



Low-Income Forum on Energy

Low-Income Forum on Energy 2015 Regional Meeting Series

AGENDA

April 30 - Long Island
Holiday Inn Plainview
215 Sunnyside Blvd
19th Floor Auditorium
Plainview, NY 11803



Low-Income Forum on Energy

Welcome

On behalf of the LIFE Steering Committee, welcome to today's LIFE Regional Meeting, one of seven taking place around New York State this year. As the cost of energy continues to pose challenges to New Yorkers with low or fixed incomes, it is important to make available to community leaders and service providers useful, timely information to assist low-income consumers. Today's program will supply you with updates on key programs along with valuable information on available resources and will highlight certain regional best practices. The program also includes new developments in the efforts toward Reforming the Energy Vision (REV), which is designed to provide customers with greater efficiency, reliability, and resiliency. 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. I 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 am – 9:00 am

Registration and Networking

9:00 am – 9:15 am

Welcome and Introductory Remarks

Chris Coll, NYSERDA
Len Silverstein, NYS Department of Public Service

9:15 am – 10:45 am

Session 1: An Overview of REV and Updates on PSC Proceedings Affecting Low-Income Customers

An Update on the Clean Energy Fund

The NYS Public Service Commission's Reforming the Energy Vision (REV) initiative will lead to regulatory changes that promote more efficient use of energy and a deeper penetration of renewable resources such as wind and solar. Related to REV, the Proceeding on Community Net Metering (15-E-0082) can help low-income customers participate in community solar projects. Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) (14-M-0224) allows local governments to procure energy supply services for their residents. As part of a CCA program, local governments can develop distributed energy resources or otherwise engage in energy planning. An update will be provided on the Low-Income Proceeding (14-M-0565), which is designed to examine programs to address energy affordability issues for low-income utility customers. In addition, the PSC has ordered new safeguards (12-M-0476) to protect customers of energy service companies (ESCOs).

As a key component of New York State's REV, the Clean Energy Fund (CEF) proposal represents a 10-year, \$5 billion funding commitment to support clean energy market development and innovation. The CEF will deliver market enabling strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through efficiency and renewables, increase private investment and accelerate growth in the State's clean energy economy, reduce customer energy bills, and ultimately provide more value to customers. This session will provide attendees with an update on the status of the CEF proposal and an overview of the strategies specific to low to moderate income consumers and communities.

Speakers:

Len Silverstein, NYS Department of Public Service
Chris Coll, NYSERDA

10:45 am – 11:00 am

Networking Break

11:00 am – 11:30 am

Session 2: Consumer Protections: Identity Theft and Scams

Identity theft is one of the fastest growing crimes in America. Victimized someone is easier than ever, with widespread availability of personal information and access to it. With only a few pieces of valid personal identifiable information, thieves may be able to apply for and receive credit and/or utility services in your name, as well as file fraudulent tax returns. Thieves can also use a variety of scams, frauds, and hoaxes to gain access to your personal information or simply to steal your finances. This presentation is designed to increase your awareness of identity theft and provide strategies to help you prevent victimization. It also provides basic tips to help you recognize and avoid scams while presenting the tools and resources to utilize if you fall victim to a scam.

Speaker:

James Dees, NYS Department of State

11:30 am – 12:00 pm

Session 3: The Effects of Storm Recovery on Weatherization Work in Long Island

In the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, NYS Homes and Community Renewal expanded the Weatherization Assistance program to include re-weatherization of previously weatherized clients who were affected by the storm. This expansion presented both opportunities and challenges. Community Development Corporation of Long Island's (CDCLI) mission was to revisit homes that had already been weatherized and address some of the issues that were created by the storm. In addition, CDCLI received funds from NYSERDA's EmPower New York program to assist in this effort. This presentation will discuss the opportunities and challenges of recovery work in Long Island, using as a case example a client whose home was destroyed by both Hurricane Irene and Superstorm Sandy.

Speaker:

Maureen Pedrotti, Community Development Corporation of Long Island

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

Lunch and Networking

1:00 pm – 1:30 pm

Session 4: Utility Updates

Utilities have a long history of providing energy assistance to their low-income customers—from budget billing to efficiency programs. This utility updates session provides the most recent information on utility low-income energy efficiency and payment assistance programs currently being administered in New York State.

Speakers:

Suzanne Brienza, PSEG
Rosanne Small-Morgan, National Grid

1:30 pm – 2:00 pm

Session 5: Heating System Installation for Low-Income Households: Lessons Learned through EmPower New York

The severe weather in the last two years has stressed the heating systems in use across our State. Breakdowns in the middle of the winter can be life-threatening situations. In the last two years EmPower New York has developed procedures for assisting households in need of heating replacement and repair in the middle of winter. This session will explore ways to optimize referrals, weigh considerations of budget and efficiency, and coordinate heating repair with energy efficiency services.

