



REPAIRING HOMES AND
BUILDING COMMUNITY

THE COVER PAGE

NEWS ABOUT COVER HOME REPAIR & THE RECOVER STORE

158 South Main Street, White River Junction, Vermont • T: 802.296.7241 • F: 802.296.7380 • www.coverhomerepair.org

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COVER just completed a project in the Sunapee area for a man well-loved by his neighbors because he helps them so much with shoveling walks, mowing lawns and just visiting with people. Over two days, over 30 people from the immediate area came out to repair his roof, replace and fix his windows, and complete numerous other needed repairs. The work and the meals were equally joyful. (See more details on page 2.)

COVER's volunteers and staff are on track to complete over 70 home repair projects this building season — roofs, ramps, stairs, structural repairs, and safety accommodations. With repairs like these, COVER addresses the human cost of an insecure home. As one homeowner put it:

It meant that we could have a better life with fewer worries about the roof falling apart and that we can be warmer and it makes us feel safer in our home. Thank you very much, we couldn't ask for better people, the staff and volunteers were nice people.

All homes leak heat, but some are downright drafty. Over the past three years, COVER teams have air sealed 208 homes, closing gaps in windows, doors and in basements

and attics. These homeowners are warmer and more comfortable and are saving nearly 18,000 gallons of fuel each winter, worth over \$50,000. Last winter, the average savings per home was 123 gallons per winter.

It was extremely important. I needed the windows covered because I spent so much on heat last winter. You guys are wonderful!

COVER is expanding our fall-risk prevention program that helps seniors be safer. The risk of falling is one of the most dangerous issues for the elderly. Simple adaptations can really make a home safer — grab bars, hand rails and bathroom handholds can make a big difference.

COVER brings homeowners, volunteers and staff together with a common and urgent goal: creating a home that is dry, warm and safe by the end of the day. Thank you for all that YOU do to create a more vibrant and connected community — by volunteering, by giving and by donating (and shopping!) at the ReCOVER Store.

We are so grateful for your support!

—Rob Schultz
Executive Director of COVER



I definitely could not have done it without COVER being there. Thanks to all the volunteers. — Homeowner

Neighbors and Community

COVER was contacted by Fred, Raymond's friend and neighbor, to see if COVER could partner with neighbors in making some repairs to Raymond's home. Raymond has not been able to keep up with the maintenance.

Raymond is a 60-year-old man who has lived in his family home for 45 years. He lived alone for several years since the death of his mother and sister. An integral part of his community, Raymond is a man of few words and a sparkle in his eyes. He is always there to shovel his neighbors' walks or to stop by for a visit. Raymond's neighbors would describe him as being a good neighbor.

Our visit to assess the house revealed a roof that was leaking badly and had serious structural issues. The interior of the house had been impacted by the leaks, and the ceiling had collapsed in several areas. There were drainage issues that would compromise the structure if they were not addressed. The project definitely fit COVER's requirement of urgency, and volunteers could safely complete the project.

We told Raymond that COVER could take on the project, and joked that he wouldn't have to empty the many buckets after a rain. Fred said there would be plenty of volunteers as well as plenty of good food. We left with a handshake and hopes of good weather for the project.



As we gathered on Day One to talk about the day, sixteen neighbors stood in the circle ready to get to work – what an amazing community! A number of volunteers had building experience, and some had never used a power tool. Everyone was eager to get the job done.

We set up a team to work in the attic to reinforce the roof rafters, while another strapped the roof. Another group of neighbors took on the task of replacing several windows and putting up some new siding. We ended the day with windows in; rafters doubled, the roofing started, drainage and cleanup well on the way. At the end of the day there was a call to grab any extra food from a great lunch. As I drove away, Fred told me we had another good sized crew for tomorrow.

Day Two was another beautiful fall day as twenty-two of Raymond's neighbors gathered around. There were some familiar faces from the previous day, and many new faces. It was obvious that this was a wonderful community with so many people coming out to help. Raymond is a great neighbor, and his community responded when he needed them!

In just two productive days of work, food and conversation, Raymond went from nearly losing his home of 45 years to having a secure place to live for many years to come.

—John Heath
Home Repair Director



ReCOVER Store

Stop by
for a visit!



The comings
and goings
at the

ReCOVER Store

are vibrant on so many levels. There is an enormous sense of community, of folks wanting to help one another. This is a dream job for me. I get to work hard and feel good about what I am doing. Just in the short time here I have learned so much about what this good non-profit does in this community—the trust it creates. People from all walks of life come through the door. There is so much respect and admiration for this organization.

