



NYSERDA

NYSERDA Residential Market Advisory Group (RMAG) Webinar

March 10, 2021 Meeting Summary

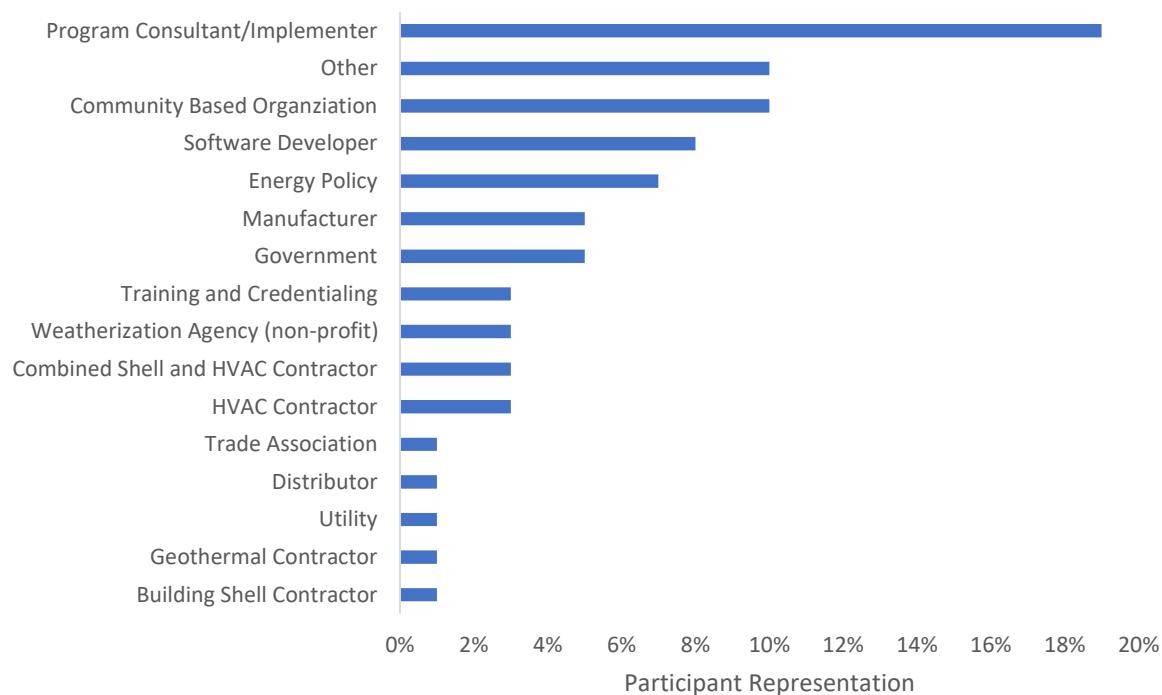
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Meeting Overview

On March 10, 2021, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) hosted a virtual meeting of the Residential Market Advisory Group (RMAG). The meeting provided updates on activities related to RMAG priority items since the previous meeting, held in October 2020. NYSERDA staff shared updates on online training tools, workforce development opportunities, Energy Efficiency and Housing Advisory Panel policy recommendations, the New York State (NYS) Clean Heat marketing campaign, and the development of a Heat Pump Planner to inform homeowners about residential heat pumps. Meeting participants engaged in discussion regarding education and awareness of heat pump technology. The presentation slides for this meeting can be found here: <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/Partners-and-Investors/Partner-With-NYSERDA/Residential-Market-Advisory-Group>.

In total, 71 individuals attended the meeting, including 14 NYSERDA staff. Meeting participants self-identified their residential market focuses, bringing diverse perspectives to the dialog, as illustrated in the chart below:



Welcome and 2021 Priorities

Courtney Moriarta, Director of NYSERDA's Single Family Residential department, welcomed participants to the webinar. Sara Omar, the meeting facilitator from Kearns & West, reviewed the meeting agenda and ground rules. Sara then invited participants to share their 2021 priorities with the group. These priorities are summarized into the following major themes:

- Working on demand-side response.
- Expanding work related to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Focusing on low-to-middle income (LMI) customers and hard-to-reach populations.

- Learning more about and implementing NYSERDA programs, including Healthy Housing and the Home Energy Savings Program, a pay for performance initiative.
- Advancing electrification through heat pump and integrated controls technology.
- Increasing resilience through home efficiency and weatherization.

[Recap of the RMAG Q4 2020 Meeting Series](#)

Laura Geel, Program Manager with NYSERDA's Single Family Residential department, provided a recap of the RMAG meeting series held in the fourth quarter of 2020. The meeting series took place over five days and included three working group sessions focused on normalizing heat pumps, ramping up to meet clean energy goals, and adjusting to the new normal created by the COVID pandemic.

