Nicor Gas programs versus other factors on the customer’s decision to install energy efficiency measures, either through the programs or outside of these. This change in energy use may include consideration of factors such as free-ridership, participant and non-participant spillover, and induced market effects. The NTG research efforts have secondary goals of identifying strategies for improving net savings and gathering additional feedback from participants to improve the program.

2.2.1 Guiding Principles

1. Estimate the NTG ratio for each program, including adjustments for free-ridership and spillover, to support annual prospective deeming of NTG ratios consistent with the Illinois NTG Policy.

- Conduct NTG research at least once during the four-year program cycle for each program following the NTG protocols in the TRM and when the program or market changes substantially. Some programs do not require primary NTG research when NTG values are deemed by consensus without primary research.
2. Where budget and schedule can accommodate, target a larger number of completions for NTG surveys than the minimum required for a 90%+/-10% level of confidence and precision program-level result.
 3. Wherever possible, consider performing free-ridership research online in real time (soon after the participant decision is made), following TRM protocols, and collect spillover information after participants have had ample opportunity to take additional actions.
 4. A sector- or Portfolio-level Spillover analysis should be considered by each utility at least once every Plan period when it is feasible and considered viable by evaluation.²

2.2.2 Approach

Evaluation efforts will measure net savings considering free ridership and participant spillover in all programs (except those where consensus values are deemed statewide without further research), and, where supported by the program delivery model, non-participant spillover and market transformation effects. The NTG surveys may include process questions as an optional research task, decided on a case-by-case basis in consultation with Nicor Gas.

The NTG analysis will apply, follow, and incorporate the Illinois Statewide NTG Methodologies Framework (NTG Framework or Framework) agreed to among the Illinois SAG participants, approved by the Illinois Commerce Commission, and documented in the effective Illinois TRM Version and any subsequent updates to the Illinois NTG Methodologies Framework. Guidehouse will use project data to determine eligibility for a NTG of 1.0 based on the Disadvantaged Areas NTG policy; eligible projects will be excluded from NTG analysis.

Guidehouse expects that most NTG research can be conducted through online surveys, supplemented by telephone interviews in some studies. Using program communications or using tracking data with participants' email addresses, telephone numbers, and mailing addresses, we will conduct research on participant free ridership through a survey via online (preferred) and/or telephone (if needed). The surveys will target customers and include trade allies if they are important to the program delivery approach. If the program supports it and Nicor Gas is willing, we will survey participants who submit their program applications online with a click through the application confirmation page to take the survey. Otherwise, shortly after completing their project, participants with email addresses will receive an email invitation to the online survey. Participants without email addresses may be solicited through the postal service to take an online survey or will be sampled for a telephone survey if they are a significant proportion of the population.

² Illinois Energy Efficiency Policy Manual Version 3.1, Section 7.5, Free Ridership and Spillover.

Spillover surveys may be conducted online or through a telephone interview, but timing must allow ample time for spillover actions to take place, usually 12 to 18 months after project completion. Guidehouse will target participating customers for participant spillover research and, if indicated by the program theory, the trade ally perspective on participant and non-participant spillover. Non-participating customers are the target for sector-level non-participant spillover.

2.2.3 Deliverables and Timing

Deliverables include:

- Draft and final survey research instruments
- Non-confidential data from survey respondents, upon request
- Draft and final NTG research findings memos
- NTG recommendations for SAG consensus

The timing for NTG research is driven by an Illinois energy efficiency policy requirement for the evaluators to send initial NTG recommendations to the SAG for the upcoming program year by September 1.

- **November 17 to February 27:** Initiate NTG research with interviews with program staff on program design, delivery, and marketing and customer targets to inform survey development. Produce a draft survey instrument during this period to allow Nicor Gas 15 days for initial review, revise, and reach a final version by February 27.
- **February 27 to May 30:** Prepare survey for fielding and launch. For spillover and trade ally surveys, field data collection occurs one or more months online or by telephone. The survey ends when sample quotas are reached. For some free ridership surveys, data will be collected throughout the year, pausing when quarterly quota are achieved.
- **May 30 to July 31:** Analyze NTG data and report results. When NTG research is conducted on a program, the results will be summarized in a memo that is delivered in draft not later than July 31.
- **July 31 to August 31:** Finalize all NTG research memos.
- **September 1:** Evaluators send initial NTG recommendations to the SAG, as required by Illinois Policy.
- **September 1 to September 30:** Evaluators present initial recommended NTG ratios for each energy efficiency program, subprogram, and/or measure group (where applicable) to the SAG, intended to represent the best estimates of future actual NTG values likely to occur for the upcoming program year. SAG participants, Nicor Gas, and Guidehouse will make best efforts to reach consensus by October 1 regarding NTG ratios appropriate for deeming for the upcoming program year.

- **October 1:** Final consensus NTG ratios for deeming for the upcoming program year beginning January 1.
- **January 1:** New consensus NTG ratios in effect.

Table 2-3 and Table 2-4 summarize the NTG research approach and timing by program and market offering.

Table 2-3. Residential NTG Research Approach and Timing

Residential Program / Market Offering	Previous NTG Research	Free Ridership Approach	Spillover Approach	Reporting Year	New NTG Effective
Sector-Level NPSO	2022	-	Online	2026	2027
Energy Education & Outreach					
Energy Education Kits	--	Deemed	Deemed	--	--
Energy Saving Kits	2025 Secondary	Online / Real-Time Post-Participation	Online	2026	2028
Home Energy Reports	--	RCT	RCT	--	--
Home Energy Savings					
Assessments and DI, Advanced Thermostats, Weatherization Rebates	2025	Online / Real-Time Post-Participation	Online	2027	2028
Home Energy Efficiency Rebates					
Space & Water Heating Rebates, Advanced Thermostats	2025	Online / Real-Time Post-Participation	Online	2029	2030
Smart Neighborhood Builder	2025 Secondary	Online + Telephone	Online + Telephone	2029	2030
Multi-Family Program¹					
Assessments and DI, Prescriptive and Custom Rebates, Central Plant Optimization	2025	Online + Telephone	Online + Telephone	2026; 2027	2028

Source: Guidehouse.

¹Multi-Family Program data collection is slated for 2026 and 2027; reporting activities will commence in 2027, incorporating findings from both years.

Table 2-4. Business and Public Sector NTG Research Approach and Timing

Business and Public Sector Program / Market Offering	Previous NTG Research	Free Ridership Approach	Spillover Approach	Reporting Year	New NTG Effective
Sector-Level NPSO¹	2023	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Business Energy Efficiency Rebates					
Assessment and DI, Rebates, Business Optimization	2025	Online + Telephone/ Real-Time Post-Participation	Online + Telephone	2028	2029
Commercial Food Service ²	2025 TRM Default	Online + Telephone / Real-Time Post-Participation	Online + Telephone	2028	2029
Commercial and Industrial New Construction	2025	Online + Telephone/ Real-Time Post-Participation	Telephone	2029	2030
Business Custom					
Custom Rebates ³	2025	Online + Telephone/ Real-Time Post-Participation	Online + Telephone	2027	2028
Combined Heat and Power	Project Specific	Online + Telephone	Telephone	As Needed	-
Coordinated Retro-Commissioning ³	2025	Online + Telephone	Online + Telephone	2027	2028
Stand-Alone Retro-Commissioning	2021	Online + Telephone	Telephone	2028	2029
Small Business⁴					
Assessments and DI, Prescriptive and Custom Rebates	2025	Online + Telephone/ Real-Time Post-Participation	Online + Telephone	2028	2029

Source: Guidehouse.

¹ Given the absence of sector-level non-participant spillover found by all previous studies, Guidehouse does not recommend this research.

² Commercial Food Service NTG research will be conducted jointly statewide.

³ Custom Rebates and Coordinated Retro-Commissioning data collection is slated for 2026 and 2027; reporting activities will commence in 2027, incorporating findings from both years.

⁴ Small Business data collection is slated for 2027 and 2028; reporting activities will commence in 2028, incorporating findings from both years.

Table 2-5 provides the NTG survey schedule by quarter-year.

