SESSION 6B

INFORMATION AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY:
WHAT DO CUSTOMERS WANT TO KNOW?

Moderator: Linda Dethman, Dethman & Associates

PAPERS:

What Is It I Need To Know? The Relationship Between Information Seeking and Intended Action Relating to Energy Efficiency
>   Eric Rambo, PA Govt. Services, Middleton, WI
>   Shel Feldman, Shel Feldman Mgmt. Consulting, Middleton, WI

Seattle MeterWatch: Using Customer Feedback to Build an Internet-Based Energy Use Service
>   Dennis Pearson, Seattle City Light, Seattle, WA
>   Linda Lockwood, Seattle City Light, Seattle, WA
>   Bahiru Egziabiher, Seattle City Light, Seattle, WA

Customer Use of Web-based Energy Usage Data – An Evaluation of California's Real-Time Energy Metering Program
>   Steven Braithwait, Christensen Associates
>   David Hungerford, California Energy Commission
>   Michael Welsh, Christensen Associates

SESSION SUMMARY:

The core questions for these three papers are ones that many energy programs face:
- What kinds of information about energy do consumers need and want?
- What are the best ways to provide that information?
- How will consumers use new information?

Rambo and Feldman examine the efficacy of a program theory on which brand advertising for the Wisconsin Focus on Energy rests: that increasing awareness of a problem can lead to gathering more information about the problem, which in turn can increase intentions to act on the problem. The authors explore this hypothesis by analyzing the results of more than 2,000 surveys conducted with residential customers. The analysis raises questions about the theorized relationships, suggests a need to think through the conditions under which the theory works and does not work, and discusses the implications for designing and targeting messages.

In the second paper, Lockwood, Pearson, and Egziabiher evaluate the reception of and needed improvements for Seattle Meter Watch – an Internet-based energy consumption information service – among Seattle City Light's larger business customers. The service allows these customers to view, graph, and download their electrical consumption, cost, and power factor data in 15-minute intervals.

The authors gathered feedback from users through focus groups and an emailed survey. This feedback confirms that the service has high value for customers and that they use it for troubleshooting, energy conservation, budget monitoring/forecasting, and insight into energy issues.

The third paper by Braithwait and Hungerford describes preliminary results of a qualitative and quantitative evaluation of the Real Time Energy Meters program in California. The *qualitative* evaluation provides "lessons learned" about the metering technologies, the installation process, the communication of information to customers, and customers' perceptions about the new metering information affected their energy usage patterns. The *quantitative* evaluation analyzes the effects of the new meters on customers' demand and energy consumption, their energy usage patterns, and/or their conversion to a Time of Use price structure.