The store is both fun and practical. The inventory changes daily (sometimes hourly!!). We have an eclectic mix of items: appliances, furniture, art, tools, paint, toilets, cabinets, antiques and so much more!

I hope to inspire people to donate generously. I hope to contribute my skills to help grow the ReCOVER Store and COVER Home Repair. I want to foster a place where folks feel free to roam and buy something of good value and at really good prices.

Please come in to visit!

In gratitude!

— Sharyn Amberger
Store Manager

PS – If you want to donate goods to the ReCOVER Store, please call Sharyn directly at 802-296-7241 ext 106 or email pictures to sharyn@coverhomerepair.org



Store hours are
10-5 Tuesday
through Saturday.

Come in and see
if we can help
with a project you
are working on!

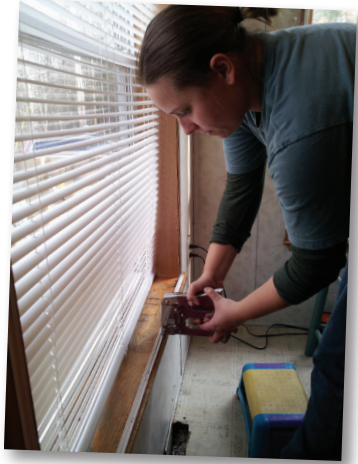
Weatherization

Hello COVER friends and supporters!

I'm Kendra Colburn, the Interim Weatherization Coordinator. I'm taking over COVER's weatherization program this fall while our regular Weatherization Director Diane Reinhardt rests her injured arm.

Winter is coming and COVER is out in the Upper Valley of VT and NH, ready to work with you and your community to keep your home warmer and more efficient this season.

I've only been here for two weeks and already I've met and worked alongside some amazing homeowners and volunteers. We've headed out to drafty homes and learned how to install heavy-duty, reusable window plastic over leaky windows. I've used our door kits to seal off the cold air that creeps around your outside doors, and hunted down air leaks in basements and heating ducts.



And I got to learn about the blower door, a really neat tool that shows just how much of a difference weatherizing can make. After we installed window plastic, weatherstripping on the doors, and some foam in the basement, the blower door showed that this first home we worked on this season will save about 208 gallons of fuel this winter alone!

If you notice some cool breezes sneaking into your home, check out our window plastic kits for sale in the ReCOVER store. Or apply for our free or low cost weatherization program and we'll work with you and your neighbors to get your house buttoned up tight against the cold.

For three years, COVER has received funds from the High Meadows Fund for a furnace cleaning program. This year we've gotten 6 people's furnaces safe and ready to work this winter.

Please join me to volunteer on a weatherizing job!

Contact COVER to get an application to make your own home more comfortable and efficient this winter.

—Kendra Colburn
Interim Weatherization Coordinator



COVER saved me from losing my home and worked tirelessly and with joy bringing my house back to a home. COVER went above and beyond my expectations in winterizing and moisture proofing, replacing unsafe rot with safe structuring and gave me back my kitchen better than ever. Diane and all the volunteers were wonderful and engaging.

—Homeowner

Volunteering

No Experience Necessary

Want to volunteer with COVER Home Repair? **No experience necessary.**

No really; no experience necessary.

If you have experience we want you also. Did you used to be a carpenter? or you still are? A plumber, an electrician? Please, sign up to volunteer.

OR you have no experience? never picked up a hammer? not sure about being on a roof or using a power tool? please sign up to volunteer.

Maybe you want to get some exercise. Maybe you need to repair your own floor so you want to come and learn from us while you help repair someone else's floor.

We provide professional leadership. Patient, supportive, appreciative leadership.

COVER's mission is to build community and foster hope.

Come and sign up to help us build community. That's what we really want you for. Come meet our homeowners who have graciously invited us into their homes to help them be able to stay in their homes by making repairs. Come eat lunch with our homeowner and other volunteers and our staff. Learn new skills, get dirty, climb a ladder (or not) and just join the process.

These are some things other volunteers have said:

"I'd definitely recommend COVER as a good volunteering opportunity. I especially enjoy the home repair/construction aspect - by the end of the day there is a very tangible, visible change made to someone's living situation."



"I would absolutely recommend COVER to other people... and I already have! I've really enjoyed volunteering and hope to do so again soon!"

"I love volunteering with COVER - the organization does some incredible things, and I love that we're in our community, working side by side with the homeowners. I also love that COVER lets you get right into the project and gives you a lot of freedom to learn how to use new tools and new skill-sets."