Table 2-5. NTG Research Schedule by Quarter-Year

Program (s)	Target/Measures	Research	2025	2026				2027				2028				2029				2030
			Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
Residential Sector	--	NPSO																		
Energy Saving Kits	Weatherization Kit	FR, PSO																		
Home Energy Savings	All Measures	FR, PSO, TA																		
Home Energy Efficiency Rebates	All Measures	FR, PSO, TA																		
Smart Neighborhood Builder	All Measures	FR, PSO																		
Multi-Family	All Measures	FR, PSO, TA																		
Business Energy Efficiency Rebates	All Measures	FR, PSO, TA																		
Business Energy Efficiency Rebates	Commercial Food Service	FR, PSO, TA																		
C&I New Construction	All C&I and Public Sector	FR, PSO																		
Business Custom	All Measures	FR, PSO																		
Coordinated RCx	All C&I and Public Sector	FR, PSO, TA																		
Small Business	All Measures	FR, PSO, TA																		

Net-to-Gross Key FR= Free ridership PSO = Participant Spillover NPSO=Non-Participant Spillover TA = Trade Allies	Survey Design/Sample Prep	
	Fielding	
	NTG Analysis and Reporting	
	Year NTG Effective	EFF

2.3 Market Transformation Evaluation

2.3.1 Guiding Principles

Market transformation (MT) programs will be more prominent in Plan 5. Guidehouse will optionally support MT efforts with three types of activities: 1) provide advice and insight to support Nicor Gas’ activities to develop, deliver, and improve each MT initiative, 2) apply theory-based evaluation to estimate savings attributable to the MT initiative, and 3) execute annual evaluation plan and assign attribution of savings.

- Advise:** Guidehouse may advise Nicor Gas and its implementation partners as elements of the market transformation initiative are established following protocols in the TRM, including Logic Model (LM), Market Progress Indicators (MPIs), Energy Savings Framework (ESF), Natural Market Baseline (NMB), MT savings work papers, and methodologies for savings attribution in relation to the Natural Market Baseline. As part of the annual evaluation planning process, Guidehouse may work with Nicor Gas to identify research that could be conducted to improve MT Initiative performance during implementation.
 - Prepare or Verify:** Savings measurement for the Market Transformation evaluation will follow the IL Statewide TRM – Volume 4: Cross-Cutting Measures and Attachments, Attachment C:

Framework for Counting Market Transformation Savings in Illinois.³ The TRM protocols provide the framework for measuring interim and long-term indicators of market progress and structural changes, attribution to the program, and cumulative energy impacts. Guidehouse will participate in the SAG MT Working group, communicating methodologies to the Working Group and documenting refinements in the TRM. This may include developing and verifying a NMB, Energy Savings Framework and Market Progress Indicators. Structured expert judgement may be used to gauge the effectiveness of and inform the evaluation of MT activities.

2. **Evaluate:** Perform annual review of savings calculator, work paper and market transformation program tracking data. Evaluate available data and collect additional data including surveys to support the review of Market Progress Indicators. Assign attribution of savings if standards of evidence are achieved. Additional activities may be assigned to the annual evaluation plan including reviews of the Natural Market Baseline and execution of the structured expert judgement panel.

2.3.2 Approach

Guidehouse may execute up to three activities to support the future evaluation of new active MTIs:

1. Collection of Baseline Data
2. Review of Natural Market Baseline
3. Market Progress Evaluation Report

Collection of Baseline Data

Evaluation of MT programs is based on a preponderance of evidence standard which requires a baseline understanding of market conditions prior to utility or implementer activities. Illinois TRM Attachment C provides the following guidance regarding attribution and evaluation of MT initiatives:

Because the unit of analysis is an entire market not a single transaction, MT evaluations tend to require numerous pieces of evidence that 1) change is occurring; and 2) the program is influential in that change. A preponderance of evidence approach, rather than proof, is most often required.⁴

Guidehouse will collect baseline data to support future evaluation of the MPis for active MT initiatives as outlined in the associated Theory-Based Evaluation Plans.

Review of Natural Market Baseline

The evaluation of each MT program will estimate the savings from the sales attributable to the initiative above the natural market baseline (NMB), as provided by Nicor Gas or its Program Implementer.

³ https://www.ilsag.info/wp-content/uploads/IL-TRM_Effective_010124_v12.0_Vol_4_X-Cutting_Measures_and_Attach_09222023_FINAL.pdf

⁴ IL TRM v14 (https://www.ilsag.info/wp-content/uploads/IL-TRM_Effective_010126_v14.0_Vol_4_X-Cutting_Measures_and_Attach_0919025_FINAL.pdf)

Guidehouse and Nicor Gas will use best available data to determine if any adjustments need to be made to the natural market baseline as a prospective update, including any external factors that could adjust the baseline forecast. While some external factors may be difficult to quantify, Guidehouse will consider directional impacts (whether likely to increase or decrease expected natural market baseline shares) and reasonable magnitude of changes. All assumptions will be clearly documented, as well as the strengths and limitations of the available evidence. Additionally, any gaps or limitations identified in the available data will be noted with possible remedies for future evaluation years.

While Nicor Gas and the MT program implementer are responsible for any subsequent updates to the NMB and Energy Savings Framework, the NMB review may be initiated and supported by any or all parties. Guidehouse will review available data sources to ensure models are consistently assigned to the appropriate ENERGY STAR regional categories to estimate baseline market shares for the respective MT initiative. Guidehouse will also implement data cleaning methodology to ensure that models are treated the same in historical and current program data.

In addition to the initial review of NMB, Guidehouse may review active NMBs in future years. NMB reviews will be conducted in response to key circumstances where it may be appropriate to update the initial Natural Market Baseline forecast, as identified in the IL TRM v14.0.

Market Progress Evaluation Report

Guidehouse will prepare a Market Progress Evaluation Report (MPER) beginning in CY2026 for each active MT initiative. The MPER will include components of impact and process evaluation, market research, and planning and market assessments to document progress and market change over the initiative's life cycle. The inclusion of the above components and their relative depth will evolve as the initiative and the relative market become more established.

Table 2-6 summarizes the active market transformation efforts in Illinois and the evaluation activities. The specific initiatives currently in discussion statewide include:

Table 2-6. Current Illinois Market Transformation Status and Evaluation Activities

Market Transformation Activity	Stretch Energy Codes	Building Performance Standards	High Performance Windows	Residential Gas Heat Pumps (HVAC)	Commercial Gas Heat Pumps (HVAC)	Efficient Rooftop Units
MTI Measure Development						
Concept Development	Advise	Advise	Complete	Advise	Advise	Complete
Strategy Development	Advise	Advise	Complete	Advise	Advise	Complete
Savings Protocol	Verify	Verify	Complete	Verify	Verify	Complete
Logic Model	Advise	Advise	Complete	Advise	Advise	Complete
Market Progress Indicators	Verify	Verify	Complete	Verify	Verify	Complete
Natural Market Baseline	Verify	Verify	Complete	Verify	Verify	Complete
Energy Savings Framework	Verify	Verify	Complete	Verify	Verify	Verify
Active Measure Evaluation						
Program Review	-	Conduct	Conduct	-	-	-
Data Collection	-	Conduct	Conduct	-	-	Conduct

*Note: Gas Heat Pump Water Heaters measure has been paused. See Appendix for details.
Source: Guidehouse.*

Evaluation research plans for specific MT initiatives are provided in the Appendix.

2.3.3 Deliverables and Timing

Deliverables

For MT initiatives still under development:

- Optional advisement on concept, strategy, and savings protocol development
- Documented review of Logic Model, Natural Market Baseline, Energy Savings Framework, and Market Progress Indicators for each MT initiative
- Theory-based Evaluation Plan

For active MTIs under evaluation:

- Comprehensive Annual Evaluation Memo which covers all active and proposed MT initiatives
- Market Progress Evaluation Report (MPER) for each active MT initiative

- Expert Judgement Panel Memo
- Documented review of Natural Baseline Review effort

Timing

The timing for MT initiative research is designed to align with the annual evaluation cycle, with draft MPERs to be delivered by no later than June 30 of each evaluation year. Additional activities such as structured expert judgement panels and natural market baseline reviews will take place in Q3, and findings will be incorporated into updates and planning for MT programs in Q4.

2.4 Portfolio Research

Guidehouse conducts additional research above and beyond annual impact and process NTG evaluation activities as requested, keeping budget priorities in consideration. Guidehouse will work with Nicor Gas and other Illinois parties to identify the programs and measures that could most benefit from these supplemental research activities, being mindful of overall budget availability. Additional research may be requested as needed and considered as a part of the annual evaluation planning process. Guidehouse will leverage research opportunities through jointly funded studies with ComEd, PGL and NSG, and Ameren Illinois when possible.