Laura reviewed the top priorities identified in each of the three working group sessions and provided an update on NYSERDA's work to advance each of these priorities. These updates are summarized as follows:

Normalizing Heat Pumps

- **Training for Service Technicians:** This item called for focused trainings for service technicians. There were several no-cost online trainings available in 2020 and these are discussed in the Workforce Development section of the meeting.
- **Experiential Demonstrations:** Efforts are ongoing within NYSERDA to advance this item. A more detailed update will be provided at the next RMAG meeting.
- **Testimonials from Customers:** Efforts are ongoing within NYSERDA to advance this item. A more detailed update will be provided at the next RMAG meeting.

Ramping Up to Meet Our Goals

- **Large Scale Pilot:** large scale pilot to demonstrate energy efficient electrification and renewable generation projects. NYSERDA is seeking champions to lead the advancement of this priority item and participants are encouraged to reach out if they would like to be involved.
- **Workforce Development Forum:** NYSERDA has been discussing this item internally and is seeking RMAG members to help advance workforce development goals. This item is discussed in more detail during the Workforce Development section of the meeting.
- **Non-Traditional Partners:** NYSERDA has recruited several new members to the RMAG since the last RMAG meeting. Recruitment of new members is an ongoing effort, and meeting participants are encouraged to invite their colleagues to join the RMAG.

The New Normal

- **Post-Installation Data:** No specific action has been taken yet to advance this item, but NYSERDA is working on advancing remote audits which could be used to advance post-installation data collection.
- **Pools of Trained Contractors:** This item is included under the umbrella of Workforce Development, which is addressed later in the meeting.
- **Peer to Peer Group:** This item is included under the umbrella of Workforce Development, which is addressed later in the meeting.

Laura then presented updates on other priority items identified during the previous RMAG meeting. These included:

- **Ally Network:** NYSERDA is currently working to build a trade ally network specific to decarbonization efforts.
- **Connect on Policy Goals:** In 2020 NYSERDA connected RMAG members to the Building Performance Association (BPA) to help members connect on policy goals. This item is considered completed.
- **Research of Network-Building Successes:** NYSERDA is currently working on this research.
- **Community Based Efforts:** NYSERDA is currently working on community-based efforts that will address three other priority items identified during the previous RMAG meeting.
- **Workforce Development:** Five of the priority items identified during the previous RMAG meeting dealt with workforce development goals. These are discussed under the Workforce Development section of the meeting.

Laura summarized the progress updates by noting that NYSERDA had made meaningful progress on eight of the priority items identified during the previous RMAG meeting, while an additional ten items had seen at least some progress.

[2021 Priorities & Preliminary Policy Considerations](#)

Emily Dean, NYSERDA's Director of Market Development, presented on the NYS Clean Heat Energy Efficiency and Housing (EE&H) Advisory Panel. The panel was convened to provide New York State's Climate Action Council (CAC) with recommendations for implementing the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA).

Recommendations from the EE&H Panel address three pillars of building decarbonization across single family (SF), multifamily (MF), and commercial and institutional (C&I) buildings. These pillars include:

- Energy Efficiency and Conservation
- Building Electrification and Low Carbon Fuels
- Decarbonizing Electricity Supply

The EE&H panel is composed of a diverse set of experts in various sectors across the state. To date, the panel has conducted three roundtable meetings, a public input webinar, and a stakeholder survey to solicit feedback and develop a set of draft policy recommendations. Emily reviewed the draft recommendations developed by the panel, noting that recommendations are preliminary and therefore not yet finalized.

Emily reviewed next steps for the EE&H Panel, which include submitting recommendations to the Climate Action Council in May and continuing public engagement efforts. EE&H staff will also develop a summary of public comments received, which will be posted to the CLCPA website at: <https://climate.ny.gov/Advisory-Panel/Meetings-and-Materials>.

Participants offered suggestions for the EE&H Panel as follows:

- One participant suggested considering Community Solar to serve LMI communities. Community Solar, combined with weatherization and other suggested measures could help achieve affordability and support decarbonization for LMI customers.
- One participant requested NYSERDA share more information with homeowners regarding clean heating and cooling (CH&C) and energy efficiency, and suggested providing information sheets

about EmPower, Affordable Housing Program, and Comfort Home program translated into more languages than are currently available.

New RMAG Structure

Laura Geel reviewed the updated mission of the RMAG, which had been a focus of the previous RMAG series meetings. The updated mission reads as follows:

To bring together residential market actors to envision the next generation of residential clean energy solutions and to facilitate deployment of strategies that stimulate market growth, deliver customer value, and enable achievement of New York State's energy policy goals. Including but not limited to CLCPA goals, fuel poverty, and climate and carbon reduction goals.

