



NECPUC 75th Symposium Agenda
The Lodge at Spruce Peak, Stowe, VT
May 22-24, 2023

Monday, May 22

12:00-5:00 p.m.

Self-Guided Activities

For early arrivals, registrants will be provided with suggestions for self-guided activities to enjoy in beautiful Stowe and the surrounding area.

3:00-6:00 p.m.

Registration Desk Open

5:45 p.m.

Pre-Dinner Reception

Sponsored by Pierce Atwood LLP, Womble Bond Dickinson LLP, and Day Pitney LLP

7:00 p.m.

Dinner

8:00 p.m.

Dessert Reception

Sponsored by Hewitt & Hewitt, National Association of Water Companies, and Nuclear Energy Institute

Tuesday, May 23

7:00 a.m.

Run/Walk with a Commissioner!

Hon. Abigail Anthony, Chair, Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission

7:30 a.m.

Breakfast

7:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. ***Registration Desk Open***

9:00 a.m.

Symposium Opens

Hon. Anthony Z. Roisman, Chair, Vermont Public Utility Commission, NECPUC Co-President
Hon. Margaret Cheney, Commissioner, Vermont Public Utility Commission, NECPUC Co-President

9:15 a.m.

Fireside Chat Plenary Session

U.S. Senator Peter Welch, Chair, Senate Agriculture Committee's Subcommittee on Rural Development and Energy
Hosted by Hon. Anthony Z. Roisman, Chair, Vermont Public Utility Commission

10:00 a.m.

Break

Sponsored by Northeast Gas Association

10:30 a.m.

Plenary Session

Lessons Learned and What's Yet to Come: Opportunities and Challenges for Leveraging Historic Federal Funding Investments to Address Regional Energy and Climate Policy Goals

Moderator: Hon. Pradip K. Chattopadhyay, Commissioner, New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission

There are historic levels of new federal funding opportunities being delivered through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the Inflation Reduction Act, and other sources. How are potential recipients such as states and utilities responding to these opportunities? For instance, New England states are currently [collaborating](#) on the New England States Transmission Initiative, to advance electricity transmission proposals that would grow the region's supply of clean, reliable, and affordable energy. What other efforts are underway, and what lessons have already been learned in terms of successful approaches? What barriers exist? How are applicants and recipients approaching significant new requirements and opportunities for addressing equity and environmental justice issues? How can federal funds be used to help reduce ratepayer costs, especially for households with high energy cost burdens?

Panelists:

- Cyril Brunner, Innovation and Technology Leader, Vermont Electric Cooperative
- Dr. David W. Cash, Regional Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 1
- Rachel Gold, Principal, Rocky Mountain Institute
- Dr. Taresa Lawrence, Director of State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial Policy, Office of Policy, U.S. Department of Energy
- Hank Webster, Deputy Commissioner, Energy Branch, Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

12:00 p.m.

Lunch

1:00-4:00 p.m.

Registration Desk Open

1:30 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions

Telecom-Energy Convergence: Leveraging Historic Federal and State Investments in Last-Mile Broadband to Support Both Advanced Energy Infrastructure and Connectivity

Co-Moderators:

- Hon. Karen Charles, Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Telecommunications and Cable
- Hon. June E. Tierney, Commissioner, Vermont Department of Public Service

Last-mile broadband connectivity is driving a convergence between the telecommunications and electricity sectors in the form of enabling widespread and equitable access to energy programs and technologies. How are regulators, providers, and stakeholders leveraging this opportunity to expand access to high-speed broadband as well as utility programs? What is working, what isn't, and what are the barriers to success?

Panelists:

- Christine Hallquist, Executive Director, Vermont Community Broadband Board
- Elin Katz, former Director, Office of Public Participation, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
- Wendy Lader, Northeast Regional Director, Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce
- Tim Schneider, General Counsel, Tilson
- Marguerite Behringer, Director of Regulatory Affairs and Industry Relations, Landis+Gyr

Trends in Natural Gas Regulation and Policy in a Decarbonizing World

Moderator: Hon. Ronald T. Gerwatowski, Chair, Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission

Many jurisdictions have adopted or are considering policies to meet aggressive GHG reduction goals that include decarbonizing the heating sector. Yet, natural gas remains as a dominant fuel resource that is heavily relied upon in New England for heating and other thermal end uses. In that context, what does the regulatory landscape look like for natural gas in the next 5, 10, and 20 years? Over the 20-year horizon, will natural gas need to be substantially abandoned in the heating sector to meet GHG reduction targets? Is it possible, as a practical matter, to abandon natural gas as a primary heating source without causing significant economic disruption? What are the regulatory challenges and strategy choices facing policymakers in planning for the future of the local natural gas distribution system with all these uncertainties?