Guidehouse will work with Nicor Gas to identify research priorities and document these in the annual evaluation plans. Areas for portfolio research include:

- Support for TRM Updates
- Process Evaluation Research
- Other Cross-Cutting Research

2.4.1 Guiding Principles

1. There are limited evaluation resources and Guidehouse will work with Nicor Gas to identify priorities and document these in the annual evaluation plans. Activities will focus first on programs that have not been evaluated, have been significantly modified, provide the most savings, or have activities that were not fully evaluated in an earlier round of evaluations.
2. Gather participant data, perform analysis, and produce recommendations to help improve the functioning and effectiveness of Nicor Gas programs.
3. Within budget constraints, collaborate with Peoples Gas, North Shore Gas, ComEd, and other Illinois utilities to identify, prioritize, and conduct research, including process evaluation of joint programs and studies of energy efficiency technologies, industry best practices, non-participant characteristics, market characterizations, or other topics of interest.
4. When available to evaluators and appropriate, use gas consumption data when analyzing impacts and customer usage patterns.

2.4.2 Support for TRM Updates

Activities

The evaluation team will provide support to improve the TRM by participating in the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings and update process. Guidehouse will work with Nicor Gas to identify priorities and research needs for new measures or updates.

Activities may include reviewing TRM draft versions; developing workpapers for new measures or to update existing measures; and analyzing data from completed evaluation activities to support new measures or update TRM assumptions. Guidehouse will provide technical review for workpapers developed by Nicor Gas and its implementation contractors if requested.

Deliverables

- When identified, submit TRM update or new measure requests to the TRM Administrator
- If a TRM new measure or update request is accepted, produce the corresponding TRM update workpaper

Timing

The TRM is updated annually based on input from Program Administrators, evaluators, and other interested stakeholders through a consensus-based decision-making process. The following TRM schedule will be followed, unless changes are accepted by the TRM TAC:

- **February 26:** Submit TRM update requests to the TRM administrator.
- **April 1:** TRM TAC informs Program Administrators, evaluators, and SAG which measures are high or medium priority measures, for which work papers need to be prepared.
- **May 15:** Proposed updates to existing measure work papers to clarify terms or approaches, as well as proposed work papers for new measures, are submitted to the TRM Administrator.
- **May 15 – September 24:** Ongoing TAC meetings and review/comment on submitted workpapers to reach consensus on TRM updates.
- **October 1:** Final TRM values effective January 1 for the following program year.
- **October/November:** Discussions on evaluation priorities for TRM updates.

2.4.3 Process Evaluation Research

Activities

We will work closely with Nicor Gas to select programs, measures and issues that would benefit most from process evaluation. The procedure for selecting process evaluation work will be informed by the latest information on program performance, market status, joint-program collaboration opportunities, budget, and Nicor Gas priorities. We will develop study-specific plans, conduct the evaluation, and deliver insights and recommendations in time for Nicor Gas to incorporate these into the next program year. We will work with Nicor Gas throughout the year to identify emerging issues that could be illuminated by new research (not anticipated in the evaluation plan process) and schedule and implement that research (budget allowing). As appropriate, Guidehouse will coordinate process activities across programs and across utilities for joint programs to address the whole of Nicor Gas approach to the market.

The process evaluation for each program, when conducted, will include in-depth qualitative interviews with Program Administration staff and Program Implementers. These interviews will be used to develop a complete understanding of the final design, procedures, and implementation strategies for each program. Through these interviews, available program materials, including marketing and outreach materials, such as web-based promotional content, point of purchase (POP) materials, print and radio advertising copy, and any cooperative marketing materials developed, will be collected.

While the process evaluation methods for each individual program will vary depending on the program's needs and stage of development, key tasks in conducting process evaluations using interview techniques and documentation review include:

- Specify research questions and objectives.
- Select appropriate research method.
- Develop interview and/or online survey guides as needed.
- Identify appropriate parties to interview or survey. Frequently, the evaluation will include in-depth qualitative interviews with those directly involved in each program, including program managers and implementation contractors, and conduct interviews or online surveys with participating trade allies and participating customers.
- Conduct interviews or online surveys and other research data collection tasks.
- Analyze other program data (including tracking database)
- Analysis and reporting of findings and recommendations.

Depending upon the circumstances, Guidehouse will use either a survey house to conduct structured surveys, online survey tools, or senior staff members to complete interviews. Process evaluation surveys will be conducted concurrently with NTG surveys, when appropriate, to minimize the burden on

the customer and/or trade ally. Process evaluation findings and recommendations will be summarized in a report separate from the impact and NTG evaluation reports.

Deliverables

- Presentation of process evaluation research findings and recommendations, in PowerPoint presentation.

Timing

- A schedule will be established for each process evaluation deliverable. To support Nicor Gas' annual planning process for program implementation, initial draft process findings and recommendations will be delivered prior to September 15.

2.4.4 Equity Metrics Reporting

In alignment with Policy Manual 3.0 mandates and Nicor Gas' strategic goals, Guidehouse will review IQ metrics and include them in annual impact evaluation reports. This task includes:

1. For the IQ Multi-Family metrics (Policy § 6.8), Guidehouse will report data in annual evaluation reports on the number of buildings and apartments receiving various measures. In addition, for shell and heat pump measures, reporting includes separate reporting on whether the measures are applicable (qualified project), and if a project is qualified but the measures were not installed, the reasons why. The annual evaluation reports will include the IQ Multi-Family reporting metrics spreadsheet populated with data. Within a given program year, the data will reflect cumulative year-to-date data.
2. For Equity and Affordability metrics (Policy § 6.10), Guidehouse will include the following reporting metrics in a spreadsheet format in annual evaluation reports, separately for each applicable EE program:
 - Total number of IQ single family whole building program participants.
 - Total number of IQ single family whole building program participants adopting air sealing.
 - Total number of IQ single family whole building program participants adopting insulation.
 - Total number of IQ single family whole building program participants with electric resistance heating adopting heat pumps.
 - Total number of IQ single family whole building program participants with fossil fuel heating adopting heat pumps.
 - Total number of IQ single family whole building program participants adopting heat pump water heaters.

- Total number of IQ single family whole building program participants with fossil fuel heating or hot water systems replaced with another fossil fuel system.
3. Guidehouse will support the Program Administrator in the data collection on diverse contracting (Tier 2 Suppliers) through reporting Tier 2 direct spend.

In addition to the semi-annual reporting metrics for Income Qualified Multi-Family (Policy § 6.8), Guidehouse will investigate the level and effectiveness, in both reducing barriers to participation and comprehensively addressing efficiency opportunities, offering one-stop-shopping services and jointly or in a coordinated fashion delivering the IQ MF programs. Utilities and interested stakeholders will work together with independent evaluators through the annual SAG evaluation plan process to determine the scope and timeframe for this evaluation.

2.4.5 Other Cross-Cutting Research

In addition to TRM support and process research, cross-cutting evaluation research includes initiatives that contribute toward energy savings and other portfolio goals, such as EUL and new measure research, Market Transformation Initiatives, NTG research, and NEI research. Evaluation research is coordinated statewide with the evaluators for ComEd, Ameren Illinois, and PGL and NSG and jointly funded and implemented when possible.

Table 2-7 summarizes proposed impact evaluation research. The evaluation team will revisit this list on an ongoing basis as, for example, the SAG releases new updates on TRM research priorities and the Nicor Gas portfolio measure mix shifts over time. This regular review will enable Guidehouse’s research to focus on the most important topics for the Companies’ evaluation and SAG stakeholders. Guidehouse will develop research plans as new needs arise and include those in the appendices.

Table 2-7. Portfolio Evaluation Research

Research Task	Description	Joint	2026	2027	2028	2029
Commercial Gas Heat Pumps (Savings Verification)	<i>Review IL TRM commercial gas heat pump measures to confirm savings assumptions and compliance with federal energy conservation standards. This includes evaluating performance data, baseline comparisons, and benchmarking against other jurisdictions to ensure consistency and alignment with TRM protocols for gas savings verification.</i>	Yes	✓	✓		
Water Heater Measure Costs (Verification)	<i>Review IL TRM Water Heater measure cost assumptions and update incremental costs for gas water heaters. Incorporate clarifications related to gas water heater specifications and installation requirements, ensuring alignment with market pricing, TRM protocols, and cost-effectiveness standards.</i>	Yes	✓	✓		

Research Task	Description	Joint	2026	2027	2028	2029
Spray Foam Gas Savings (Verification)	Conduct research on spray foam insulation/sealant measures sold through ComEd’s Retail/Online Program to inform and validate TRM assumptions for gas savings. This includes in-store and web survey data collection to update gross savings parameters, develop and refine net-to-gross (NTG) ratios, and assess product use cases and installation locations. The research will also inventory stocking practices at participating retailers, analyze sales data, and support workpaper development for TRM updates. Findings will ensure that TRM savings estimates accurately reflect real-world measure usage and market conditions.	Yes	✓			
Behavior Savings Persistence Adjustments	Update the secondary literature review in the TRM for measure 6.1.1 “Adjustments to Behavior Savings to Account for Persistence.” This literature review would feed into updates to the Electric and Gas persistence factors including the full duration of persistence (i.e., the measure EUL) and the shape of the multiyear persistence curve.	Yes		✓	✓	
Insulation in HDD for Conditioned vs Semi-Conditioned Spaces	Review and refine IL TRM insulation savings assumptions based on HDD and space classification. Define and standardize conditioned, unconditioned, and semi-conditioned spaces to ensure consistent application of modeling approaches and savings estimates. Validate these definitions and assumptions against other jurisdictions to support applicability across Res and C&I sectors.	Yes	✓			
Evaluation Research – Usage of AMI	Investigation into advanced meter infrastructure (AMI) data to assist programs such as custom, SEM and Home Energy reports. AMI enables more accurate and timely verification of program impacts, development of customer loadshapes, and improved profiling of participation patterns.	Yes	✓	✓		

Research Task	Description	Joint	2026	2027	2028	2029
Air Sealing and Insulation Measures Update	Update air sealing and insulation measures in the IL TRM using new consumption data analysis, leveraging AMI gas interval data. Utilities will provide granular AMI data and support secure data transfer for this research.	Yes	✓	✓		

Source: Guidehouse.