How to volunteer:

Go to our website to see the volunteer schedule. Coverhomerepair.org

See something you really want to do but the project is full? Call or email and let me see if I can squeeze you in. Or keep your name as a back up.

Want to volunteer to weatherize but only for a half day? Let me know. Let me work with you to make this the volunteer experience that you want.

—Mary Sutton-Smith
Volunteer Coordinator



To all the crew at COVER,
Thank you so much. I live so
differently now. So relieved
and content.

—Homeowner



Staffing Update

Farewell!

This summer we had a major change at the ReCOVER Store with a complete staffing turnover. We are grateful for the years of service to COVER by **Frank Orlowski**, **MaryEllen Treadway**, **Elise Angelillo**, **Andrew Tofel** and **Irene Hanslin**. They were a strong team and helped thousands of Store customers find what they were looking for, and helped many families complete needed improvements to their homes.

Many thanks to Matt Sherman, who completed his AmeriCorps term with COVER in September. We are so grateful and pleased that he is staying in the Upper Valley.

Welcome!

We are excited to welcome **Sharyn Amberger** as the new ReCOVER Store Manager. Sharyn comes to COVER with a 30 year strong background in retail sales and an enthusiastic passion for getting to know the ReCOVER Store community. We still have a part-time opening in the Store. See our website for details.

Kendra Colburn is a new addition to our Weatherization Team. She'll be in the field



(From Left, Briana, Sharyn and Kendra)

with volunteers while Diane Reinhardt's wrist heals up. Kendra is a native Vermonter and has great carpentry, writing and farming skills. She's hit the ground running with the cold weather coming up quick and is having fun with homeowners and volunteers.

Briana Baker is from Minnesota and is this year's AmeriCorps member. She has jumped right into COVER's work, immediately understanding the need to both get the day's job done well and take good time to get to know people. She's a rugby player and a singer and we know she's not afraid of the cold.

Reflections

I was very excited to join the COVER team this year! When I moved here from Minnesota in September, I was looking forward to exploring a beautiful new place, working with my hands, and meeting people who are improving their communities. The Upper Valley has many things in common with my dear home state, and serving with COVER has been a wonderful introduction to the extraordinary people of this place.

It has struck me again and again during my short time with COVER that our projects make life-altering changes to the health and safety of individuals and families. The physical risk, not to mention the emotional and financial burden, of a leaky roof, rotten stairs, or a drafty bedroom

makes other aspects of daily living much more difficult – sometimes impossible. After a day of working together, you can often see the relief and pride on the face of a homeowner, as well as the sense of accomplishment for a volunteer. I am continually encouraged by COVER's commitment to a different way of building and sustaining community – one that holds volunteers, homeowners, and staff as important and equal partners in our effort to improve the Upper Valley. This dedication to a more complete idea of community, when paired with our critical repair and weatherization projects, makes COVER a unique and inspiring organization.

—Briana Baker
AmeriCorps



This project made us feel more comfortable and secure in our home. It relieved a lot of stress and anxiety knowing that our home was properly repaired. Thank you for all your help.
—Homeowner

The Cover Page is published semi-annually and mailed to friends and supporters of COVER in the Upper Valley including individual contributors, businesses, foundations, civic groups including churches and other religious organizations.

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COVER's mission is to foster hope and build community in the Upper Valley.

We do this by bringing together volunteers and homeowners to complete urgently needed home repair projects and to facilitate the reuse of household goods and building materials. We envision a community where the need for home repair is an opportunity for people to come together.

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ASSISTANCE! 802.296.7241 X105

The ReCOVER Store is open
Tuesday – Saturday, 10-5. Check
out our website!
www.coverhomerepair.org

COVER
158 S. Main Street
White River Junction, VT 05001



"Like" us on facebook:
COVER Home Repair & The ReCOVER Store

Why I Love My Job

I volunteered to write this article on why I love my job. There are so many reasons that it's hard to name any one.

I have met many amazing people doing this work. From homeowners, to volunteers and co-workers—these people that have enriched my life in every way. When I think back to the place I was before COVER came into my life, it was not a very good place. I didn't really leave my house much. With no money and no car it's hard to not be depressed about life in general.

But then one day in February of 2005 a group of people came to work on my home. I had never really known about volunteering. It was one of the best experiences of my life.

Now every day is reason to get out of bed in the morning. I look forward to being at COVER everyday whether it's doing paperwork, posting pictures to our FaceBook page, meetings or doing site visits, it is all great!

COVER gave me back my life! Thank you.

Paying it forward in my own small way.

And that is why I love my job!!

— Gail Guernsey,
Home Repair Coordinator

