



2013 Regional Meetings

Low-Income Forum on Energy 2013 Regional Meeting Series

AGENDA

North Country

May 9, 2013

SUNY Canton

Miller Campus Center

Woodcock Conference Suite

Canton, NY 13617



Welcome

On behalf of the LIFE Steering Committee, welcome to today's LIFE Regional Meeting, one of six taking place around the State. This year's theme, LIFE in Action, is designed to provide you with specific action steps you can take to help your constituencies. As the cost of energy continues to pose challenges to New Yorkers with low or fixed incomes, it is important to provide community leaders and service providers with useful, timely information to assist low-income consumers. Today's program will supply you with valuable information on available resources, updates on key programs, and will highlight certain regional best practices. Please also take advantage of the tremendous opportunity for networking at today's event. Often, it takes the right contacts to help serve your clients in the most effective and efficient manner.

We hope that you enjoy today's meeting and I'd like to thank you for participating in the LIFE dialogue!

Len Silverstein, LIFE Chairman

8:00 – 9:00 AM

Registration & Networking

9:00 – 9:30 AM

Welcome & Introductions

Speakers:

*Len Silverstein, NYS Dept. of Public Service & LIFE Chairman
Chris Coll, NYSEERDA*

9:30 – 9:45 AM

Session 1: LIFE as a Resource

The Low-Income Forum on Energy (LIFE) encourages an interactive exchange of information and collaboration among the programs and resources that assist low-income energy consumers. Comprised of organizations and individuals committed to addressing low-income issues, the LIFE network can be a valuable resource for you to better serve your clients and can also provide an opportunity for professional growth. Hear from the LIFE Implementation Team on how you can utilize the LIFE network to better serve your clients.

Speaker:

Sue Montgomery Corey, Community Power Network of NYS

9:45 – 10:15 AM

Session 2: Updates on the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) is a federally funded program that issues heating benefits to supplement eligible household's annual energy costs. Many low-income households depend on HEAP benefits to offset their home energy costs, with nearly 1.4 million households in New York State receiving a benefit during the 2012-2013 program year. This presentation will provide you with an update on the 2012-2013 HEAP program, a look forward to the 2013-2014 program and promote the enrollment of HEAP recipients in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) through my benefits.

Speaker:

Kathleen Martin, NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

10:15 – 10:30 AM

Session 3: The Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage (EPIC) Program

The Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage (EPIC) program is a New York State program for seniors administered by the Department of Health. It helps more than 270,000 income-eligible seniors aged 65 and older to supplement their out-of-pocket Medicare Prescription Drug Plan (Part D) costs. This presentation will provide you with an overview of the EPIC program and highlight recent changes to the program.

Speaker: Candy Rivera-Whitehead, Magellan Health

10:30 – 10:45 AM

Networking Break

10:45 - 11:30 AM

Session 4: Hurricane Irene: A Year Later

Hurricane Irene affected many homes and communities across the North Country. This session will provide you with an opportunity to look back at the impact that the storm had on the region and to discuss the ongoing recovery efforts. Leaders involved in the storm response will discuss their experience and will impart lessons that can be applied to future disaster response initiatives.

Speakers:

*William Ferebee, Town of Keene, Supervisor
Don Jaquish, Essex County Emergency Services Dept.*

11:30 – 12:00 PM

Session 5: New York's Competitive Energy Market

In 1994, the energy industry was restructured in New York to provide consumers the opportunity to purchase electricity and natural gas from an energy service company (ESCO), instead of only from their utility. The Department of Public Service has opened a proceeding, in Case 12-M-0476, to review and address specific concerns, such as aggressive door-to-door marketing, and other important aspects of the competitive energy market for residential customers. In addition, the Department has surveyed residential customers to find out their experiences with ESCOs. This presentation will review the results of the survey, provide an overview of the public comments received in the proceeding and will discuss options for future Commission action to address the concerns raised in the residential survey and in this proceeding.