2.5 Evaluation Portfolio Support and Reporting

2.5.1 Annual Review of Nicor Gas’ Adjustable Savings Goals

Each year, Nicor Gas requests that Guidehouse, as its Independent Evaluator, verify the accuracy in the TRM calculations used to derive the measure savings that form the savings goals in the adjustable savings goal spreadsheet in advance of filing the completed adjustable savings goal spreadsheet.

Guidehouse will work with the Program Administrator to review the Adjustable Savings Goals Spreadsheet each year for 20262 through 20295. After our review, if we find instances of measures that do not accurately match the effective Illinois TRM Version, Guidehouse will recommend Nicor Gas make updates. Guidehouse will review a revised version of the Adjustable Savings Goals Spreadsheet provided by Nicor Gas to confirm it implemented the recommended measure updates correctly.

Deliverables

- Findings and recommendations from review of draft annual Adjustable Savings Goals templates for Nicor Gas.
- A verification memo certifying the completeness of the annual adjustable savings goals template in respect to the TRM. The memo will also summarize any TRM changes that would have impacted the current programs.

2.5.2 Ad-Hoc Evaluation Support Requests

Guidehouse will produce periodic ad-hoc memos and presentations to assist Nicor Gas and Program Implementer with guidance and program development assistance through the lens of the evaluation contractor perspective, when requested.

2.5.3 Cost-Effectiveness Review and Summary Reporting

Guidehouse will conduct a TRC cost-effectiveness analysis at the conclusion of the four-year program plan pursuant to Section 8-104(f)(8). Guidehouse will provide a brief annual portfolio summary report for each program year, 2026 through 2029, and will produce a final report summarizing the combined results for the four program years after the conclusion of 2029. The annual portfolio summary reporting will be presented in three spreadsheet documents, using templates recommended by the SAG,

accompanied by a memo describing Guidehouse’s approach and source of assumptions. The tables included are:

1. TRC and Program Administrator Cost Test (PACT) Cost-Effectiveness Results Tables
2. Verified Energy Savings and Program Cost Summary Tables
3. High-Impact Measures Tables

Results will include benefit-cost ratios as well as the net present value (NPV) of benefits, costs, and net benefits for the following scenarios:

- With and without non-energy impacts (NEIs), (if available at the time of evaluation), as well as,
- At the portfolio-level TRC, with and without income qualified programs.

The final summary for the four years will include the annual and four-year results in a standard report format. The annual and four-year cost-effectiveness report will include a separate joint-utility memo providing the gas and electric costs, benefits, and TRCs for the joint energy efficiency programs that the gas companies offer in conjunction with electric program administrators.

Guidehouse will summarize program tracking data to estimate the total number of customers participating in Nicor Gas’ programs. The approach will vary by program depending on the nature of the data as described below.

- When the program tracking data has an account number and those numbers generally correspond to single customers, the evaluation will use unique account numbers as a proxy for customer counts. We will calculate and aggregate unique customers for programs meeting these criteria, applying this method to most Residential and Business programs. Totals will be reported by program, sector, and for the entire portfolio.
- For programs targeting multifamily dwellings, sometimes buildings have a single account for the building and sometimes each dwelling unit has an account. When the program tracking data has a field with the number of dwelling units, we will use that as a proxy for customers and report it within the sector and portfolio number of customers. If the program tracking data does not have a field with the number of dwelling units (or it is not adequately populated), we will have no way to calculate the number of individual dwelling units and will only include the number of accounts in the sector and portfolio totals. This approach may undercount the actual number of customers.
- The program tracking data does not include account numbers for the programs shown in **Table 2-9**. Typically, these are midstream programs where the actual end user is not known. As a result, the evaluation cannot create customer counts for these programs. **Table 2-10** presents counts of measures installed for these programs.

The Summary Report will present the results in a table patterned after the following prototype.

Table 2-8. Number of Accounts Participating in Nicor Gas’ Programs

Program *	Number of Unique Accounts	Notes
Residential Program a	###	Number of unique accounts
Program b	###	Number of unique accounts
Program c (multifamily)	###	When the data includes the number of dwelling units then this count uses that number. For all other records it counts each unique account number. The evaluation cannot eliminate double-counting for dwelling units that do not have account numbers from the counts coming from other programs.
Residential Total	###	Number of unique accounts, not the sum of the program counts.
Business Program d	###	Number of unique accounts
Program e	###	Number of unique accounts
Program f	N/A	Customer account numbers are not available
Commercial Food Service	###	Account numbers are only available for a portion of the participants, so this understates the actual number.
Business Total	###	Number of unique accounts, not the sum of the program counts.
Portfolio Total	###	Number of unique accounts, not the sum of the program counts.

* The actual program names will be used instead of the placeholders used here.

The programs and program components that are NOT included in the table above are shown in the following table.

Table 2-9. Programs Where Customer Counts Are Not Available

Program	Notes
Residential Midstream Business	Customer account numbers are not available.
Midstream Market Transformation	Customer account numbers are not available.
Codes and Standards	This should be a point of discussion as the program develops.

Table 2-10. Measure Counts Where Customer Counts Are Not Available

Program *	End Use Type	Quantity Installed †
Residential		
Program a	<type>	###
Program a	<type>	###
Program b	<type>	
Program b	<type>	###
Business		
Program c	<type>	###
Program c	<type>	###
Program d	<type>	###
Program d	<type>	

* The actual program names will be used instead of the placeholders used here.

† The units represented by the quantity may vary within a given measure type.

Deliverables and Timing

- Assuming all final reports and cost data are received by July 15, the first draft of the annual portfolio impact savings and cost effectiveness will be delivered August 31, and the final report by October 30, or best efforts.
- A four-year summary report of portfolio summary impact savings and cost effectiveness reporting produced after the end of 2029.
- Annual and four-year joint-utility memo providing the gas and electricity costs, benefits, and TRCs for the joint energy efficiency programs.

2.5.4 Job and Macroeconomic Impact Reporting

Guidehouse will produce a draft and final report annually encompassing economic and employment impacts analysis for the Nicor Gas energy efficiency portfolio. This analysis will be alignment with the Illinois Energy Efficiency Policy Manual (the Policy Manual) requirement that each program administrator in Illinois must annually report estimates of the economic development and employment impacts of its energy efficiency programs. The reports may also include estimated impacts for individual Programs. Estimates will include direct, indirect, and induced effects on employment, industry output, and labor income.

Direct effects may include, but are not limited to, the initial changes in employment and demand for regional production triggered by the implementation and management of utility Energy Efficiency Programs. These effects include jobs managing and implementing Programs, Program Implementation Contractor incentives, participant rebates, and bill savings.

Indirect effects may include, but are not limited to, secondary impacts generated from business-to-business spending as firms and households directly impacted by the Energy Efficiency Programs increase purchases from their suppliers, who must in turn increase purchases from their suppliers and so forth as the initial expenditure ripples through interconnected industries. These effects include the impact of contractors purchasing equipment from distributors or manufacturers that is needed to implement programs.

Induced effects may include, but are not limited, to secondary impacts generated from household to business spending as labor income changes that result from both direct and indirect activity affect the local economy. This is the effect of additional household income resulting from jobs that are created.

Deliverables and Timing

- Assuming all final reports and cost data are received by July 15, the first draft of the annual Job and Macroeconomic Impact Reporting will be delivered August 31, and the final report by October 30, or best efforts.
- A four-year summary report of job and macroeconomic reporting produced after the end of 2029.

