

Energy Efficiency Advisory Group (EEAG)
8/5/2020
Via WebEx

Present:

Brad Iverson-Long-Idaho Public Utilities Commission	Don Strickler-Simplot
Wil Gehl-Community Action Partnership Assoc of Idaho	Ben Otto-Idaho Conservation League
Haley Falconer-City of Boise	Katie Pegan-Office of Energy & Mineral Resources
Diego Rivas-Northwest Energy Coalition	Lynn Tominaga-Idaho Irrigation Pumpers Association
Anna Kim-Public Utility Commission of Oregon	Tina Jayaweera-Northwest Power & Conservation Council
Connie Aschenbrenner*-Idaho Power	
Quentin Nesbitt-Idaho Power	

Not Present:

Stacey Donohue-Idaho Public Utilities Commission
Jim Hall-Wafd
Sid Erwin-Idaho Irrigation Pumpers Association
Selena O'Neal-Ada County

Guests and Presenters*:

Quentin Nesbitt*-Idaho Power	Paul Goralski-Idaho Power
Tracey Burtch*-Idaho Power	Theresa Drake*-Idaho Power
Andrea Simmons*-Idaho Power	Annie Meyer*-Idaho Power
Shawna Potter*-Idaho Power	Randy Thorn-Idaho Power
Juliet Petersen*-Idaho Power	Steve Hubble-City of Boise
Chad Severson-Idaho Power	Donn English-Idaho Public Utilities Commission
Erik Olson-Office of Energy & Mineral Resources	Shelley Martin-Idaho Power
Mindi Shodeen-Idaho Power	Denise Humphreys-Idaho Power
Cheryl Paoli-Idaho Power	Krista West-Idaho Power
Chellie Jensen-Idaho Power	Sheree Willhite-Idaho Power

Note Takers:

Shawn Lovewell (Idaho Power) with Kathy Yi* (Idaho Power)

Meeting Facilitator: Rosemary Curtin

Meeting Convened at 9:05 am

Rosemary started the meeting with the introductions of EEAG members.

9:05 am-May Meeting Notes-Announcements—Theresa Drake, Connie Aschenbrenner

Theresa updated the group on the leadership transitions in the Customer Relations and Energy Efficiency Department. Juliet Petersen is the new Commercial, Industrial, and Irrigation Leader. With the recent retirement of Pete Pengilly, Quentin Nesbitt has assumed the role of Customer Research & Analysis Leader. Shawna Potter is the new Residential Leader while Billie McWinn is on a temporary duty assignment as a Regional Customer Relations Manager at the Canyon Operations Center.

Connie provided an update of the Idaho Rider balance. In June of 2019, the rider percentage was decreased from 3.75% to 2.75%. As of June 30, 2020, the Rider balance is in a deficit of approximately \$8.2 million.

The company is working on its 2021 budget. It is also working towards incorporating the Utility Cost Test into its cost effectiveness of programs. Connie reminded the group that due to the 2019 Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) delays, the 2021 IRP DSM working group has been delayed.

There were questions and comments about the ongoing rider balance fluctuations, some EEAG members support a longer-term view of the rider balance for customer stability. Quentin commented that predicting the number of projects and incentive amounts for the Commercial/Industrial programs can be a challenge. As you can see from the current Rider balance, it is not affecting participation or the company's efforts in pursuing all cost-effective energy efficiency. One member raised a concern that a deficit balance could result in a limit to funding future energy efficiency acquisition and decreased energy savings and going forward it would be better to err on the side of over collection in the Rider with mechanisms in place for returning customer money if needed. One member commented that they agreed with the over collection of Rider funds and acknowledged that this deficit isn't hindering Idaho Power from pursuing cost-effective energy efficiency. There was a question about programmatic change timelines and the recently completed Potential Study results. Quentin stated that upcoming presentations would cover upcoming changes that will impact programs. Connie added that the company intends to schedule a workshop to specifically address energy efficiency and the potential study for interested members of EEAG and IRPAC.

9:42 am-Future Impacts to Programs—Kathy Yi

Kathy's presentation focused on impacts to programs in 2021. She covered cost-effectiveness assumptions and impacts to residential and commercial/industrial/irrigation programs. She asked the group for their feedback on a future presentation of the low-income programs billing analysis and evaluations. The consensus was that this would be a valuable presentation.