Speaker:

Len Silverstein, NYS Dept. of Public Service

12:00 – 1:00 PM

Lunch & Networking

1:00 – 1:45 PM

Session 6: The Impact of Climate Change on Vulnerable Populations

Climate change, marked by increasing temperatures, rising sea levels, changing precipitation patterns, and increased frequencies of extreme weather, has been widely recognized as an issue that needs to be addressed in New York State and across the globe. The discussion on climate change has largely centered on impacts to our environment and strategies to reduce Green House Gas emissions. However, an emerging topic in this discussion is the impact on vulnerable members of our society. How does climate change and the possible mitigation affect low-income, senior citizens, disabled, and sick?

This session will provide an overview of the Homegrown Sustainability Plan for the North Country. In addition, we will consider how climate change affects the vulnerable members of our society and seek to identify opportunities to introduce this important issue into the larger discussions on climate change.

Speaker:

Kate Fish, Adirondack North Country Association

1:45 – 2:15 PM

Session 7: An Update on the Weatherization Assistance Program

The Weatherization Assistance Program provides an essential service to low-income New Yorkers by delivering energy conservation improvements and addressing health and safety issues in homes across the state through a network of 60 sub grantees.

This presentation will provide you with an update on program activities during the last year and plans for the 2013-2014 program, including the coordination with the federal Healthy Homes Initiative.

Speaker:

Dan Buyer, NYS Homes and Community Renewal

Networking Break

Session 8: The Implications of Heating with Biofuels

Wood has been a primary fuel for space and water heating for many homes across the North Country due to its abundance and relative affordability. Over the past couple of decades, wood pellets and other biofuels have become more common in the market place. This presentation will provide you with an overview of the benefits and negatives associated with biofuels, in addition to some important considerations when burning biofuels.

Speaker:

Mike Newtown, SUNY Canton

Session 9: Discussing Energy with Your Client

Clients are provided with information everywhere they go, but how can you get them to apply this information and benefit from it? This session will dispel myths related to energy use, provide simple energy saving actions to share with your clients, and provide tips on how best to communicate these ideas to the low-income households you serve.

Speaker:

Carol Sweeney, Honeywell

Session 10: Use a LIFE Line

Do you still have questions that were not answered throughout the day? Do you have a specific case that you would like to get input on? Use a LIFE line and ask your colleagues for help!

Wrap Up and Closing Remarks

Evaluation & Raffle

The evaluation form is a critical tool in developing the type of event that is most beneficial to you. Please complete the evaluation form throughout the day and turn it in at the end of the program. When you turn in your evaluation, you will be given a ticket for the raffle drawing, which will occur at the end of the day.



Thank You to the North Country Regional Meeting Leaders

The LIFE Steering Committee would like to thank our North Country Regional Meeting leaders, Sue Montgomery Corey, Community Power Network of NYS, for her time and expertise in the development of the agenda for this meeting. Her commitment to the LIFE mission and the support from the organizations that they represent on the LIFE Steering Committee is greatly appreciated.

Since the NYS Public Service Commission initiated LIFE in 1998, the LIFE Steering Committee has been an integral part of the growth and development of the program. The Steering Committee is comprised of the following organizations:

The Association for Energy Affordability, Inc.
Cattaraugus County Community Action, Inc.
Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation
Community Power Network of NYS, Inc.
Consolidated Edison of NY, Inc.
Honeywell
National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation
National Grid
New York State Community Action Association (NYSCAA)
New York State Department of Public Service (NYS DPS)
New York State Department of State (NYS DOS)
New York State Homes and Community Renewal (HCR)
New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)
New York State Office for the Aging (NYS OFA)
New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA)
New York State Weatherization Director's Association (NYSWDA)
New York State Electric and Gas Corporation (NYSEG)
Orange and Rockland Utilities, Inc. (O&R)
United Way of the Dutchess-Orange Region
Rochester Gas and Electric (RG&E)

LIFE is sponsored by the New York State Public Service Commission and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority. For more information about LIFE, please visit our website at www.lifenynews.org.

Save the Date!

The 2014 LIFE Statewide Conference
will be held in May 2014, in Albany NY.

Details including dates and program information will be available in late 2013.

As part of our on-going commitment to both environmental and fiscal responsibility, we will not be printing and distributing presentation handouts. Please support us in these efforts by going to www.lifenynews.org after to download copies of available presentations. Attendees will receive an email notification when the presentations become available.