2.5.5 Quantifying and Monetizing Societal Non-Energy Benefits

Guidehouse will conduct an evaluation to quantify and monetize the societal Non-Energy Impacts (NEIs) associated with Nicor Gas' 2026-2029 energy efficiency portfolio.

Societal public health NEIs occur when energy efficiency programs reduce natural gas usage which reduces air pollution emissions, including particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen oxide (NO_x), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), ammonia (NH₃), Ozone (O₃), and carbon dioxide (CO₂). This reduction in emissions causes reduced adverse health impacts, which are monetizable. We will use U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) emissions factors for natural gas and CO–Benefits Risk Assessment (COBRA) Health Impacts Screening and Mapping Tool to quantify and monetize these health impacts. At a high level, Societal NEIs associated with a Nicor Gas energy efficiency program are represented by the total monetary value of illnesses and deaths avoided due to program-induced reduced emissions over 30 years, discounted to the year of implementation.

Deliverables and Timing

- Guidehouse will include annual societal NEIs in Nicor Gas' TRC values, reporting the TRCs with and without the societal NEIs.

2.6 Evaluation Budget

The evaluation budget for work represented in this evaluation plan is presented in Table 2-11.

Table 2-11. Evaluation Budget

EMV Service Year	Evaluation Description	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	Total
2026-2029	Evaluation Plan	\$66,208	\$49,044	\$50,569	\$52,094	\$0	\$0	\$217,915
2026-2029	Impact Evaluation	\$0	\$190,000	\$513,924	\$485,183	\$546,229	\$406,775	\$2,142,110
2026-2029	NTG Research	\$15,000	\$263,032	\$373,420	\$418,580	\$312,020	\$0	\$1,382,052
2026-2029	TRC & Jobs Reporting	\$0	\$0	\$66,073	\$68,018	\$70,133	\$136,640	\$340,864
2026-2029	Equity Metrics Reporting	\$0	\$23,430	\$47,550	\$48,990	\$50,490	\$25,620	\$196,080
2026-2029	Process Evaluation	\$0	\$75,922	\$62,078	\$64,008	\$0	\$0	\$202,007
2026-2029	TRM Support	\$0	\$19,779	\$40,141	\$41,357	\$42,623	\$21,628	\$165,530
2026-2029	Supplemental Research	\$0	\$78,100	\$80,400	\$49,740	\$48,849	\$0	\$257,089
2026-2029	Technical Support	\$0	\$23,430	\$47,550	\$48,990	\$50,490	\$25,620	\$196,080
2026-2029	Adjustable Goals Review	\$15,000	\$12,005	\$27,800	\$28,665	\$29,529	\$0	\$113,000
2026-2029	SAG/ICC Support	\$0	\$23,430	\$47,550	\$48,990	\$50,490	\$25,620	\$196,080
2026-2029	Project Management	\$30,000	\$115,384	\$156,885	\$162,048	\$142,943	\$43,134	\$650,393
2026-2029	Contingency	\$0	\$0	\$78,100	\$80,400	\$82,900	\$85,400	\$326,800
2026-2029	Expenses	\$0	\$37,500	\$37,500	\$37,500	\$37,500	\$0	\$150,000
	Total	\$126,208	\$911,056	\$1,629,540	\$1,634,563	\$1,464,196	\$770,437	\$6,536,000

Appendix A. Detailed Program Evaluation Plans

Guidehouse has developed program-specific plans to evaluate the entire portfolio of Nicor Gas energy efficiency programs. The following programs are covered in this plan:

- **Residential Programs**
 - Outreach
 - Home Energy Savings
 - Home Energy Efficiency Rebates
 - Smart Neighborhood Builder
 - Multi-family Program
- **Income Qualified Programs**
 - Single Family Weatherization
 - Multi-Family Weatherization
 - Public Housing Authority
 - Affordable Housing New Construction
 - Energy Saving Kits
 - Home Energy Assessment
- **Business and Public Sector Programs**
 - Business Energy Efficiency Rebates
 - Commercial and Industrial New Construction
 - Custom Rebates
 - Small Business
 - Strategic Energy Management
 - Building Operator Certification
- **Market Transformation Initiatives**
 - Active Measure Evaluation

3 Residential Programs

3.1.1 OUTREACH

The Outreach program’s objective is to increase residential customers’ understanding of energy usage in their homes and educate these customers on available energy efficiency opportunities. The program will include offerings that will be delivered jointly with electric utility partners for Energy Education Kits (EEK) and by Nicor Gas only for Energy-Saving Kits (ESK) and Home Energy Reports (HER).

- The EEK offering is designed to educate fifth grade students about using energy wisely. Each student will also receive an energy-saving kit, which may include natural gas and electricity-saving products, such as showerhead, aerators, shower timer, LED night light, digital thermometer, LED lamps, flow rate test bag, Mercaptan sticker, and plumber’s tape.
- Nicor Gas will continue distributing free ESKs during 2026-2029. There are two versions of ESKs, specifically 1) a water-saving kit and 2) a weatherization kit. The water-saving kit includes high-efficiency showerheads (1 or 2 per kit), a kitchen aerator, a shower timer, and bathroom aerators (1 or 2 per kit). The weatherization kit includes weatherstripping, rope caulk, light switch and outlet gaskets, and a door sweep.
- This behavior modification offering generates energy savings through residential customer engagement and behavioral change strategies. This offering will provide individualized energy use information through HERs tailored to customer usage and habits to drive changes in energy usage behavior. HERs may use historical energy use data, customer demographics, and other information to provide personalized, actionable tips to customers.

The evaluation of this program will include the activities shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Evaluation Activities

Market Offering	Category	Tasks	CY2026	CY2027	CY2028	CY2029
All	General	PM/IC Interview	X		X	
Elementary Education Kits	Impact	Interim Impact Analysis	X	X	X	X
Elementary Education Kits	Impact	Measure-Level Deemed Savings Review	X	X	X	X
Energy Saving Kits	Impact	Interim Impact Analysis	X	X	X	X
Energy Saving Kits	Impact	Measure-Level Deemed Savings Review	X	X	X	X
Energy Saving Kits	NTG	Online Free Ridership Research (except for faucet aerators and showerheads)	X			
Energy Saving Kits	NTG	Online Spillover Research	X			
Home Energy Report	Impact	Program Tracking Data Review	X	X	X	X
Home Energy Report	Impact	Population-level Consumption Data Analysis	X	X	X	X

Source: Guidehouse.

For NTG research “X” indicates reporting year.

3.1.2 HOME ENERGY SAVINGS

The Home Energy Savings (HES) program helps customers complete comprehensive retrofits in existing single-family buildings by providing financial, educational, and logistical support to overcome key market barriers. The program promotes energy assessments with installation of energy-saving measures as well as the installation of building envelope improvements.

The HES program includes two offerings, home energy assessments and weatherization rebates. With the Self Assessment Portal, customers begin their energy efficiency customer journey by learning about offerings in the portfolio and what changes they can make in their homes. Participants are provided tailored reports for each assessment, identifying additional savings opportunities, efficiency upgrades and available rebates. They also receive free measures to install in their home, which may include pipe insulation, showerheads, faucet aerators, programmable and advanced thermostats.

The weatherization rebate offering provides financial incentives to customers installing air sealing, insulation, or duct sealing measures. This work must be performed by a contractor that is industry-certified and program-approved. After a customer has expressed interest in the program, a participating contractor schedules a site visit to the home. No assessment is required. The participating contractor completes the work and provides an instant discount to the customer (in other words applies the incentive and deducts the cost directly on the bill to the customer).

The evaluation of this program will include the activities shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Evaluation Activities

Market Offering	Category	Tasks	CY2026	CY2027	CY2028	CY2029
All	General	PM/IC Interview	X		X	
Direct Install, Weatherization	Impact	Interim Impact Analysis	X	X	X	X
Direct Install, Weatherization	Impact	Measure-Level Deemed Savings Review	X	X	X	X
Direct Install, Weatherization	NTG	Customer Free Ridership Survey	†	X		
Direct Install, Weatherization	NTG	Customer Spillover Survey	†	X		
Direct Install, Weatherization	Process	Research Optional, Discuss with Program				
Direct Install, Weatherization	NTG	Contractor Free Ridership and Spillover Survey	†	X		

Source: Guidehouse.

For NTG research “X” indicates reporting year; and “†” indicates the year research starts.

3.1.3 HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY REBATE

The objective of the Home Energy Efficiency Rebate (HEER) program is to obtain energy savings by overcoming market barriers to the purchase and installation of high-efficiency natural gas space and water heating equipment and other targeted measures in residential applications. This program provides incentives for the purchase and installation of high-efficiency natural gas furnaces and boilers, smart thermostats, and other high-efficiency natural gas equipment. Customers are encouraged to install the most efficient gas heating equipment and appliances available when replacing older, less efficient equipment.

