
NLIEC News

June 30, 2010

In the Energy Assistance Community ...

- **2010 National Energy and Utility Affordability Conference**

About 600 people gathered in San Antonio, TX, June 14-17 when the National Fuel Funds Network and National Low Income Energy Consortium presented the 2010 National Energy and Utility Affordability Conference. The event known, known as NEUAC, is the largest single U.S. gathering to address the need for affordable home energy and other utilities for people with low income. The keynote speaker was former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Henry Cisneros, who served in President Bill Clinton's cabinet. Cisneros is executive chairman of the CityView companies, which work with homebuilders to create homes priced within the range of average families. CityView is a partner in building 40 communities in 12 states, including more than 7,000 homes. The conference also featured two general session panels. Tuesday's plenary session examined Smart Grid technology and its impacts on low-income consumers. On Wednesday, two Department of Energy officials led a discussion of an overview of the impact and accomplishments of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and provided a look at what lies ahead. NEUAC 2010 featured 56 workshops in seven tracks dealing with subjects including energy availability and sustainability, weatherization and energy efficiency, energy assistance and education, energy policy and advocacy, vulnerable populations, energy programs in Indian country, and utility and fuel programs. It also included Hot Topics sessions and a poverty simulation workshop, where conferees had the opportunity to experience the problems and difficulties faced by low-income households through role playing. Copies of presentations and handouts from the 2010 conference can be viewed or downloaded by clicking on speakers' or presenters' names at <http://www.energyandutilityconference.org/2010%20Speakers.html> .

Next year's conference will be held June 27-29, 2011, at the Marriott Harbor Beach Hotel, Fort Lauderdale, FL.

- **NLIEC Presents 2010 Achievement Award to Kay Joslin, Sherry Vogel of LIHEAP Clearinghouse**

The National Low Income Energy Consortium presented its 2010 NLIEC Achievement Award to Kay Joslin and Sherry Vogel of the National Center for Appropriate Technology's LIHEAP Clearinghouse in recognition of their work on behalf of the energy-assistance community. "Each year, the National Low Income Energy Consortium recognizes an individual or organization that has demonstrated consistent leadership in championing low-income issues," NLIEC Chairperson Cindy Datig said. "Over the years, the NLIEC Achievement Award has been presented to many prominent individuals and groups for the work they do. This year, the award goes to a combination of two people and an organization." She presented the award to

Joslin and Vogel during the 2010 National Energy and Utility Affordability Conference in San Antonio, and described it as a “real cause for celebration within the NLIEC” in that the LIHEAP Clearinghouse is a longtime member of the NLIEC Board of Directors. “For many years, the LIHEAP Clearinghouse has collected and provided timely and accurate information of great value to policymakers, program operators and people seeking energy assistance,” Datig said. “In doing so, the LIHEAP Clearinghouse has represented the highest example of professionalism in public service.”

NFFN Awards Recognize Four Organizations and Individuals

The National Fuel Funds Network has bestowed its highest honor, the Sister Pat Kelley Achievement Award, to David N. Parker of the American Gas Association. The award, one of four that the NFFN announced at the 2010 National Energy and Utility Affordability Conference in San Antonio, recognizes exemplary personal achievement in furthering NFFN’s objectives of increasing public awareness of low-income energy problems, advancing energy assistance policy and promoting charitable energy assistance. “David Parker is a committed champion of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program” said NFFN Chairman Tom Stovall. “During his tenure at AGA, he markedly increased the association’s resources and leadership in advocating for increased federal energy aid. In this work, he has stressed partnership with and support of the nonprofit community, increased media attention to energy assistance and delivered solid analyses of the issues. The leadership of David Parker at the American Gas Association is a major factor in achieving the present historically high level of LIHEAP funding and the difference that it makes for families with low income.”

Parker is retiring as president and chief executive officer of the American Gas Association.

