



LIFE 2004 Regional Meetings

Conference Report: Poughkeepsie

The LIFE 2004 Regional Meeting for the Hudson Valley Region was held on April 27, 2004 at the Best Western in Poughkeepsie. Forty individuals representing twenty-five organizations attended the event. Martin Insogna, Chair of the LIFE Steering Committee and Utility Consumer Program Specialist for the New York State Department of Public Service served as Master of Ceremonies. Support for the regional meeting was provided by our local host, Dutchess County Community Action Agency, Inc.

Agenda

The agenda for the regional meeting included the following sessions:

Consumer Protection Update. This session discussed the changing consumer protection requirements: what they mean for low-income customers and common misconceptions about New York's consumer protection rules. *Speakers: Ben Wiles, Public Utility Law Project; Glenn Alveranga, New York State Dept. of Public Service and Susan Royce, Central Hudson.*

The Changing Resource Picture. This session explored the current public and private resource programs available for low-income energy customers and the changes occurring with those resource programs. *Speakers: Peggie Neville, New York State Energy Research and Development Authority; Bruce Bowdy, New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance and Michael Gorman, New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal.*

Regional Profiles. This session reviewed regional energy, housing, and poverty statistics available for this region. *Speaker: Sue Montgomery Corey, Community Power Network of New York State, Inc.*

Housing and Energy. This session provided a regional perspective on the link between energy and housing. It explored community-based solutions that helped low-income households address their housing and energy needs. *Speakers: Kevin O'Connor, Rural Ulster Preservation Corporation; Jessica Barry, Mid-Hudson Energy Smart Communities; Maureen Lashlee, Dutchess County Community Action Agency, Inc.*

Best Ideas Identified At This Conference

The advisor devices that Central Hudson can provide to let the company know when an at-risk household has a power outage.

Encouraging new home buyers to have an energy inspection.

Networking, collaborating and leveraging to extend the impact of the resource programs for low-income households.

It was good to hear about the NYSERDA Low-Income Programs.

The consumer protection information was very useful.

Strengthening energy education for consumers. This should include outreach for children and schools.

The regional statistics were good.

Financing options to help low-income homeowners make energy improvements.

Energy Smart Affordable housing should be more widely available for low-income households.

The new Assisted Home Performance Program is exciting.

Significant Concerns Identified At This Conference

The availability of accessible, energy-efficient, affordable housing for seniors.

The increasing need for energy bill payment assistance.

Locating Building Performance Institute contractors who are available and accessible.

Lack of financial literacy in many low-income households.

Energy burden has negative connotations. We should be talking about energy needs and how those are increasing.

Low-income households need training-they don't know the strategies needed to address their energy costs.

It's hard to coordinate among programs and share information.

Keeping the lights on is a serious challenge for many low-income households.

Please create a resource booklet!

Geographic availability of programs.

Conference Evaluation Results

Each conferee was asked to complete a conference evaluation. Twenty-three participants completed evaluations with the following results.

1. How well did the Regional Meeting meet your expectations? *Conferees rated this at 4.0 out of 5.0.*
2. Please rate the quality of the speakers overall. *Conferees rated this at 4.26 out of 5.0.*

3. Please rate the quality of the other aspects of LIFE.

Materials	<i>Conferees rated this at 4.1 out of 5.0</i>
Conference Facilities	<i>Conferees rated this at 4.22 out of 5.0</i>
Food	<i>Conferees rated this at 4.39 out of 5.0</i>
Parking	<i>Conferees rated this at 4.65 out of 5.0</i>
Conference Staff	<i>Conferees rated this at 4.65 out of 5.0</i>

Participation By Sector

Sector	Number Attending	Percent of Total
Utility	5	12.5%
State Government	6	15.0%
Local Government	8	20.0%
3 Dept. of Social Services		
4 Office for Aging		
1 Other Local Government		
Community Action/Weatherization	13	32.5%
Community-Based Organization	5	12.5%
Energy Services Company	0	0%
Faith-Based	0	0%
Independent Living Centers	0	0%
Statewide Non-Profit	1	2.5%
National Non-Profit	0	0%
Other	2	5.0%

Organizations Represented at This Regional Meeting

Rural Ulster Preservation Co., Inc.
 NYS Dept. of Public Service
 Mid-Hudson Energy \$mart Communities
 Orange & Rockland Utilities
 NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance
 Sullivan County Office for the Aging
 Town of Greenburgh
 Hudson River Housing, Inc.
 Putnam County Office for the Aging
 Community Power Network of NYS, Inc.
 Astor Early Childhood Program
 WestCOP
 NYS Div. of Housing & Community Renewal

Ulster County Community Action, Inc.
 CACHE, Inc.
 Dutchess County Community Action Agency
 Rural Sullivan Housing Corp.
 Dutchess County Dept. of Social Services
 NYS Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)
 Rural Ulster Preservation Co., Inc.
 NYS Electric & Gas Corp. (NYSEG)
 Dutchess Community Partnership
 Sullivan County Dept. of Social Services
 Central Hudson Gas & Electric
 Public Utility Law Project (PULP)