The evaluation of this program will include the activities shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Evaluation Activities

Market Offering	Category	Tasks	CY2026	CY2027	CY2028	CY2029
All	General	PM/IC Interview	X		X	
All	Process	Research Optional, Discuss with Program				
Equipment, Advanced Thermostats	Impact	Interim Impact Analysis	X	X	X	X
Equipment, Advanced Thermostats	Impact	Measure-Level Deemed Savings Review	X	X	X	X
Equipment, Advanced Thermostats	NTG	Customer Free Ridership Survey			†	X
Equipment, Advanced Thermostats	NTG	Customer Spillover Survey			†	X
Equipment, Advanced Thermostats	NTG	Trade Ally Free Ridership and Spillover Survey			†	X

Source: Guidehouse.

For NTG research “X” indicates reporting year; and “†” indicates the year research starts.

3.1.4 SMART NEIGHBORHOOD BUILDER

The objective of the Smart Neighborhood Builder (SNB) program is to obtain energy savings by increasing the energy efficiency of new construction single-family detached homes and townhomes. This program was inspired by Nicor Gas Smart Neighborhood initiative and promotes technologies to encourage builders to construct zero ready homes. The program provides participating new home builders and their verifier companies a financial incentive to exceed state and local building code requirements regarding duct and air sealing, along with the installation of specific high-efficiency space and water heating natural gas equipment.

SNB works with homebuilders and their verifier companies to build homes in the Nicor Gas service territory that are safer, more comfortable, durable and energy efficient due to the installation of high-efficiency equipment and by exceeding duct and air sealing building code requirements. Verifiers are typically building rating companies or on-site contractors, but they can be any entity designated by the builder, or even the builder itself. SNB provides monetary incentives for homebuilders and their verifier companies to promote energy efficient new construction building practices.

The evaluation of this program will include the activities shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Evaluation Activities

Market Offering	Category	Tasks	CY2026	CY2027	CY2028	CY2029
All	General	PM/IC Interview	X		X	
All	Impact	Interim Impact Analysis	X	X	X	X
All	Impact	Measure-Level Deemed Savings Review	X	X	X	X
All	NTG	Builder Free Ridership Survey			†	X
All	NTG	Builder Spillover Survey			†	X
All	Process	Research Optional, Discuss with Program				

Source: Guidehouse.

For NTG research “X” indicates reporting year; and “†” indicates the year research starts.

3.1.5 MULTI-FAMILY

The Multi-Family (MF) program addresses residential (living units) and common areas (central plants, laundry rooms, etc.) in multi-family buildings with 3 units or more. The program goal is to overcome market barriers to the installation of energy efficiency measures by offering comprehensive assessments, a range of rebate offerings, generous financial incentives (including free offerings), and technical assistance. The program employs a “one-stop shop” approach that allows customers to easily navigate the different services available to these customers across the portfolios of Nicor Gas and its partner electric utilities.

The program includes seven components that work together to provide customers with turnkey, umbrella services to drive comprehensive energy upgrades. The offerings include:

- Free energy assessments to identify comprehensive opportunities
- Free direct installation of low-cost measures in living units and common areas
- Prescriptive rebates for standard upgrades applicable to most buildings
- Custom rebates for more complex projects or other opportunities not covered by the other offerings
- Free Central Plant Optimization (CPOP) to upgrade centralized boiler systems
- Structured weatherization rebates for air sealing and insulation projects
- Technical assistance to help customers navigate the program, take advantage of all program services, coordinate with other offerings, and follow through to implement project

The evaluation of this program will include the activities shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Evaluation Activities

Market Offering	Category	Tasks	CY2026	CY2027	CY2028	CY2029
All	General	PM/IC Interview	X		X	
All	Process	Research Optional, Discuss with Program				
DI, Prescriptive, CPOP	Impact	Interim Impact Analysis	X	X	X	X
DI, Prescriptive, CPOP	Impact	Measure-Level Deemed Savings Review	X	X	X	X
Custom	Impact	Custom Savings Review	X	X	X	X
Custom	Impact	Wave Impact Analysis	X	X	X	X
Custom	Impact	Survey, Phone, or Virtual Verification	X	X	X	X
Custom	Impact	Onsite Verification	X	X	X	X
Prescriptive, Custom, CPOP	NTG	Customer Free Ridership Survey	†	X		
Prescriptive, Custom, CPOP	NTG	Customer Spillover Survey	†	X		
Prescriptive, Custom, CPOP	NTG	Trade Ally Free Ridership and Spillover Survey	†	X		

Source: Guidehouse.

For NTG research “X” indicates reporting year; and “†” indicates the year research starts.

3.2 Income-Eligible Programs

3.2.1 WEATHERIZATION

The IE Weatherization program provides comprehensive no-cost weatherization and other improvements to IE customers. The program targets single family Nicor Gas residential households with income at or below 80% of area median income (AMI) as determined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) guidelines. The program targets multi-family homeowners, renters, and owners of multi-family buildings who rent to IE households. For program delivery and tracking, Nicor Gas defines multi-family as buildings with at least three living units. Smaller multi-family buildings are tracked along with detached single-family residences. While the program services renters, building owners must apply for program services and will be involved in the delivery process. The IE Weatherization program will be delivered jointly or in collaboration with other program administrators including ComEd, Ameren, Peoples Gas and North Shore gas.

The program includes three separate offerings: IHWAP, Retrofits, and Healthy Home. The IHWAP offering coordinates with the statewide IHWAP program that offers weatherization services through federal programs administered by the U.S. Department of Energy and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Retrofits offering delivers services in communities to supplement local CAAs that may not have the capacity or expertise to fully serve all households through IHWAP. IHWAP Limits participation to households with incomes below 200% of the federal poverty level, and Retrofits serves additional customers with incomes up to 80% AMI. Nicor Gas, along with ComEd and other partners, has identified additional contractors to serve these communities. The Healthy Home offering partners with COBs, health care providers, insurance companies, and other groups to provide IE households with comprehensive services. Participant benefits include experiencing a healthier, safer, and more comfortable home with a reduced energy burden.

The evaluation of this program will include the activities shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Evaluation Activities

Market Offering	Category	Tasks	CY2026	CY2027	CY2028	CY2029
All	General	PM/IC Interview	X		X	
All	Impact	Interim Impact Analysis	X	X	X	X
All	Impact	Measure-Level Deemed Savings Review	X	X	X	X
All	Process	Research Optional, Discuss with Program				
Multi-family Custom	Impact	Custom Savings Review	X	X	X	X
Multi-family Custom	Impact	Survey, Phone, or Virtual Verification	X	X	X	X
Single Family	Process	Research - IHWAP Participant Survey				

Source: Guidehouse.

3.2.2 PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY

The IE Public Housing Authority (PHA) program provides broad and impactful energy efficiency opportunities to Public Housing Authorities to help the income-qualified households they serve. The PHA program will be delivered jointly with other program administrators including ComEd, Ameren, Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas.

The PHA program provides a flexible approach to serve the needs of agencies responsible for managing public housing. While the program focuses on the large multi-family buildings that make up the majority of this housing stock, it will also address smaller multi-family buildings and other properties managed by these agencies.

The evaluation of this program will include the activities shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Evaluation Activities

Market Offering	Category	Tasks	CY2026	CY2027	CY2028	CY2029
All	General	PM/IC Interview	X		X	
All	Impact	Measure-Level Deemed Savings Review	X	X	X	X
All	Impact	Measure-Level Deemed Savings Review	X	X	X	X

Source: Guidehouse.

3.2.3 AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEW CONSTRUCTION

The objective of the Affordable Housing New Construction (AHNC) program is to provide technical guidance and financial incentives for developers of affordable housing to improve comfort and reduce energy use for IE households, while exceeding current Illinois building code requirements. The AHNC program will be delivered in coordination with ComEd.

The AHNC offering provides incentives and technical assistance for the developers and builders of new and renovated buildings that eventually will be occupied by IE customers. The program requires measures covering natural gas systems, including building envelope, HVAC systems, and water-heating equipment, as well as electric systems such as lighting, HVAC systems and appliances, which are covered by electric utility partners.

The evaluation of this program will include the activities shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Evaluation Activities

Market Offering	Category	Tasks	CY2026	CY2027	CY2028	CY2029
All	General	PM/IC Interview	X		X	
All	Impact	Custom Savings Review	X	X	X	X
All	Impact	Survey, Phone, or Virtual Verification	X	X	X	X

Source: Guidehouse

3.2.4 IE ENERGY SAVING KITS

The IE Energy-Saving Kit (IE ESK) program provides free energy-saving products to help IE customers begin their customer journey toward comprehensive energy efficiency improvements. The IQ ESK offering will be delivered jointly with ComEd and may also be delivered with other electric utility partners.