Kathy provided an overview of the three Energy Efficiency Kits and the two Buy-Down offerings; Simple Steps, Smart Savings and Energy Efficient Lighting. In 2021 energy savings for LED lightbulbs in the kits will be reduced significantly after the first year. Idaho Power is proposing to sunset the Mail by Request Kits in its current format. The New Customer Kit is not cost effective, but the company thinks there is opportunity to offer it in a different format. Energy savings for the Student Kits are custom calculated based on information provided by students, parents, and teachers. These will still be offered but they could be impacted by an uncertain school year due to COVID.

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is ending the Simple Steps, Smart Savings program on September 30, 2020. The residential programs presentation will cover the next steps.

Kathy next highlighted the Cohort offerings and Irrigation Menu within the Commercial, Industrial, and Irrigation programs. Persistence is a major assumption within the Cohort offering. Employees leave the company; equipment changes which can impact cost effectiveness. The company will continue to monitor this program. The Irrigation Efficiency program may still be cost effective because of the custom projects. The prescriptive or menu offering has been impacted by RTF savings assumptions. The company will still provide this program and is still

actively participating with the RTF on measure savings assumptions. There isn't a specific timeline when this work will be complete. Idaho Power along with other utilities are gathering customer survey information and the intent of that data will be used to inform research. It is an ongoing project.

There were questions and comments around water savings associated with the Irrigation programs and how those are considered non-energy benefits, using less water means less electricity is used for pumps. One member commented that they would like to see the water savings message highlighted in marketing tactics and as an educational component. One member asked if savings from a capital project that originated from the cohort could be allocated to the cohort. Quentin answered that cohort savings is reported within the Custom offering. A member suggested the company continue to look at the kit or giveaway method of delivery to keep energy savings high.

10:22 am C&I&I Programs—Juliet Petersen

Juliet provided updates and year-to-date savings for the commercial, industrial, and irrigation programs. She updated the group on COVID-19 impacts and adaptations to programs. She highlighted the New Construction program and Retrofits and requested feedback from EEAG on proposed changes.

The Commercial New Construction program has experienced a decrease in energy savings compared to this time last year and based on the number of projects in the pipeline. The team is exploring ways to increase participation in this program. One opportunity that has been identified is an increase to the professional assistance incentive. This incentive is available for the third-party architect or engineer who supports the participant in the application process. This incentive is separate from the project incentive and does not impact the participant incentive. Juliet used MentiMeter to obtain feedback and suggestions from EEAG members.

There were questions regarding the current state of the commercial new construction market during COVID and if the company has seen changes in the market and in participation in the program. The Program Specialist answered that there doesn't appear to be any disruption in new construction. There could be impacts in the future in how the current building spaces are utilized. There may be less new construction and more remodeling of existing spaces.

Juliet asked the group- “How long do you think the trial period should last to evaluate effectiveness of changes?”

- The majority of EEAG members preferred a 12-month timeframe.

Several EEAG members commented that it will take time to communicate these changes to the architect and engineers and support the 12-month timeframe.

Feedback from EEAG members- “Proposed changes to the new construction program.”

- Seeing no slowdown of people moving to Idaho. Getting these buildings built correctly the first time is key. We can't count on building codes in the residential sector to ensure conservation.
- Several members commented that this was a “good idea” and that it's important to track the impact / evaluate the program.
- I'd be interested in the professional feedback on a flat incentive for the professional assistance vs based on a percentage.

The Retrofit program participation has seen a decline in projects submitted. Part of this decline could be due to COVID-19 impacts. Several peer utilities have temporarily increased their incentives for their lighting programs.

Idaho Power is proposing a temporary increase to drive participation. Juliet highlighted the measures that are being considered. Increasing incentives on a short-term basis will allow the company to pause and evaluate the impact of the changes and share those with EEAG before a permanent change is implemented.

Juliet asked the group- “What feedback do you have about the proposed changes to the retrofits lighting program?”

