

## Meeting Summary

### CLIMATE AND ENERGY OUTREACH COORDINATION MEETING

Tuesday, April 28, 2009  
10 am – 2 pm  
COG Board Room, 3rd Floor

#### Attendees

Dave Pirtle, Pepco  
Tom Welle, Pepco  
Bob Burnette, Dominion  
Bill Murray, Dominion  
Steven Jumper, Washington Gas  
Tracye Funn, Washington Gas  
Fred Sackett, SMECO  
Jeff Shaw, SMECO  
Terry Ressler, SMECO  
Sharon Cooke, DC DOE  
Linda Jordan, DC PSC  
Kellie Armstead, DC PSC  
Walt Auburn, MEA  
LaWanda Edwards, MD PSC  
Ricky Gratz, Maryland Assistant Peoples Counsel  
Andy Farmer, VA SCC  
John Morrill, Arlington County  
Sarah O'Connell, Arlington County  
Steve Sinclair, Fairfax County  
Susan Hafeli, Fairfax County  
Ellen Eggerton, Fairfax County  
Najib Salehi, Loudoun County  
Eric Coffman, Montgomery County  
Karl Berntson, Prince George's County  
Harriet West, Clean Air Partners  
Diane Derby, Georgetown Climate Center  
Prof. Ed Maibach, George Mason University  
Gary Featheringham, Northrup Grumman:  
Teri Lutz, Allegheny  
Lisa Maher, Arlington County  
Doug Weisburger, Montgomery County

#### Staff

Stuart Freudberg, COG DEP  
Joan Rohlfs, COG DEP  
Jeff King, COG DEP  
George Nichols, COG DEP

### **Background/Goal of Meeting**

The goal of the meeting is to discuss energy efficiency outreach and education programs in the region. The COG Board adopted greenhouse gas emission reduction goals in its Climate Change Report in November 2008. The report includes a recommendation for development of a public education and outreach campaign as well as number of recommendations related to conserving energy. Given that there are many energy outreach and education campaigns underway or being developed by different organizations in the region, the meeting will provide an opportunity to review efforts underway and identify opportunities for coordination/collaboration.

### **Summary of Outreach and Education Campaigns**

#### **Maryland Public Service Commission (MD PSC)**

In its EmPower Maryland proceedings, the MD PSC is approving new utility plans to achieve the EmPower Maryland goals of reducing energy consumption by 15% by 2015. The MD PSC order has directed utilities and state government to develop a General Awareness Campaign (GAC). Stakeholders developing the GAC have tentatively agreed that there will be a set of agreed-upon statewide strategies/messages, but that the individual utilities will manage their own specific outreach programs independently. The agreement is still subject to PSC approval.

The statewide messaging will include messages such as “you have the power to manage your own energy use.” Other aspects include protecting the environment, working together, long term sustainability, and information about the surcharge.

#### **Maryland Energy Administration (MEA)**

MEA has been working closely with the MD PSC and utilities on the GAC. MEA is interested in working towards bridging messages so that the various stakeholders can provide a cohesive message to consumers, leaving flexibility to utilities in implementing the program.

#### **Virginia State Corporation Commission (VA SCC)**

The energy efficiency goal in Virginia is currently set at a 10 percent reduction from 2006 base levels by 2022, but is subject to change. The 2008 Virginia General Assembly directed the SCC to develop and implement an electric energy consumer education program to provide retail customers with information regarding energy conservation, energy efficiency, demand-side management, demand response, and renewable energy. Virginia Energy Sense is the Commonwealth’s statewide consumer education and outreach program to encourage electric energy efficiency and conservation and will focus on households, businesses, and institutions. SCC recommended a 5-year consumer education and outreach program to be initiated in the second half of 2009. Key components are market research, informational materials, website, public relations/grassroots outreach, and advertising. The estimated expenditure over 5 years is \$10 million. Funding is from a special regulatory revenue tax. The SCC started a solicitation process for marketing/public relations support, proposals are due May 5, with a contract award expected by August 2009.

### **District Public Service Commission (DC PSC)**

The District has several outreach goals, including educating DC consumers, increase knowledge of choices, to build partnerships, greening, and conservation. One program of interest is Heat Smart and Cool Aids. It is a priority to provide energy savings tips. The District is working closely with Washington Gas and Pepco. Collateral material is available on the PSC website. The District has defined which audiences to target and how best to reach them.

### **District Dept. of Environment Energy Office**

The DC Energy Office has outreach plans with a goal to establish partnerships and get out the message that energy efficiency is important. DC provides suggestions on how to reduce energy consumption. One important message is about rebates for purchase of Energy Star products. Various media are used including TV, radio, newsprint, signage, and listservs. Public schools are also venues for providing information. Staff go door to door, often focusing on small businesses. The District will offer up to \$4000 for small businesses to implement energy savings suggestions identified through free energy audits. The District is also targeting government buildings for improvements. The District Sustainable Energy Utility has not yet been implemented. It will be a priority to avoid duplication and to build upon existing success.