The IE ESK may include differentiated offerings, such as a water-saving kit with showerheads, faucet aerators, and a shower timer, as well as a weatherization kit with caulking, weatherstripping, and other air sealing measures. Nicor Gas will work with ComEd to identify lighting and other appropriate electric measures to include in the kit offerings.

The evaluation of this program will include the activities shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Evaluation Activities

Market Offering	Category	Tasks	CY2026	CY2027	CY2028	CY2029
All	General	PM/IC Interview	X		X	
All	Impact	Interim Impact Analysis	X	X	X	X
All	Impact	Measure-Level Deemed Savings Review	X	X	X	X

Source: Guidehouse.

3.2.5 HOME ENERGY ASSESSMENT

The Income Eligible Home Assessment (IE HA) program provides no-cost energy assessments to customers with free direct installation of energy-saving measures while simultaneously acting as intake for the comprehensive weatherization Retrofits offering.

The IE HA program includes two offerings: in-person assessments and self assessments. With the in-person assessment offering, income eligible customers begin their energy efficiency customer journey by learning about offerings in the portfolio and what changes they can make in their homes. Energy Advisors directly install energy-saving products at the time of the assessment and educate on how these products help save energy and money. Energy Advisors create tailored reports for each assessment, identifying additional savings opportunities, efficiency upgrades and available rebates. Direct installation measures include pipe insulation, showerheads, faucet aerators, door sweeps, air handler filter replacements, programmable and advanced thermostats, as well as other electric measures where the Program has a partnership with an electric utility or provider. During the assessment the Energy Advisor is also assessing the customer’s home for potential to be served through the Retrofits offering. The Energy Advisor is specifically looking at opportunities to replace aging and inefficient HVAC equipment, attic air sealing and insulation opportunities, duct sealing potential, and other opportunities to improve the health, safety and comfort of the home. Customers' homes that meet all or most of the Retrofits prioritization criteria will be provided comprehensive weatherization services and health and safety upgrades. With the self-assessment offering, income eligible customers

will be provided a self-guided home assessment through an online portal. The customer will be asked a series of questions about their home, to better understand how their home uses energy. The self-assessment portal will provide recommendations for immediate energy-saving changes as well as information on other portfolio offerings. After the self-assessment is complete, Nicor Gas and the electric utility will deliver the energy-saving products to the customer’s home for self-installation at no additional cost.

The evaluation of this program will include the activities shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Evaluation Activities

Market Offering	Category	Tasks	CY2026	CY2027	CY2028	CY2029
All	General	PM/IC Interview	X		X	
All	Impact	Interim Impact Analysis	X	X	X	X
All	Impact	Measure-Level Deemed Savings Review	X	X	X	X

Source: Guidehouse.

3.3 Business and Public Sector Programs

3.3.1 BUSINESS ENERGY EFFICIENCY REBATES

The Business Energy Efficiency Rebates (BEER) program’s goal is to produce natural gas savings in the commercial, public, and industrial sectors by encouraging customers to make energy-saving improvements and offering incentives for qualifying upgrades. This offering also provides free energy assessments to identify energy-saving opportunities, install free energy-saving product on-site, and provide a customized report of efficiency recommendations. The four BEER offerings include assessments, rebates, commercial food service (CFS), and business optimization (BOP).

The midstream commercial food service (CFS) rebate program builds on the progress, analysis, and experience gained from a jointly funded pilot program that has been successfully running since 2018. The goal is to support and sustain a comprehensive list of measures for the food service industry to give operators a range of options for improving energy efficiency in their facilities. The commercial food service offering will be managed jointly with the other Illinois investor-owned utilities.

The evaluation of this program will include the activities shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Evaluation Activities

Market Offering	Category	Tasks	CY2026	CY2027	CY2028	CY2029
All	General	PM/IC Interview	X		X	
All	Process	Research Optional, Discuss with Program				
C&I and Public Sector	Impact	Interim Impact Analysis	X	X	X	X
C&I and Public Sector	Impact	Measure-Level Deemed Savings Review	X	X	X	X
C&I and Public Sector	NTG	Customer Free Ridership Survey		†	X	
C&I and Public Sector	NTG	Customer Spillover Survey		†	X	
C&I and Public Sector	NTG	Trade Ally Free Ridership and Spillover Survey		†	X	
Commercial Food Service	Impact	Interim Impact Analysis	X	X	X	X
Commercial Food Service	Impact	Measure-Level Deemed Savings Review	X	X	X	X
Commercial Food Service	NTG	Customer Free Ridership Survey		†	X	
Commercial Food Service	NTG	Customer Spillover Survey		†	X	
Commercial Food Service	NTG	Trade Ally Free Ridership and Spillover Survey		†	X	

Source: Guidehouse.

For NTG research “X” indicates reporting year; and “†” indicates the year research starts.

The evaluation team will perform net-to-gross (NTG) savings research to update the CFS pilot’s NTG ratio for reporting in 2028. This research will include process evaluation into the pilot’s market engagement and customer satisfaction.

3.3.2 COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEW CONSTRUCTION

The New Construction Program is offered jointly to non-residential (including public sector) customers served by ComEd and Nicor Gas.⁵ The program aims to capture immediate and long-term energy efficiency opportunities that are available during the design and construction of non-residential and multifamily buildings in ComEd’s service territory. The program covers new buildings, additions, and major renovations. Slipstream implements the program for ComEd and Nicor Gas.

The program offers two different program tracks to tailor program support to different types of participants and specific business segments.

- Performance path:** Offers a custom, hands-on technical approach to new construction projects and targets projects that are early in the design phase to maximize opportunities to influence the incorporation of high-performance design strategies. Technical staff use whole building energy simulations (including energy models and spreadsheet calculations) to optimize the building design for energy performance. Modeling results include incentive amounts and annual energy cost savings estimates. This allows the design team to identify design strategies and technologies that will take their building design further and have the greatest impact on the building’s energy use.

⁵ Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas offered the program in the previous program cycle and continue to support legacy projects, although they are no longer accepting new applications.

- **Best Practices path:** Offers a more prescriptive approach to new construction projects. This pathway was designed for fast-moving, developer-led projects or small projects. This includes predetermined lists of measures and incentives that are available for specific building types along with resources and guidelines for how to best implement those measures. This path provides an optimized and predictable incentive pathway with predefined, per-square foot incentives for achieving specific energy efficiency best practices, as well as optional advanced measures. The building types that are available through the Best Practices path are listed as follows:
 - Warehouse and industrial
 - Multifamily and assisted living
 - Office
 - Retail and grocery

The evaluation of this program will include the activities shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Evaluation Activities

Market Offering	Category	Tasks	CY2026	CY2027	CY2028	CY2029
All	General	PM/IC Interview	X		X	
C&I and Public Sector	Impact	Program Tracking Data Review	X	X	X	X
C&I and Public Sector	Impact	Custom Savings Review	X	X	X	X
C&I and Public Sector	Impact	Survey, Phone, or Virtual Verification	X	X	X	X
C&I and Public Sector	Impact	Wave Impact Analysis	X	X	X	X
C&I and Public Sector	NTG	Customer Free Ridership Survey			†	X
C&I and Public Sector	NTG	Customer Spillover Survey			†	X

Source: Guidehouse.

For NTG research “X” indicates reporting year; and “†” indicates the year research starts.

The gross impact evaluation will be based on a custom savings review. We will perform a program tracking data review and custom savings review in two waves. The first wave is expected to cover the first half of the calendar year (January 1-June 30) and the second wave is expected to cover the second half (July 1-December 31). Each wave will consist of a tracking data review, followed by stratified random sampling of all completed projects and a custom savings review of sampled projects.

The custom savings review will include desk reviews of all sampled projects, including reviewing and, if needed, revising building energy simulation models. On a project-by-project basis, the evaluation team will determine if survey, phone, or onsite/virtual verification activities are necessary to complement desk review activities. We will present realization rate results overall for the program by fuel type, inclusive and exclusive of interactive effects.

Per the program design, the baseline for all projects will typically be based on the applicable Illinois Energy Conservation Code (ICC) for Commercial Buildings. The ICC references the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC), which also allows for use of ASHRAE Standard 90.1 as an alternate compliance method. For each project, the applicable code version will be determined by the issuance date of the construction permit. We will also allow for a grace period (in years) with IECC code updates.

Therefore, projects with permit issuance dates at or after January 1 of the year following an IECC code update will be assigned the newest IECC code version as a baseline.