- The standard of the IPUC is to “pursue all cost-effective energy efficiency.” If you can increase the incentive and remain cost effective, then the standard requires this
- I think that testing various option on a temporary basis is reasonable. It could help to identify more long-term opportunities and help with short term challenges
- No objection but a lot of this lighting is going to happen anyway. Will need to consider the role of the markets vs. the program
- The length of time could drive people based on “expiring deal”

11:00 am Residential Programs—Andrea Simmons/Shawna Potter

Andrea provided preliminary year-to-date energy savings by program and customer participation. Several programs that require site visits; Energy House Calls, Home Energy Audits, Multifamily Direct Install, have been impacted by COVID-19. Idaho Power is still taking those enrollments and will follow-up with customers when it becomes safe to do so. Wil Gehl provided an update on weatherization and the agencies that provide that service. They are reprioritizing their work in areas where it is safe to do so. Their main concern is the health and safety of their clients.

The slide from the May EEAG meeting that highlights the programs impacted by COVID-19 was reviewed. A question was asked if the company has considered using AMI data for virtual energy audits or explored that possibility due to COVID. Andrea answered that some companies have started doing that and she is collecting data on the mechanics of that technology. One EEAG member encouraged the company to lean into this opportunity and not be put off by those who don’t participate but rather, focus on the early adopters and use that to encourage other who may be hesitant to participate in virtual audits.

Normally this time of year, our Education & Outreach Energy Advisors would be visiting local senior centers to provide in-person educational events. Due to COVID-19, the company needed to come up with different ways to reach these customers. Working with the coordinators and directors of different senior centers, the Energy Advisors assembled giveaway bags at home and dropped them off at senior centers in lieu of hosting in-person events.

The company also added a new line on the AC Cool Credit postcard that reminds customers to let Idaho Power know if they have recently had their air conditioners replaced or serviced. The company has received positive feedback from customers.

Shawna provided an update on the Shade Tree offering. The spring and fall events for 2020 have been cancelled due to COVID-19. The program specialist is researching options for next year. She also provided an update on the Educational Distributions: Welcome Kits, Student EE Kits, and the Energy Savings Kits (mail-by-request kits). As was mentioned in Kathy’s presentation, the Welcome Kits may not be cost effective in 2021. With school attendance uncertainty, certain logistics will need to be addressed, which could impact the Student EE kits offering. As Kathy reviewed in her presentation, the Energy Savings Kits will not be cost effective next year. Because of this, the company is proposing to sunset the Energy Savings Kits offering with a plan to offer a last push in October using a postcard. She asked EEAG for ideas on language the company could use to promote this.

One member suggested the “last chance” tactic is effective because people are incited by not wanting to miss out on an opportunity.

Shawna informed the group that Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is ending the Simple Steps, Smart Savings program as of September 30, 2020. Idaho Power’s Energy Efficient Lighting program will be impacted. In Kathy’s presentation, she mentioned how lighting savings has decreased which is why BPA is ending this program. She also mentioned that showerhead savings were recently deactivated by the Regional Technical Forum, so there is no savings that Idaho Power can claim for those. Idaho Power is exploring alternatives to this program. There were questions and comments about cost effectiveness of a local program vs. the cost sharing of a regional program. One member commented that they are glad to see Idaho Power pursuing a possible replacement for this program.

11:47 am Marketing—Tracey Burtch/Annie Meyer

Tracey and Annie updated the group on the marketing efforts the company is pursuing while also being empathetic to our customers during COVID-19. A new Tip Tuesday design was implemented to focus on saving energy and money while we all spend more time in the home. The company also promoted a summer contest between July 24-August 2 within My Account. As of this presentation, there have been approximately 7300 entries and a lot of positive customer feedback. The company also transitioned the Business Tips on social media to focus on training opportunities that are available.

12:00 pm Wrap-up/Open Discussion

- Will the evaluation presentation happen at the November meeting or later? Quentin answered that hasn’t been decided, he was looking for feedback at this time.
- I do like the shorter meetings. Today’s meeting content good. Having a small break would have been helpful.
- I agree, I do like the shorter meetings.

Quentin thanked the group for their participation and feedback. The next EEAG meeting will be Thursday November 12th.

12:00 pm Meeting Adjourned