

Energy Efficiency Advisory Group (EEAG) February Virtual Meeting

Michelle Toney
Idaho Power Research
Assistant

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Present

Alexa Bouvier – Office of Energy and Mineral Resources
Benedikt Springer – Public Utilities Commission of Oregon
Connie Aschenbrenner – Idaho Power
Diego Rivas – Northwest Energy Coalition
Don Strickler – J.R. Simplot

Ken Robinette – South Central Community Action Partnership
Quentin Nesbitt – Idaho Power
Sidney Irwin – Idaho Irrigation Pumpers Association
Jason Talford – Idaho Public Utilities Commission
Wil Gehl – City of Boise Public Works

Not Present

Brad Heusinkveld – Idaho Conservation League
Jim Hall – WaFd Bank
Taylor Thomas - Idaho Public Utilities Commission

Guest & Presenters*

Adam Thomas – ADM
Alexis Freeman* – Idaho Power
Annie Meyer – Idaho Power
Becky Arte Howell – Idaho Power
Billie McWinn* – Idaho Power
Bo Hanchey* – Idaho Power
Chellie Jensen* – Idaho Power
Cheryl Paoli – Idaho Power
Chris Pollow – Idaho Power
Curtis Willis – Idaho Power
Dahl Bietz – Idaho Power
Heather Polonsky - ADM
Kathy Yi – Idaho Power
Krista West – Idaho Power

Landon Barber – Idaho Power
Laura Conilogue – Idaho Public Utilities Commission
Melissa Kosla* – ADM
Michelle Toney – Idaho Power
Michelle Scala – Public Utilities Commission of Oregon
Mindi Shodeen – Idaho Power
Nathan Black – Idaho Power
Ray Short – Idaho Power
Shelley Martin – Idaho Power
Sheree Wilhite – Idaho Power
Todd Greenwell – Idaho Power
Zack Thompson – Idaho Power

Note Takers

Michelle Toney with Kathy Yi

Meeting Facilitator

Quentin Nesbitt

9:40 A.M. Welcome & Announcements—Quentin Nesbitt

Quentin opened the meeting. There were no questions or comments about the November 2023 notes.

Bo Hanchey- Customer Operations VP for Idaho Power introduced himself and thanked everyone for their participation in EEAG. He then announced Quentin and Billie's new roles and highlighted the company's Demand-Side Management (DSM) Organizational Structure.

Connie mentioned the positive order received in the 2023 DSM prudence case from Idaho PUC.

9:50 A.M. 2023 YTD Financials & Savings—Quentin Nesbitt

Quentin presented the preliminary overall 2023 Energy Efficiency (EE) and Demand Response (DR) financials, savings, and expenses. He also showed overall results as compared to prior years. He then reviewed overall expenses by category and sector then went over the 2024 evaluation plans.

Discussion

One member asked about the capacity of the DR programs for 2018 & 2019 and why capacity was higher than in 2022 & 2023. Quentin explained the changes in the program parameters after the 2021 season, where the program hours are later in the day, have affected customer participation.

The member then commented about the 2016 & 2017 actual load was higher than the capacity in 2023. Quentin explained that it is the timing of when the programs are used. Quentin also added that the irrigation program is split into four groups, and not all will be used in any given event. He added that the Integrated Resource Plan process and modeling takes this into account.

One member asked if there is a chart that shows Oregon versus Idaho. Quentin answered the costs are broken out in the table shown but the savings are not.

The member then asked what "Other" evaluations for the Weatherization programs are. Quentin explained that "Other" evaluations are an internal billing analysis of the savings for those programs which does quantify savings.

The member then asked why in six years, there has been no process evaluations for the weatherization programs from a third party. Quentin and Billie responded, explaining that the Community Action Partnership (CAP) agencies manage the program, not Idaho Power and they adhere to federal rules.

The member then asked about the impact evaluations. Quentin explained that the billing analysis is considered the impact evaluation. ' Landon added that in 2020 an evaluator helped us come up with a methodology for doing our own internal billing analysis and we've been following that since 2020.

10:00 A.M. Residential Programs—Billie McWinn

Billie presented 2023 residential program results and highlights, showing savings and participation for each of the programs, and specific updates for the market transformation pilot, Weatherization Assistance for Qualified Customers (WAQC) re-weatherization, AC Cool Credit, and Shade Tree.

Discussion

Home Energy Report (HER)

One member asked how the HER program works. Billie explained how the program works and how the savings are determined.