Speaker:

Dan Kushnick, Honeywell

2:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Session 6: Using Nontraditional Partnerships to Drive Energy Efficiency Delivery in Low-Income Communities

Energy efficiency for low and moderate income consumers can have a positive impact on constrained household budgets. However, as promising as this value proposition seems to be, enrolling consumers for energy efficiency programs can be challenging and expensive for contractors. One possible solution for contractors to reduce customer acquisition efforts and costs is to partner with other organizations that provide services to low and moderate income households.

The Long Island Low-Income Energy Task Force, a strategic partnership of diverse community players including for-profit Home Performance companies, social enterprises, local environmental groups, regional food banks, medical insurance providers, social service providers, nonprofits and others, has been piloting a new energy efficiency client identification and signup program. Preliminary program results have been very positive and may actually reduce customer acquisition costs by as much as 90 percent. This session will provide an overview of the program and explain how a similar program might benefit other service providers.

Speakers:

Cindy Ciuffo, Green Homes Long Island
Chuck Schwartz, LI Green

2:30 pm – 3:00 pm

Session 7: Foreclosure Protection Programs

Foreclosure actions in New York State increased significantly in 2008 and remain high today. This session will identify the foreclosure impact on Long Island; how New York and the federal government has attempted to address the impact through legislation and regulations; and resources homeowners may be able to access to help them avoid foreclosure. Foreclosures have become a marathon process in New York and this session will explore why. The State requires that homeowners are given a mandatory settlement conference at the beginning of the foreclosure process to allow both sides the opportunity to negotiate in good faith a possible resolution allowing the homeowner to stay in their home. The U.S. Treasury Department created the Home Affordable Modification Program to allow borrowers to make more affordable payments and mortgagees and to reap the financial benefits of its loans. Other regulations have been enacted to establish procedures for mortgage servicers to follow that would ensure an objective criteria to this process. And, nonprofit programs have been funded to provide assistance to homeowners to help them advocate and negotiate with the mortgage servicers to achieve a favorable outcome.

Speaker:

Michael Wigutow, Nassau Suffolk Law Services

3:00 pm – 3:15 pm

Session 8: DPS Long Island: Our Role and Responsibilities to Low-Income Electric Customers

This session will provide an overview of the restructured electric utility operations on Long Island as well as the Department of Public Service's (DPS) responsibilities including customer rights and protections, review of electricity rates, preparations for and response to storms and other emergencies, and customer complaint resolution.

Speaker:

Anna Senatore, NYS Department of Public Service

3:15 pm – 3:30 pm

Networking Break

3:30 pm – 4:00 pm

Session 8: 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!

4:00 pm

Wrap Up and Closing Remarks

Evaluation and Raffle

Thank You to the LIFE 2015 Regional Meeting Leaders

The LIFE Steering Committee would like to thank our 2015 Regional Meeting leaders for their time and expertise in the development of the agenda for this meeting and in the facilitation of scholarship opportunities. Their commitment to the LIFE mission and the support from the organizations that they represent on the LIFE Steering Committee is greatly appreciated. In addition, the Steering Committee extends gratitude to the LIFE Implementation Team, comprised of Sue Montgomery Corey (Community Power Network of NYS), Chuck Schwartz (LI Green), and Jennifer Monroe (Adirondack Efficiency), for their contributions to meeting content and logistics.

LIFE 2015 Regional Meetings Planning Subcommittee

Donna Boyce, Solix, Inc.; Chris Coll, NYSERDA; Sue Montgomery Corey, Community Power Network of NYS; Mishel Filisha, NYSERDA; Kate Granger, National Grid; John Mazzarella, NYSERDA; Beth Ryan, NYS Homes and Community Renewal; Jackie Sykas, NYSEG/RG&E; Virginia Walsh, Honeywell

LIFE 2015 Regional Meetings Scholarship Subcommittee

Sue Montgomery Corey, Community Power Network of NYS; Pat Fayó, United Way of the Dutchess Orange Region; Monica Ferreri, NYS Department of Public Service; Mishel Filisha, NYSERDA; Kim McMann, NYS Community Action Association; Beth Ryan, NYS Homes and Community Renewal

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:

Association for Energy Affordability, Inc.
Cattaraugus Community Action, Inc.
Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation
Consolidated Edison of NY, Inc.
Honeywell
National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation
National Grid
New York State Community Action Association
New York State Department of Public Service
New York State Department of State
New York State Electric and Gas Corporation
New York State Energy Research and Development Authority
New York State Homes and Community Renewal
New York State Office for the Aging
New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance
New York State Weatherization Directors' Association
Orange and Rockland Utilities, Inc.
PSEG Long Island
Rochester Gas and Electric
Solix, Inc.
United Way of the Dutchess-Orange Region

LIFE is sponsored by the New York State Public Service Commission (PSC) and supported by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). Visit www.lifenynews.org for more information about LIFE.

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 the meetings to download copies of available presentations. Attendees will receive an email notification when the presentations become available.



Save the Date!

The 2016 LIFE Statewide Conference will be held in May 2016 in the Capital District. Details including dates and program information will be available in late 2015.