### **Pepco Holdings**

Pepco has submitted plans to meet the EmPower Maryland goals. On April 18 the Maryland PSC approved Pepco's plan for residential programs. The roll out will be in June, first focused on Pepco employees. Pepco is awaiting MD PSC approval of the marketing budget of \$3.5 million for 2009-2011. Pepco is participating in developing the GAC and the collaborative is striving for consensus. Pepco is aware that demand response and now energy efficiency can be bid into PJM's forward capacity market. This will help reduce overall program cost.

To provide context, David Pirtle said that the magnitude of the reductions called for by EmPower Maryland are on the order of the capacity of the Potomac River coal-fired power plant.

### **Dominion**

In March, Dominion submitted a notice of intent to file for 13 energy efficiency programs. A new energy efficiency law from the Virginia General Assembly (HB 2506/SB1248) takes effect July 1, 2009. The law allows investor-owned electric utilities to recover, through a rate adjustment clause, the costs of designing, implementing, and operating energy efficiency programs, including a general rate of return on operating expenses, if such programs are found to be in the public interest. The utility may earn a general rate of return on energy efficiency programs. The State Corporation Commission may allow for the recovery of reductions in revenue related to energy efficiency programs, to the extent the revenue is not recovered through off-system sales. Dominion plans to formally submit its plans to the SCC after July 1.

## **Washington Gas**

Washington Gas promotes the efficient use of clean natural gas and renewable energy to improve the environment for the benefit of our customers, investors, employees, and the communities served. Washington Gas strives to be responsible environmental stewards while products and services that meet customers' energy needs are delivered.

Washington Gas uses resources efficiently in business processes and encourages employees and customers to do the same.

Washington Gas routinely provides tailored messages to its customers, through means such as bill inserts. Key messages include the importance of energy efficiency and environmental stewardship. Policy issues of concern include rate decoupling and life cycle benefits analysis.

Year-Round Energy Education includes Energy Essentials Quarterly Customer Newsletters; Safety & Energy Efficiency information on [washingtongas.com](http://washingtongas.com); and community presentations. For winter preparedness, Washington Gas provides a Maximize Your Energy Savings Brochure; a dedicated page on the website; and winter messages on customer bills.

WGES is piloting home energy audit programs and partnering with demand response providers to create opportunities for conservation projects across customer classes. The CleanSteps<sup>SM</sup> Conserve includes personalized home energy review; on-the-spot energy efficiency measures; customized report with energy saving recommendations; and assistance with follow-up measures.

## **Arlington County**

Arlington County's energy efficiency outreach is coordinated as part of the county's Fresh AIRE program. Some county activities include CFL give aways; workshops, seminars, public presentations; development of literature; and free home energy audits. The county has also launched AIRE Partners (businesses and institutions) and AIRE Champions to recognize leaders in community. The county also conducts site visits and 'soft' advice to churches, condos, and businesses. Partnering with Business Improvement Districts and the Chamber of Commerce is important to secure business participation.

One new area of focus is on honing programming for ARRA funds. Programs being considered include creating case studies of residential projects and county building successes; a residential loan/incentive program; reaching out to the multifamily sector; creating AIRE 'memberships' for individuals, with AIRE Business Affinity program imminent. Small- and medium-size business sustainability programming is likely (e.g. Prasinós – link energy, water, transport, recycling activity with direct training and engagement).

The focus of continued program development includes developing community climate emission goals & action plan and community-wide sustainability planning. The county also wants to develop residential programs leveraging ARRA money + national/regional

efforts (e.g. Home Performance with Energy Star; WGES). Small business programming focuses on energy, plus other key sustainability metrics (transport, water, waste). Business/institutional programs are linked to community activity through recognition (AIRE Champions) and the business affinity program.

### **Loudoun County**

Loudoun County is involved in a wide range of efforts to reduce the county government's energy consumption, improve energy efficiency and raise awareness about energy conservation. In January 2009, the Board of Supervisors created the Committee on Energy & Environment as a new standing committee, replacing the Ad Hoc Committee on Energy Efficiency formed a year earlier.

The county is part of the Energy Star partnership, a joint program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Energy designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This partnership is part of the county's commitment to protect the environment through energy efficiency. In partnership with Energy Star, the county will: measure and track the energy performance of county facilities where possible by using tools such as those offered through Energy Star; develop and implement a plan consistent with the Energy Star Energy Management Guidelines to achieve energy savings; help spread the word about the importance of energy efficiency to the Loudoun County government workforce and citizens; and support the Energy Star Challenge, a national call-to-action to help improve the energy efficiency of America's commercial and industrial buildings by 10 percent or more.