Laura then reviewed RMAG objectives established to help achieve the RMAG mission and the structure of the RMAG Charter. She highlighted three stakeholder group types that inform the RMAG: Working Groups, Listening Sessions & Workshops, and Expert Panels. Each of these groups provides expertise and recommendations to the broader RMAG, which in turn provides feedback, input, and information to NYSERDA. A graphic noting this engagement process is attached in Appendix A.

Amy Kasson-Muzio, Program Manager with NYSERDA's Standards and Quality Assurance department, presented an overview of the NYSERDA Quality Assurance (QA) Working Group, as one example of the working groups which advise the RMAG. The group was formed in August 2020 with the objective to improve communication and enhance learning opportunities through data generated from NYSERDA's QA, quality control (QC), and program activities to support program contractors and overall market growth.

Since its inception, the QA working group has increased communication across all stakeholders and conducted a customer satisfaction survey. The group also reassessed and streamlined the Energy Affordability and Equity (EAE) QA checklist, which resulted in an 85% reduction in inspection tasks in the checklist.

Laura invited participants to submit questions and feedback regarding the RMAG structure, charter, and working groups, to resmarket@nyserda.ny.gov.

Workforce Development

Laura Giannini, Senior Project Manager with TRC Companies, presented on NYSERDA's initiatives related to clean energy workforce development and training.

Laura solicited feedback and questions from meeting participants. One participant asked whether internship funding is available to HeatSmart communities. HeatSmart communities may be eligible for the PON4000: Clean Energy Internship Program and some have hired interns through the program. Local municipalities who meet the other eligibility criteria of the program are eligible to participate, as are not-for-profit organizations. Please contact cleanenergyinternship@nyserda.ny.gov with specific questions regarding eligibility for an organization as needed.

Laura then presented an overview of online training tools that NYSERDA offered in the 12 months prior to this meeting. These tools include a Steven Winter Associates (SWA) series on building electrification,

online courses through Interplay Learning, and CLEARResult online trainings. NYSERDA is currently reviewing participation levels for these activities to determine which will continue to be offered going forward. Laura then solicited questions and feedback from participants regarding the online training resources so that they are better utilized in the future. Participant feedback is summarized as follows:

- Multiple participants indicated that they were previously unaware of the online training resources. There was discussion regarding promotion of the trainings and whether recordings of the trainings would be made available. Laura indicated that NYSERDA had promoted online trainings through existing mailing lists, and that NYSERDA is currently reviewing and evaluating the trainings.
- One participant asked whether any online training resources are still available. Laura noted that the commercial series of the Steven Winters Associates training recently announced additional sessions. The CLEARResult training is no longer available, and the Interplay training is not currently expanding participation, though those with current licenses for the training may continue to participate.
- One participant asked whether the online trainings offered Building Performance Institute (BPI) credits or other certifications. None of the online trainings mentioned during the presentation included BPI credits. The Interplay Learning offering did include some courses that qualify for NATE and NABCEP continuing education credit hours.

Call for Participants

Sara Omar issued a call for participants to volunteer as champions for the priority items identified at the previous RMAG meetings. Sara highlighted four items for participants to consider joining:

1. Creating a forum for exchange of ideas on workforce development, particularly among low-income and disadvantaged populations.
2. Developing pools of trained technicians' contractors can recruit from, to help counter staffing shortages.
3. Setting up peer-to-peer contractor groups with non-competing contractors to share ideas and best practices.
4. Developing a 6-month Heat Pump boot camp

RMAG participants are encouraged to reach out to resmarket@nyserda.ny.gov if they would like to be involved with any of the above items.

Decarbonization Efforts

Cory Nicosia, Assistant Project Manager with NYSERDA's marketing team, presented on the NYS Clean Heat marketing campaign which will be launching in mid-April 2021. The campaign was developed by a Marketing Working Group composed of six investor-owned utilities and representatives from NYSERDA's lean heating and cooling team. The campaign aims to improve coordination among NYSERDA and utilities regarding heat pump marketing, and to guide development, roll out, and performance reporting of a statewide consumer awareness program.

To reach these goals, the marketing campaign will use digital media to reach all homeowners who meet the campaign's targeting criteria and implement additional focused outreach to areas with high

concentrations of target homeowners. This outreach will be paired with utility marketing, which will target customers with offers related to energy use and equipment. Target audiences will be identified based on a set of criteria used to determine which homes are ideal for clean heat upgrades and which have a propensity to adopt clean heating and cooling technologies.