Panelists:

- José M. Costa, President and CEO, Northeast Gas Association

- Priya Gandbhir, Senior Attorney, Conservation Law Foundation
- Mark LeBel, Senior Associate, Regulatory Assistance Project
- Mackay Miller, Partner, ERM

2:45 p.m.

Break

Sponsored by Sense

3:15 p.m.

Plenary Session

Presentation of George Dunn Award

Invitation to 2024 NECPUC Symposium

3:30 p.m.

Plenary Session

“Shark Tank” – Regulatory Style! Join Entrepreneurs and Innovators as they Present the Latest and Greatest in Technological and Programmatic Advancements to meet our Policy and Regulatory Goals

Moderator: Hon. Sarah Hofmann, former Commissioner, Vermont Public Utility Commission

Join entrepreneurs and innovators as they present the latest and greatest in technological and programmatic advancements to meet our policy and regulatory goals. Learn about exciting new ideas and hear real-time feedback from a panel of “sharks” with exceptional regulatory, technology, and business expertise. At the end of the session the audience will have the opportunity to weigh in on the presentations.

Sharks:

- Charlotte Ancel, Vice President, Regulatory, Avangrid
- David Bradbury, President, Vermont Center for Emerging Technologies
- Laury Saligman, Partner & Managing Director, Clean Energy Venture Group
- Hon. James M. (Jamie) Van Nostrand, Chair, Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities

Contestants:

- Mishal Thadani, CEO and Co-Founder, Rhizome
- Phillip Stephenson, Vice President Business Development, Electrified Thermal Solutions, Inc.
- Jonathan Knauer, Vice President Policy and Product Strategy, ConnectDER
- Praveen Kathpal, CEO, Motor
- Malcolm Smith, CEO, Sustaine

5:45 p.m.

Pre-dinner Reception

Sponsored by Retail Energy Supply Association and Robinson+Cole, LLP

7:00 p.m. ***Dinner***

8:00 p.m. ***Dessert Reception***
Sponsored by American Clean Power Association and RENEW Northeast

Wednesday, May 24

7:30 a.m. ***Breakfast***

7:30 a.m. ***Concurrent Telecom Breakfast***
Join Commissioners, staff, and telecommunications professionals in discussing telecommunications issues and developments.

8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. ***Registration Desk Open***

9:00 a.m. ***Plenary Session***

Decarbonization Deep Dive Panel #1: Focus on Transmission Planning

Moderator: Hon. Riley Allen, Commissioner, Vermont Public Utility Commission

Economy-wide decarbonization and greenhouse gas reduction goals are changing the way we use and plan the electrical grid, are and requiring regulators and stakeholders to consider how those policy goals interact with the fundamental regulatory concerns of system reliability and customer affordability. In the first of two “deep dive” plenary discussions, this panel will focus on the implications of this dynamic for the transmission planning process. As the FERC transmission planning NOPR, the 2050 Transmission Study, and the New England States Transmission Initiative continue to unfold, how do regulators and stakeholders knit together these various studies and discussions to enable the region to pivot from planning to procurement of transmission resources, consistent with longer time horizons and a broader view of benefits? How do we reform the planning process to make the best use of our existing transmission assets, right size replacements of aging facilities, and foster a more efficient and cost-effective path forward? What other opportunities for coordination and holistic transmission planning should the New England region consider? How do regulators and stakeholders develop approaches that balance climate policy goals with regulatory imperatives of system reliability and protecting consumers from excessive costs?