The Network also honored the West Virginia Utility Assistance Program, an initiative of the Dollar Energy Fund, with the Victorine Q. Adams Award. The award spotlights institutional innovation and achievement among nonprofit NFFN members. “Since its inception in October 2008, the West Virginia Utility Assistance Program has distributed approximately \$1.8 million in grants to over 6,000 low-income families,” Stovall said. “All major utilities in the state are partners in the program which provides aid to households in all 55 West Virginia counties. In addition, the Network announced that its 2010 NFFN Extra Mile Award recipient is Congressman Edward J. Markey of Massachusetts, who will be presented with the award at a later date in Washington, DC. The Network presents the award annually to a Member of Congress who has demonstrated legislative achievement for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program. Congressman Markey, who has been a tireless supporter of LIHEAP, this year introduced the Energy Assistance for American Families Act that would authorize \$7.6 billion for the program in future fiscal years. The 2010 NFFN Corporate Excellence Award was presented to Entergy Corporation for its outstanding achievement on behalf of low-income consumers. The award recognizes Entergy’s extensive and wide ranging Low-Income Customer Assistance Initiatives, which the utility has introduced to help its customers in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas. Operating in a service area of high, persistent poverty, Entergy has engaged partners in a holistic approach to increase family income, assets and educational achievement to supplement direct financial assistance for utility bill payment.

- **NFFN Sets Summer LIHEAP Action Day**

The National Fuel Funds Network will hold a Summer LIHEAP Action Day July 28 in Washington, DC. NFFN members will travel to the nation's capital to meet with congressional representatives about LIHEAP funding. The Network will support and coordinate grassroots activities such as press conferences, congressional call-ins, petition drives and local or state government proclamations. For the past eight years, NFFN has held its Washington LIHEAP Action Day during February, but severe winter weather led to the cancellation of the 2010 event. The next winter Action Day will be February 9, 2011.

- **New AARP Study Highlights Impact on Older Adults as Summer Heat Takes Hold**

As the summer begins, new research illustrates the dangers — including aggravating chronic health conditions, food insecurity and even premature death — that many older Americans face from high home energy costs. AARP's Public Policy Institute and the National Energy Assistance Directors' Association released "Affordable Home Energy and Health: Making the Connections," which details the wide-ranging effects of temperature, health and safety as they relate to age and health conditions. The paper offers recommendations that promote adequate and affordable home energy use, and explores the role of home energy in maintaining both economic and health security for older adults and people of all ages. "Millions of Americans are struggling to afford basic necessities in this economy, including their utility bills," said AARP Executive Vice President John Rother. "Policymakers and our elected officials must understand that making home energy more affordable is not only good policy but may save lives." The AARP Public Policy Institute and National Energy Assistance Directors' Association are members of the NLIEC Board of Directors. — *AARP news release*, June 22, 2010 The AARP Public Policy Institute paper is available at: <http://www.aarp.org/money/low-income-assistance/info-06-2010/2010-05-consumer.html>

In Washington ...

- **Sebelius Issues Statement on GAO Report Addressing Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program**

Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius issued a statement June 18 regarding a pending Government Accountability Office report on the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program that found instances in which benefits were given to ineligible individuals and areas where the program could be vulnerable to fraud. "Public resources are limited, and a dollar spent on ineligible families is one less dollar available for those who genuinely need help," the secretary said. "This Department has zero tolerance for fraud. All cases of suspected LIHEAP fraud will be turned over to the HHS Inspector General. In addition, HHS has been taking major steps to work with states to prevent fraud and abuse to ensure program integrity. On May 5, HHS issued new guidance strongly encouraging states to require LIHEAP applicants to provide Social Security Numbers as a condition of receiving assistance. States were advised to make enhanced use of state prisoner databases and other existing databases, such as the Social Security Administration's Enumeration Verification System, to verify the identities of applicants. Earlier this month, HHS asked all states to supplement their LIHEAP plans for the coming fiscal year with information on the mechanisms they will use to prevent waste, fraud and abuse. HHS will work with state LIHEAP programs

and state governments to pinpoint areas of vulnerability and to disseminate best practices.” — *HHS news release*, June 18, 2010 Read more at: <http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2010pres/06/20100618a.html>

· **Senate Confirms FERC Nominees Moeller, LaFleur**

The U.S. Senate has confirmed Philip Moeller and Cheryl LaFleur to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. “We are grateful for these Senate confirmations. Commissioner Moeller will be able to continue his important work here at FERC for a new full term, and we will be joined by Cheryl LaFleur, who brings to the Commission experience in energy policy and operations,” FERC Chairman Jon Wellinghoff said. “I am grateful to the members of the U.S. Senate and to the President for their support to serve another term on the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission,” said Moeller. “I am honored to serve on FERC at a time when implementing energy policy is of such critical importance to our nation’s future.” LaFleur said she is honored “to be joining the Commission at a time when our nation is facing critical energy challenges and opportunities.” She added: “I would like to thank President Obama for nominating me, and Senator Reid, Chairman Bingaman, Senator Murkowski, and all the members of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources for their support. I look forward to working with them, with my new FERC colleagues and with other federal and state officials from all regions of the country.” The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is an ex officio member of the NLIEC Board of Directors. — *FERC news release*, June 22, 2010 Read more at: <http://www.ferc.gov/media/news-releases/2010/2010-2/06-22-10.asp>