Another member asked how long the savings life for the Home Energy Reports program is. Kathy answered that it is a one-year measure life.

Another member asked about the HER contract that is ending, and if there is more information about the new contract. Billie answered that the company has a contract with a new implementer.

Residential New Construction (RNC)

One member asked if the issues Billie described with getting raters for the program were due to a lack of raters or the lack of a rating process. Billie said that the issues are due to the lack of raters in this area.

BRIO

One member asked about the market impact numbers for ductless heat pumps and what needs to be put into place to capture those. Billie said the numbers that were presented last time with the number of heat pumps sold by the vendors is what we have, and it would take a long-term effort to get total results, which was not part of this pilot.

The member then confirmed that the information for heat pumps and vendors shows the heat pumps are being sold and the company successfully engaged but to collect information on actual market impacts the pilot would have to run longer. Billie answered yes, if we wanted to know the full market impact the company would have to evaluate what the market would have done in the absence of this effort, which was more than was being tested as a part of this pilot.

One member asked about the relationship with the Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (NEEA) going forward, commenting that BRIO was in addition to the NEEA effort. The member also asked what the impacts are of NEEA moving on from ductless heat pumps. Billie responded that the Brio effort was intended to supplement NEEA's past activities. She added that the company's involvement with NEEA is independent of these results. Quentin added that the company wanted to test market transformation in a more localized approach with Brio and that is why heat pumps were selected. He added that Billie has presented that in a localized area, you can engage in the market and that's as far as this pilot went. We do not have all the numbers or know what the true impact to the market is, but the pilot did show that by engaging with a mid-level wholesaler approach, you can make an impact on the market.

One member was curious about how much the localized approach could grow and how the same efforts could be applied to a larger scale in a small geographic area. Quentin responded that it is a topic the company is considering.

WAQC Re-Weatherization

One member commented on WAQC funding and bipartisan infrastructure law funding that came through the Department of Energy. The member said it is a large amount of money, and the undertaking is difficult for the agencies because they are trying to spend those funds and balance the other funding from other utilities to get homes weatherized. The bill is funding all heating sources. The member added how stringent requirements are through the Department of Energy, including their requirements of who is allowed to work on the homes.

Another member asked if similar programs for Oregon had the same issues. Cheryl answered that there are less contractors in the Oregon area and that yes, that is a hurdle the CAP agencies deal with. Billie added that the Company is planning to propose changes in Oregon to address this, and other hurdles.

A/C Cool Credit (ACCC)

In response to Billie sharing the roll-out of a new ACCC awareness campaign and enrollment sweepstakes contest, one member asked whether the messaging impact regarding home temperatures is part of it. Billie confirmed that it is part of that campaign.

The member then asked about who the sweepstakes and awareness are marketed towards. Billie replied that it would be to all potential participants since the cost of the sweepstakes would be the same whether marketing to all potential participants or just those with a switch already installed, which was the target for the prior campaign.

The member complimented the marketing strategy then commented that the survey shows people aren't knowledgeable and agrees it is worth it to target the larger market.

Another member stated the importance of increasing DR, then asked if the Bring Your Own Thermostat (BYOT) marketing campaign is included. Billie answered that the company is working to determine if a BYOT program offering can be a long-term cost-effective option.

One member commented on the survey, stating the incentive is noted as too low and asked about raising the incentive. Billie responded that incentive and program parameters are being evaluated.

Shade Tree

One member asked about how the counties are selected. Billie answered that the company has rotated through much of the service area but in hub locations.

Another member said the city is looking at expanding their tree campaigns and would like to have conversations with the company for opportunities to share costs. Billie stated the program specialist will reach out to discuss.

Another member asked why this is changing. Billie replied that the evaluators observed the tree mortality rates and whether the trees survived. The evaluators found reduced savings potential, which is why the value proposition is changing.

10:45 A.M. – Break

11:01 A.M. Commercial, Industrial, & Irrigation Programs—Chellie Jensen

Chellie presented the Commercial, Industrial, and Irrigation Program performance for 2023. She discussed potential offerings for small business lighting, shared about existing cohorts, and the proposed 2024 customer trainings then went over the demand response program preparations.

Discussion

Custom

One member thanked the company for its involvement and is looking forward to future projects.

Small Business Lighting

One member asked about the cost share model and the estimated costs the company is willing to spend. Chellie answered that our plan is a 70/30 cost split with customer to make the program cost effective. The member stated that this is a strong approach being taken with the customer.

