



**Historical Backgrounder**

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**People Working Cooperatively (PWC) Historical Backgrounder**

- **1975:** PWC opens its door from a garage in Covington, Ky. During its first year, the organization's two employees and small team of volunteers helped 43 low-income homeowners, most of them with annual incomes of \$5,000 and less.
- **1980:** Having increased its staff from just two workers to more than 30 employees, PWC is awarded a grant from Housing and Urban Development through the City of Cincinnati to be one of seven cities in a national demonstration project called "The Elderly Home Repair Program."
- **1982:** PWC establishes a formal volunteer program to help get individuals interested in working in their communities.
- **1983:** PWC moves its offices and home base to Cincinnati, Ohio. Its first volunteer event involves more than 70 volunteers who help 20 elderly homeowners in Price Hill, Madisonville and Hyde Park with minor repairs during an event dubbed "Repair Affair."
- **1985:** PWC has saved the homes of more than 5,000 elderly, disabled and low-income homeowners in Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. The organization establishes the Home Modification Program for the Disabled and the Single Parent Head of Household Program, aimed at maintaining the homes of disabled individuals and single parents, respectively. Also, in an effort to recognize its growing corps of volunteers, PWC introduces an annual volunteer award.
- **1986:** PWC begins a new weatherization venture with CG&E, eventually shaping the Weatherization Program still in existence today.
- **1987:** PWC hosts the first "Prepare Affair" fall volunteer event, drawing 26 volunteers who perform home maintenance tasks such as cleaning gutters and raking leaves at the homes of 27 PWC clients.
- **1988:** PWC expands its capabilities to help the needy by beginning a free, low-interest loan program to assist low-income homeowners with major repair needs.
- **1990:** By its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary, PWC has increased its outreach to 14,000 of the region's "Invisible Poor" a term coined by PWC to describe those with fixed incomes who still own

their own homes. Also, a new department is created to manage the ever-increasing number of volunteer-based events and projects framing the Volunteer Involvement Program (VIP).

- **1995:** No longer a struggling non-profit, PWC has established itself as a resource for low-income households across the area to turn to for their home repair and maintenance needs. PWC's volunteers are a shining example of the agency's growth, having been responsible for providing services to more than 950 elderly homeowners in 1995 alone.
- **1998:** PWC is sanctioned by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences to hold Cincinnati's only official "Oscar Night America" fundraising party.
- **2000:** PWC staff and volunteers have performed more than 45,000 services for the needy in Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. After 25 years of service, its annual volunteer events have grown considerably. Repair Affair and Prepare Affair 1999, combined; saw more than 2,200 volunteers help more than 900 elderly homeowners. PWC calculates a 221 percent increase in the amount of clients it has helped in the past 10 years.
- **2003:** PWC develops its "Whole House" solution to critical home repair. The new concept introduces a more holistic mindset to PWC's clients, giving them a wide range of options to fully restore their homes through repair, maintenance, weatherization and modification.
- **2005:** PWC celebrates 30 years of serving the community providing critical home repairs, modifications and energy conservation services for more than 175,000 individuals since 1975.
- **2008:** With the support of its more than 80 licensed, professionally trained staff members and a dedicated corps of volunteers, PWC provides more than 10,800 services annually.
- **2009:** PWC expands into Southeast Indiana after being awarded a \$1.8 million grant from the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority to help with the state's Home Energy Conservation and Weatherization Program.
- **2010:** The U.S. Department of Energy awarded People Working Cooperatively a \$1.5 million grant for home weatherization work in Ohio, marking the first time PWC has received direct funding from the federal government. Xavier University's "Launch-a-Business Competition" selects PWC as one of eight winners to help PWC develop a business plan for its new social enterprise.
- **2011:** PWC sees its highest number of calls for assistance, hitting 65,000 phone calls from community members in need. Through an independent evaluation, PWC learns its "Whole House" strategy increases housing values of its clients by six to 10 percent.

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