Loudoun County has exceeded the energy savings goal set for the "Cool Capital Challenge." Earlier, Loudoun won a first place award in the Virginia Municipal League's "Go Green Virginia:" Green Government Challenge. As part of the county's efforts to promote energy awareness, the Board of Supervisors endorsed October 2008 as Energy Efficiency & Conservation Month in Loudoun County. Throughout the month, the county joined in a nationwide effort to promote public understanding of our energy needs and to reduce energy consumption in our everyday lives. Programs and activities focused both on what Loudoun County employees can do in their homes and office and what residents and businesses can do to save energy and reduce the carbon footprint of the county.

### **Fairfax County**

Fairfax County has just started to develop its energy efficiency program. An energy conservation committee has been formed with representation from 16 county agencies. The county is gearing up for the block grant program. 70 projects with a value >\$30 million have been identified. Some agencies have been doing citizen outreach through existing channels.

### **Montgomery County**

Current county efforts include energy workshops; Green Business certification; educational materials; Clean Energy Rewards; Youth Education Efforts; Home Energy Loan Program (HELP); Green Living Guide (*Under Development*); and energy-

efficiency videos. The main target audiences are residents and businesses. The county in essence has educational and outreach efforts, as well as a number of emerging programs, but not a true *campaign*. The county's Sustainability Working Group developed a number of recommendations related to energy education that will need to be addressed.

### **Clean Air Partners**

Clean Air Partners is a public private partnership serving the Baltimore-Washington region. Its purpose is to educate the public about health and environmental effects of poor air quality. One of its key goals is to encourage voluntary actions to reduce air pollution and conserve energy. Its annual public awareness campaign focuses on radio and transit ads. Clean Air Partners handles AirAlerts which provide air quality forecasts by email and text messaging to individuals and businesses. They also work with TV Meteorologists to include air quality information in their broadcasts, with an emphasis on poor air quality days (Code Red and Code Orange). Clean Air Partners also provides teachers with comprehensive air quality curriculum and kit materials for use in the classroom. In 2008, Clean Air Partners had 71 million media impressions in the Baltimore-Washington region. 375,000 visitors/month to the Clean Air Partners web site (Jun-Aug) and 1.5 million between May-Sep 08. Doubled the number of people signing up to receive AirAlerts, from 1,300 to 2,600. Presented curriculum to more than 1,000 young people in DC, MD, VA in last 12 months. In 2009, 2 new radio ads (6 weeks); transit ads (2-3 months); social marketing (year round); and pledge driver for EPA's Energy Star campaign. Call to action – Take the Clean Air Pledge (AirAlerts and Energy Star Pledge).

### **Overview of Effective Public Education and Outreach Campaigns**

Dr. Ed Maibach, Center for Climate Communication, George Mason University discussed research on effective public education and outreach campaigns. On average, outreach impacts are rather modest, typically expect 9% behavior change. The more successful campaigns were able to achieve higher message reach and frequency. Consider "big messy campaigns" with simple messages, delivered in numerous ways, by many credible sources. Try making the behavior you are promoting "easy, fun & popular." Consider that it might make more sense to focus on behavior rather than trying to create attitude change by providing information. Try to get the desired behavior a matter of common conversation.

He offered three questions for consideration. How, if at all, do you want to work together on education & outreach throughout the region? If you decide to work together, will you focus the collaboration on climate change or on energy use? What specific behaviors will you seek to influence?

He provided three program options to consider. One program, centrally managed (e.g., a regional paid media campaign; "truth" campaign). One program, individually implemented (e.g., a turn-key kit implemented in each jurisdiction; Baby Back to Sleep campaign). Or, one strategy, individually implemented (e.g., shared development of audience research and messages; National High Blood Pressure Education Program).

## **Collaboration and Coordination/Next Steps**

Several issues were identified for further consideration:

While the metro Washington regional media market transcends political boundaries, and given the number of programs in the region, consistency is important to avoid customer confusion. Consistency may be important for Top Ten List/Tips; savings estimates.

There may be divergent stakeholder interests. Natural gas and electricity suppliers may have different views on how energy efficiency is defined.

Regulatory drivers need to be considered. There are cost recovery/rate issues that may need to be addressed. Ultimately, many of the utility outreach initiatives will be governed by the decisions of the PSC.

While common messaging makes sense, brand ownership is quite important to the organizations involved.

Some sort of community challenge should be considered as one way to change behavior.

COG may need to collaborate with other organizations in the region, including the Northern Virginia Regional Commission (NVRC), NOVEC, and DMME.

It was agreed that a follow-up meeting would be useful and should be scheduled after July 1.

Staff agreed to develop proposals for consideration at the next meeting.