Another member asked if there would be some additional workload shifted on the company by cutting out the third party and will the 70/30 help. The member also asked about what impacts have been considered while transitioning away from the third party. Chellie replied that it gives the company more control by working directly with contractors. Program Specialist, Shelley Martin, added that the impact on the company will be taking on those tasks.

One member asked about the crossover of the Retrofits program and the new small business program considering the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA) backstop, which dictates efficiency standards for the manufacturing and sales of lightbulbs, and the removal of screw-in LEDs in Retrofits. Shelley stated that the small business lighting program will be consistent with the Retrofits program and will not offer incentives for screw-in LEDs.

Chellie added that there will be opportunities to educate customers about energy efficiency associated with early replacement and with encouragement to switch them out themselves.

School Cohort

One member asked about the differences between maintaining and sustaining? Chellie answered that the active phase is typically the first two years of engagement with strong consultant support, and includes energy team development, energy policy development, energy model creation, training and report-out workshops, energy champion and team calls, and general energy efficiency awareness. The maintaining phase includes medium consultant support and is typically years three through five or six. This phase includes consultant maintenance of facility energy models, monthly energy champion calls, report-out workshops, and ongoing general development to transition to self-sustaining operations. The sustaining phase is typically beyond year five or six, where the participants manage activities on their own including maintenance of energy models and ongoing focus on energy-saving activities. Participants in this phase are invited to participate in workshops and report outs but cohort related energy savings are no longer claimed or reported, and consultant support is minimal.

Idaho Design Lab (IDL)

One member spoke about the Government Lead by Example Program and thanked Idaho Power for their outreach.

Irrigation

One member asked who the packets of enrollments are mailed to, for the Peak Rewards program. Chellie answered that we send packets to all irrigation customers.

11:47 P.M. Marketing—Alexis Freeman

Alexis presented the marketing overview for all sectors. She discussed the residential survey responses, winter contest, January Connections, and spring energy efficiency tips. Alexis then went over Energy@Work, irrigation news, and highlighted what will be included in the March Connections.

Discussion

No questions or comments.

12:00 P.M. – Lunch

1:00 P.M. Evaluations—ADM Associates, Melissa Kosla

Quentin introduced ADM; Melissa Kosla, Heather Polonsky, and Adam Thomas.

Melissa presented the program information, results, and recommendations for the Home Energy Audit (HEA) and Small Business Direct Install (SBDI) program evaluations.

Quentin reminded everyone that SBDI ended in 2023, but the evaluation was done to review savings and added that as Chellie mentioned we were looking for ways to continue the lighting program to small businesses with appropriate changes.

Discussion

Small Business Direct Install (SBDI)

One member asked about the use of self-reported hours and inquired about the barriers to implementing some sort of verification. Melissa answered you can get a good measure of annual hours by facility type, if participants are randomly selected. Adam added that there are a couple facility types that capture the bulk of savings. Chellie recognized the members' good point and said this is something to consider. Melissa added that looking at the hourly billing data could give us a good determination of the hours.

Home Energy Audit Program (HEA)

One member asked if door sweeps have been considered as weatherstripping and can it be an envelope package. Kathy answered yes, the analysis was done a couple years ago, and auditors didn't want to install those items so, it's a good time to revisit. Billie agreed that the company will look into that.

2:00 P.M. Wrap-up/Open Discussion

Today's meeting was great with good information. I look forward to the next meeting and hopefully it is in person as I always enjoy networking with Idaho Power staff and EEAG members.

This was good as well as enjoyable.

Just a few things. First, thanks for taking the time to hold these meetings. These are always super informative, and it is great to hear the things that are being tracked and see the programs being actively managed. I'm looking forward to the implementation of the new small business lighting program and the efficiencies that can be found there. I'd like to revisit the ACCC and ask if the value of reliability has been considered as there are a lot of opt outs and failure rates.

I appreciate the opportunity to participate.

Thank you all for the effort and presenting. I'm not familiar with all the Idaho Power offerings yet, and I can't always tell if a program is in Idaho or Oregon.

I appreciate the information shared today. Some city planning and development staff are interested in Multifamily. I'll follow up after this and see if we can find a time to chat about that.

Connie thanked everybody for their participation and contributions.

Quentin thanked everyone and reminded members of the next meeting date and as of now, it will be in person.

2:15 P.M. Meeting Adjourned