

## SESSION 3D

### **YOURS, MINE, OR OURS – CAN WE RESOLVE THE ATTRIBUTION CONUNDRUM?**

*Moderator: Carol White, National Grid*

#### PAPERS:

##### **Free-Ridership as a Way to Kill Programs – How Evaluation Policies Can Frustrate Efficiency Goals**

Douglas Mahone, Heschong Mahone Group, Inc.

##### **A Fresh Look at Evaluation to Support Energy Efficiency in the 21st Century**

Rafael Friedmann, Pacific Gas & Electric Company

##### **The Intersection of Policy and Methodology in Net Savings Estimation: Recommendations from a Regional Scoping Study**

Lisa Wilson-Wright, NMR

Lynn Hoefgen, NMR

Jane Peters, Research Into Action

Marjorie McCrae, Research Into Action

Elizabeth Titus, Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships

Cheryl Browne, NMR

#### SESSION SUMMARY:

Energy policies that rely on current practices to assess net savings (attribution) may lead to unintended consequences, including premature program closure, understated benefits, misdirected modifications or overly cautious programs and initiatives. The authors in this session will focus on these policy issues and will also address methodological alternatives to consider when assessing net savings.

Douglas Mahone presents a thought piece that includes examples of how evaluation policies can define free-ridership, with the result of killing valid energy efficiency efforts. The intent is to illustrate for policymakers the consequences of their evaluation policy rules, and to alert evaluators to ways that evaluation practices may have unwanted consequences for the success of energy efficiency program portfolios.

Rafael Friedmann builds upon previous work to focus on the need to rethink the paradigm that currently governs attribution evaluations and the need to move away from a framework focused on net-to-gross (NTG), especially if only based on free-ridership (FR) where for full credit, your intervention needs to be both necessary and sufficient. Using examples that illustrate the next phase of energy efficiency program deployment, Rafael shows how the “necessary and sufficient” attribution paradigm has outlived its usefulness and suggests some options to consider.

Lisa Wilson-Wright discusses findings from a scoping study undertaken for the Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships surrounding the definition and measurement of net savings. This effort included perspectives from energy and air regulators, program administrators, and other key stakeholders. Lisa’s paper provides a summary of the issues identified and presents policy and research recommendations to address the challenges laid out in the scoping study.