Cory shared a series of creative samples from the campaign, including examples of lifestyle photography and a promotional video advertising the Clean Heat campaign. She then introduced the cleanheat.ny.gov website landing environment. The website includes pathways for customers to access rebates, find NYS Clean Heat contractors, and access information about NYS Clean Heat.

One participant asked whether NYSERDA felt lifestyle photography would be effective for pushing homeowners to cleaner heating options. Cory responded that yes, NYSERDA believed that showing comfort in the home through photography resonates with homeowners.

[Heat Pump Planner](#)

Michael Courtney, Project Manager with NYSERDA's Single Family Residential department, discussed the Heat Pump Planner, an outreach and education tool for customers to evaluate heat pump alternatives. The planner will be available as a PDF document and on the NYSERDA website, and is designed to educate homeowners about the uses, benefits, and costs of residential heat pump options. The PDF version of the Planner will be released in March 2021 and the website version will be released in the second quarter of 2021.

[Discussion](#)

Participants engaged in a discussion regarding raising awareness about heat pumps. Key discussion points are summarized below:

- Participants shared strategies for raising awareness about heat pumps. One participant shared that they are using personalized videos to showcase potential savings from heat pumps. Another participant shared that they developed a Tiny Home Powerhouse to demonstrate heat pump effectiveness. The participant shared the following link to the Tiny Home PowerHouse website: <https://www.tinypowerhouse.org/>
- There was discussion regarding development of a one-stop website page with access to information about all available rebates, incentives, and financing. NYSERDA intends to create such a webpage as part of the NYS Clean Heat Program.
- There was discussion regarding the electric grid impacts associated with increased heat pump installations. One participant noted that envelope improvements are crucial to ensuring heat pumps are reliable during cold weather. NYSERDA is considering and embarking on research efforts to quantify and mitigate such grid impacts.
- One participant suggested improving the precision of contractor lists that are distributed to customers, so that customers living upstate are not given lists of contractors located downstate, for example.
- One participant noted that there is demand for case studies from contractors and homeowners. Case studies are useful both as success stories and opportunities for learning.

Wrap Up and Next Steps

Several participants indicated interest in participating further in RMAG priority actions, including developing the Large-Scale Pilot and supporting a workforce development forum. Participants are encouraged to reach out to resmarket@nyserda.ny.gov if they would like to participate in or learn more about any of the RMAG priority actions.

Courtney thanked participants for joining the RMAG meeting and for their contributions. She then adjourned the meeting.

Appendix A: RMAG Engagement Process

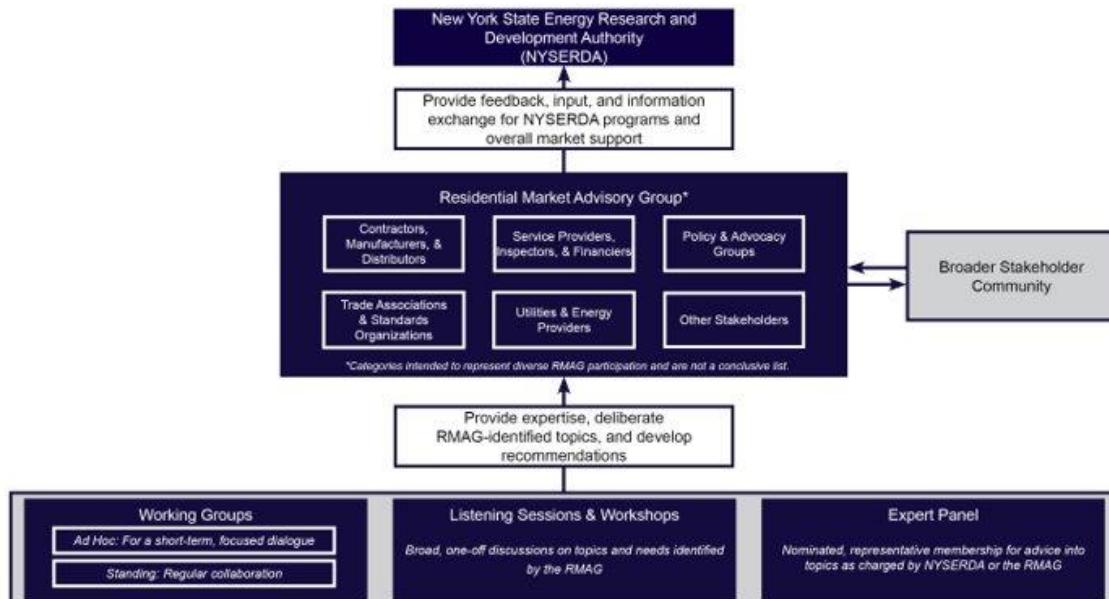


Figure 1: Information flow between stakeholder groups