· **Midwestern Governors Association Holds Briefing on Energy and Jobs Efforts**

The Midwestern Governors Association held a briefing for congressional and agency staff on its jobs and energy initiatives. As Congress and federal agencies continue their efforts to improve the nation's energy security and climate stewardship, Midwestern governors are working to create jobs that transition the Midwest into the new energy economy. “I am proud of the work that my fellow Midwest governors are doing to position the Midwest to be a leader in the new energy economy,” said Ohio Gov. Ted Strickland, the MGA chair. “Because states serve a key role in the development of energy policies, we have an obligation to make the federal government aware of the important and innovative work being done.” Iowa Gov. Chet Culver provided remarks at the briefing. “I am proud of the advances that Iowa continues to make in alternative energy development. Iowa leads the nation in wind generation as a percentage of total power, at 20 percent-which is a substantial increase above the 5 percent figure when the Culver-Judge administration took office. More than 200 Iowa companies supply the wind industry, generating more than \$50 million in new revenue for Iowa companies annually,” Culver said. “The Midwest as a whole can take advantage of this growing industry and lead the way in generating renewable energy that creates jobs and benefits the environment.” The MGA is the newest member of the NLIEC Board of Directors. — *MGA news release*, June 22, 2010 Read more at: <http://www.midwesterngovernors.org/Release/briefingrelease.pdf>

In the News ...

· **Seniors Lose 24 Percent of Their Buying Power**

A survey of senior costs by The Senior Citizens League shows older Americans have lost

almost one-quarter of their buying power since 2000. According to TSCL's 2010 Annual Survey of Senior Costs, since 2000, annual cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) increased average Social Security benefits by just 31 percent while seniors' typical expenditures have increased almost 63 percent — more than twice as fast. "Some of the biggest increases in costs are in categories that seniors spend the largest portion of their incomes. They are expenses for which consumers have few other options, like housing, energy, and medical costs," says Daniel O'Connell, chairman of TSCL. — *Albany (GFA) Herald*, June 7, 2010 Read more at: <<http://www.albanyherald.com/news/headlines/95744014.html?ref=014>>

- **State Regulators Concerned About Utility Rate Increases**

The financial advisory and consulting firm Deloitte says its annual survey of state regulators found an increasing number concerned about consumers' ability to pay for higher power costs. Eighty-five percent of the regulators expect power costs to increase for residential customers in the next 12 months, the firm said. Its survey also showed that more than 34 percent of regulators believe consumers will not accept any utility rate increase as rate hikes are becoming more onerous to the public in a difficult economy, compared with 23 percent in last year's survey. Deloitte said the number of regulators who felt the public would accept a five percent rate increase dropped from 53.3 percent of the survey respondents last year to 34.3 percent this year. The survey of 35 state utility commissioners was conducted in April and May. — *Platts*, June 7, 2010 Read more at:

[h<http://www.platts.com/RSSFeedDetailedNews.aspx?xmlpath=RSSFeed/HeadlineNews/ElectricPower/6095912.xml>](http://www.platts.com/RSSFeedDetailedNews.aspx?xmlpath=RSSFeed/HeadlineNews/ElectricPower/6095912.xml)

- **Cooperatives Working Towards a Smart Grid: The Impacts of MultiSpeak, Interoperability and Cybersecurity**

With passage of the Energy Information and Security Act (EISA) in 2007, Congress aimed to promote the transition to a smarter grid and, at the same time, set in motion a process for creating interoperability and cybersecurity standards necessary for the success of that effort. At this point, however, the accelerated push to smarten the grid, helped along by new federal money for investments and research, threatens to outpace the standards-setting process. In other words, we may have a smart grid before we're truly ready for it. Policymakers understand that, just as in other industries such as finance and health care, the benefits of computerization and automation bring potential risks. The communication and automation software applications that enable more reliable demand response, integration of renewable resources and better outage management also introduce new risks that must be actively managed. — *Electric Light & Power*, June 2010 Read more at: <http://www.elp.com/index/display/article-display/6558041623/articles/utility-automation-engineering-td/volume-15/Issue_6/Features/Cooperatives_Working_Towards_a_Smart_Grid_The_Impacts_of_MultiSpeak_Interoperability_and_Cybersecurity.html>