3.3.3 CUSTOM REBATES

The purpose of the Custom Incentives (Custom) program is to assist medium to large commercial, industrial, and public sector customers in identifying and implementing cost-effective gas-saving measures that are not otherwise addressed in Nicor Gas’ BEER or Small Business offerings. Custom projects may include, but are not limited to, Combined Heat and Power (CHP) systems, process heat recovery technologies, other low-emissions technologies such as gas heat pumps, and more. Additionally, the Custom program offers retro-commissioning (RCx) non-jointly as a Stand-Alone offering, which aims to optimize operations and improve building efficiency by returning facilities to their intended operation or design specifications.

The evaluation of this program will include the activities shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Evaluation Activities

Market Offering	Category	Tasks	CY2026	CY2027	CY2028	CY2029
All	General	PM/IC Interview	X		X	
C&I and Public Sector	Impact	Custom Savings Review	X	X	X	X
C&I and Public Sector	Impact	Wave Impact Analysis	X	X	X	X
C&I and Public Sector	Impact	Survey, Phone, or Virtual Verification	X	X	X	X
C&I and Public Sector	Impact	Onsite Verification	X	X	X	X
C&I and Public Sector	NTG	Customer Free Ridership Survey	†	X		
C&I and Public Sector	NTG	Customer Spillover Survey	†	X		
C&I and Public Sector	Process	Research Optional, Discuss with Program				

Source: Guidehouse.

For NTG research “X” indicates reporting year; and “†” indicates the year research starts.

Due to the unique NTG protocol employed for Retro-Commissioning, Nicor Gas Stand-Alone (non-joint) RCx projects will be researched on the same schedule as the Coordinated RCx program NTG research. For CHP, project specific NTG values will be determined by evaluation early in each project.

3.3.4 SMALL BUSINESS

The Small Business (SB) program obtains long-term natural gas savings for small business and public sector gas customers by providing financial incentives, information, and direct installation of energy-saving products to overcome key market barriers.

The program will provide small commercial and public sector gas customers with two primary options to participate: rebates for installing energy-efficient improvements and assessments that provide energy education along with installation of free energy-saving products. Rebates incentivize customers

to install energy-efficient equipment or make energy-saving improvements. Free energy assessments introduce customers to energy efficiency, providing technical assistance, identifying energy-saving opportunities, and prioritizing energy efficient improvements. Nicor Gas seeks to ensure that the Small Business program is jointly delivered or coordinated with ComEd to streamline customer experience and maximize participation and potential savings.

The evaluation of this program will include the activities shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Evaluation Activities

Market Offering	Category	Tasks	CY2026	CY2027	CY2028	CY2029
All	General	PM/IC Interview	X		X	
All	Process	Research Optional, Discuss with Program				
Prescriptive Rebates, DI	Impact	Interim Impact Analysis	X	X	X	X
Prescriptive Rebates, DI	Impact	Measure-Level Deemed Savings Review	X	X	X	X
Custom Rebates	Impact	Custom Savings Review	X	X	X	X
Custom Rebates	Impact	Wave Impact Analysis	X	X	X	X
Custom Rebates	Impact	Survey, Phone, or Virtual Verification	X	X	X	X
DI, Rebates	NTG	Customer Free Ridership Survey	†	†	X	
DI, Rebates	NTG	Customer Spillover Survey	†	†	X	
DI, Rebates	NTG	Net Savings Research - Trade Ally Spillover Survey	†	†	X	

Source: Guidehouse.

For NTG research “X” indicates reporting year; and “†” indicates the year research starts.

3.3.5 STRATEGIC ENERGY MANAGEMENT

The objective of the Strategic Energy Management (SEM) program is to obtain energy savings by focusing on improving and optimizing commercial, industrial, and public sector processes and energy equipment. The program engages customers in long-term continuous energy efficiency improvements at their facilities by involving site management, leveraging data, and promoting best practices at the site.

The evaluation of this program will include the activities shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Evaluation Activities

Market Offering	Category	Tasks	CY2026	CY2027	CY2028	CY2029
All	General	PM/IC Interview	X		X	
All	Impact	Custom Savings Review	X	X	X	X
All	Impact	Survey, Phone, or Virtual Verification	X	X	X	X

Source: Guidehouse.

3.3.6 BUILDING OPERATOR CERTIFICATION

The Building Operator Certification (BOC) program is a training and certification for commercial building operators. The curriculum teaches participants how to improve building comfort and efficiency by optimizing the building’s systems. The savings for BOC participants are determined by a TRM measure that calculates savings using facility square footage.

The evaluation of this program will include the activities shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Evaluation Activities

Market Offering	Category	Tasks	CY2026	CY2027	CY2028	CY2029
All	General	PM/IC Interview	X		X	
All	Impact	Measure-Level Deemed Savings Review	X	X	X	X

3.4 Market Transformation Initiatives

3.4.1 ACTIVE MEASURE EVALUATION

3.4.1.1 High Performance Window

The High Performance Window (HPW) initiative promotes higher levels of efficiency in windows through a market transformation initiative (MTI). Nicor Gas’s HPW MTI is intended to cover at least a 10-year duration. This document provides an initial Theory-based Evaluation Plan covering the evaluation activities proposed for the first four years of the MTI. Guidehouse will provide additional evaluation plans (including expanded activities) for the period beyond CY2028 in future documentation.

This evaluation plan includes four sections which cover the proposed evidence-gathering approaches for the HPW MTI for CY2026-CY2028:

- Market Progress Indicators (MPIs) Assessment
- Evaluation of Evidence Gathered
- Review of Natural Market Baseline (NMB)
- Market Progress Evaluation Report (MPER)

The evaluation of the HPW MTI will include the activities shown in Table 1. Future evaluation activities subject to change based on market data. Guidehouse will also include a detailed overview of the evaluation activities for HPW MTI each year in the Annual Evaluation Plan, which encompasses all evaluation activities across resource acquisition and market transformation.

Table 1. HPW MTI Evaluation Activities

Category	Tasks	CY2026	CY2027	CY2028	CY2029
General	Nicor Staff Interview	X	X	X	X
General	Implementer Interview	X	X	X	X
General	Natural Market Baseline Review	X	-	-	-
General	Structured Expert Judgment Panel	X	-	-	X
Impact	Savings Calculator and Work Paper Review	X	X	X	X
Impact	Market Transformation Program Tracking Data Review	X	X	X	X
Impact	MPI Assessment	X	X	X	X
Impact	Non-Participating Retailer Web Scraping	-	X	X	X

Source: Guidehouse

Additional details on the HPW initiative’s evaluation approach can be found in the Nicor Gas Market Transformation Initiative: High Performance Windows Theory-based Evaluation Plan.

3.4.1.2 Residential Gas Heat Pump

The Residential Gas Heat Pump (RGHP, GHP) initiative promotes gas powered residential heating and cooling through a market transformation initiative (MTI). Nicor Gas’s RGHP MTI is intended to cover at least a 10-year duration. This document provides an initial Theory-based Evaluation Plan covering the evaluation activities proposed for the first four years of the MTI. Guidehouse will provide additional evaluation plans (including expanded activities) for the period beyond CY2028 in future documentation.

This evaluation plan includes four sections which cover the proposed evidence-gathering approaches for the RGHP MTI for CY2026-CY2028:

- Market Progress Indicators (MPIs) Assessment
- Determining MTI Energy Savings
- Evaluation of Evidence Gathered
- Market Progress Evaluation Report (MPER)

The evaluation of the RGHP MTI will include the activities shown in Table 2. Future evaluation activities subject to change based on market data. Guidehouse will also include a detailed overview of the evaluation activities for RGHP MTI each year in the Annual Evaluation Plan, which encompasses all evaluation activities across resource acquisition and market transformation.

Table 2. RGHP MTI Evaluation Activities

Category	Tasks	CY2026	CY2027	CY2028	CY2029
General	Nicor Staff Interview	X	X	X	X
General	Implementer Interview	X	X	X	X
General	Natural Market Baseline Review	X	-	-	-
General	Structured Expert Judgment Panel	X	-	-	X
Impact	Savings Calculator and Work Paper Review	X	X	X	X
Impact	Market Transformation Program Tracking Data Review	X	X	X	X
Impact	MPI Assessment	X	X	X	X

Source: Guidehouse

Additional details on the RGHP initiative’s evaluation approach can be found in the Nicor Gas Market Transformation Initiative: RGHP Theory-based Evaluation Plan.

3.4.1.3 *Efficient Rooftop Unit*

The Residential Gas Heat Pump (RGHP, GHP) initiative promotes gas powered efficient rooftop units for residential heating and cooling through a market transformation initiative (MTI). A Theory-Based Evaluation Plan has not been created for this measure at this time.