Panelists:

- Hon. Philip L. Bartlett, II, Chair, Maine Public Utilities Commission
- David Burnham, Director, Transmission Policy, Eversource Energy

- Robert Ethier, Vice President, System Planning, ISO-NE
- Johannes P. Pfeifenberger, Principal, Brattle Group
- Maria Robinson, Director, Grid Deployment Office, U.S. Department of Energy

10:15 a.m. ***Break***
Sponsored by Edison Electric Institute

10:45 a.m. ***Plenary Session***

Decarbonization Deep Dive Panel #2: Focus on Rates

Moderator: Hon. Marissa Paslick Gillett, Chairman, Connecticut Public Utilities Regulatory Authority

In the second “deep dive” panel on the impacts and opportunities created by decarbonization and GHG reduction policies, this session will focus on how these issues are playing out at the electric distribution and retail level, specifically in the area of rate design. In reviewing and approving retail rates, how should regulators manage the interplay of climate policy goals with costs, including for ratepayers who are already dealing with high energy cost burdens, and who may have less ability to participate in initiatives such as building and transportation electrification?

Panelists:

- Amy Boyd, Vice President, Climate and Clean Energy Policy, Acadia Center
- Claire Coleman, Consumer Counsel, Connecticut Office of Consumer Counsel
- Travis Kavulla, Vice President of Regulatory Affairs, NRG
- Dr. Long Lam, Senior Associate, Brattle Group
- Hon. Carleton B. Simpson, Commissioner, New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission

12:00 p.m. ***Lunch***

1:30 p.m. ***Fireside Chat Plenary Session***

Hon. Shalanda H. Baker, Director of the Office of Economic Impact and Diversity and Secretarial Advisor on Equity, U.S. Department of Energy

Hosted by Hon. Margaret Cheney, Commissioner, Vermont Public Utility Commission

2:15 p.m. ***Break***
Sponsored by Advanced Energy United

2:45 p.m. ***Concurrent Sessions***

Using Strategic Planning to Address the Increasingly Complex Challenges of Water Regulation, Supply, and Quality

Moderator: Hon. John W. “Jack” Betkoski, III, Vice Chairman, Connecticut Public Utilities Regulatory Authority

From PFAS to lead pipe replacement to drought to aging infrastructure, water regulation is more complex and vital than ever. In managing multiple, critical challenges, a sound strategic planning process is necessary to ensure these challenges are being addressed in a proactive and effective manner. Connecticut’s adoption of a state water plan is one example of how this is being done. This panel will discuss the latest developments in water planning across the New England region.

Panelists:

- George Logan, Director of Community Relations, Aquarion
- Lori J. Mathieu, Public Health Branch Chief, Environmental Health and Drinking Water Branch, Connecticut Department of Public Health
- Hon. Patrick Scully, Commissioner, Maine Public Utilities Commission
- Martha Sheils, Director, New England Environmental Finance Center
- Mark Vannoy, President, Maine Water Company

Transmission and Distribution System Reliability and Resiliency in an Era of Electrification

Moderator: Hon. Cecile M. Fraser, Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities

Policy goals encouraging increased electrification of the heating and transportation sectors rely on New England’s electricity transmission and distribution systems being reliable and resilient. Complicating our electrification goals is the increased frequency of extreme weather events. ISO New England is working with the Electric Power Research Institute to conduct a probabilistic energy-security study for the New England region under extreme weather events. This study will characterize how extreme weather events in the future may affect the evolving power system and prompt thinking about how best to prepare for them. This panel will include a discussion of the results of that study, and its implications for system reliability and resiliency. How do we plan and operate the transmission and distribution systems given the low-probability, high-impact reliability risks related to extreme weather? What role can distribution-level programs like energy efficiency, load management, storage, and distributed generation play in our reliability and resiliency efforts? How can we better coordinate distribution-level efforts with transmission-level efforts? How do we balance reliability and resiliency spending with protecting customers from excessive costs?

Panelists:

- Barry Ahern, Director of Transmission Planning, Asset Management & Conceptual Engineering, National Grid
- Josh Castonguay, Vice President, Chief Innovation Officer, Green Mountain Power
- Erin Cosgrove, Senior Manager, Policy and Programs, Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships

- Stephen George, Director, Operational Performance, Training, and Integration, ISO-NE
- Bobby Jeffers, Program Manager, National Renewable Energy Laboratory
- Andrey Oks, Director of Operations Coordination, Northeast Power Coordinating Council

4:00 p.m.

Symposium program concludes

Thursday, May 25

7:30 a.m.

Breakfast