

KEEPING THE [EFFICIENT] LIGHTS ON: THE ROLE OF DEMAND-SIDE OPTIONS IN RESPONDING TO ELECTRIC SYSTEM RELIABILITY CONCERNS

Moderator: William P. Saxonis, New York State Department of Public Service, Albany, NY

Panelists:

Stephen Pertusiello, Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc.

Michael Messenger, California Energy Commission

Jean Shaffer, Seattle City Light

Martin Kushler, American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy

Summary:

Reliable electric power is a critical ingredient in assuring our quality of life and in maintaining the strength of the American economy. In many states, economic expansion has outstripped even the most optimistic predictions of the growth of electric consumption. Increasing electricity use combined with factors such as rising fuel prices, unusual weather conditions, difficulties in increasing generation capacity, increased need for plant maintenance, and transmission constraints have contributed to a serious threat to electric system reliability in many parts of the nation and placed upward pressure on the cost of power. As a result, we are seeing the emergence of a variety of energy efficiency and other demand-side program options, as policymakers and regulators struggle to find effective strategies to respond to these challenges.

We have assembled a distinguished panel of experts to describe how their regions are incorporating energy efficiency and demand reduction programs as a part of their response to the reliability challenge, and to discuss the current and potential role for energy program evaluation in these efforts. Our experts will address reliability issues from a variety of perspectives including California, a large urban center - New York City, the Pacific Northwest and national. We have asked the panelists to focus on lessons learned and offer practical recommendations for the future.