[Cooperatives_Working_Towards_a_Smart_Grid_The_Impacts_of_MultiSpeak_Interoperability_and_Cybersecurity.html](http://www.elp.com/index/display/article-display/6558041623/articles/utility-automation-engineering-td/volume-15/Issue_6/Features/Cooperatives_Working_Towards_a_Smart_Grid_The_Impacts_of_MultiSpeak_Interoperability_and_Cybersecurity.html)>

- **More People Need Payment Help to Stay Connected to Power**

Randall McKibbins is among a growing number of people in Illinois' Rock River Valley who are struggling to pay their utility bills as summer heats up and the economy crawls to recovery. The 42-year-old Rockford resident suffers from severe sleep apnea and relies on oxygen

tanks to breathe at night. The tanks require electricity, and McKibbins' electric service was recently turned off for several days for nonpayment. "The bills have gotten so overwhelming living on a fixed income," said McKibbins, who uses a wheelchair to get around and receives \$634 a month from Social Security. "That is not a whole lot to live on." McKibbins' electric service was restored Friday, thanks to an emergency assistance grant from the city, but many more people still need help paying their utility bills. — *Rockford (IL) Register Star*, June 16, 2010 Read more at: <http://www.rrstar.com/carousel/x767638866/More-people-need-payment-help-to-stay-connected-to-power>

New Jersey Man Sentenced to Four Years in Prison in \$400,000 Fraud Case

The owner of a Paulsboro-based heating oil company was sentenced to prison for defrauding the New Jersey Home Energy Assistance Program of nearly \$400,000. Thomas J. Harris, 66, of Woolwich, the owner and sole proprietor of Harris Fuel Oil, was sentenced to four years in state prison by Superior Court Judge M. Christine Allen-Jackson. Harris pleaded guilty Aug. 10, 2009 to second-degree charges of financial facilitation of criminal activity (money laundering) and misapplication of entrusted property and property of government. He was sentenced to four years on each charge, with the sentences to run concurrently. Harris admitted that he defrauded the HEA Program of \$399,812 by offering low-income beneficiaries cash for their state-issued assistance checks instead of fuel to heat their homes. — *Woodbury (NJ) Gloucester County Times*, June 17, 2010 Read more at: http://www.nj.com/gloucester-county/index.ssf/2010/06/woolwich_man_sentenced_to_four.html

Louisville Heat Reaching Dangerous Levels

The dog days of August are here in June. Dangerously high temperatures and oppressive humidity are forcing government into action at every level, while shelters are preparing for their ninth-straight white flag day on Tuesday — meaning patrols are handing out water and trying to convince the homeless to come indoors for relief from the heat. The next two days are expected to be carbon copies of Monday, with high temperatures in the mid-90s (it was 95 on Monday) and a heat index that makes it feel like its 105 (103 on Monday). Louisville Mayor Jerry Abramson committed \$5,000 from a contingency fund to shore up the nearly depleted Summer Heat Relief Program, which provides air conditioners or fans to the poor. The program has handed out 80 window air-conditioner units and 100 fans, which is close to the number given out all of last summer, said Debbie Belt, a community liaison with the Louisville Metro Community Action Partnership. "This heat wave is posing a threat to citizens, especially those at greatest risk such as young children and the elderly," Abramson said. "It is vital that we continue to provide cooling resources through this program." — *Louisville (KY) Courier-Journal*, June 21, 2010 Read more at: <http://www.courier-journal.com/article/20100621/NEWS01/6210369/Louisville+heat+reaching+dangerous+levels>

Beyond the Meter

With pressures on utilities to reduce peak loads and integrate variable renewables, third-party demand response (DR) solution providers are playing an important role as a bridge between the power supplier and commercial, industrial and institutional customers to manage peak demand. Whether utilities see third parties as competitors or helpmates, they are a useful route to getting DR quickly and cost efficiently. Over the past decade, as a consequence of

providing a much needed service, they are an industry force forging partnerships with utilities around the world. “It’s fair to say that some utilities see us as a competitor. The fundamental reason is because every utility I have ever met cares very deeply about its customer relationship, and some may be reluctant to have a third party between them and their customers,” said Gregg Dixon, senior vice president of marketing for EnerNOC. His company is a third-party DR provider with more than 35,000 MW under management for more than 100 utilities serving over 6,500 commercial, industrial and institutional consumers in the United States, Canada and the U.K. — *Intelligent Utility*, June 25, 2010 Read more at: http://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/energycentral/iu_20100506/index.php?startid=28#/30

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