

# Illinois EE Stakeholder Advisory Group Q3 Meeting

Tuesday, September 26, 2023  
9:30 am – 12:30 pm  
Teleconference

## Attendees and Meeting Notes

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### Meeting Materials

Meeting materials for today are posted on the [September 26 meeting page](#)

- [September 26, 2023 SAG Q3 Meeting Agenda](#)
- [ComEd Presentation: Income Eligible Weatherization Customer Bill Impacts](#)
- [SAG Facilitator Update: Q3 2023 Meeting](#)

### Attendees (by webinar)

Celia Johnson, SAG Facilitator  
Caty Lamadrid, Inova Energy Group (SAG Meeting Support)  
Allen Dusault, Franklin Energy  
Amir Haghghat, No Organization Identified  
Andrenika Whisenton, CLEAResult  
Andrew Cottrell, ScottMadden  
Andrey Gribovich, DNV  
Andy Vaughn, Leidos  
Becca McNish, ComEd  
Bill Risley, Franklin Energy  
Brent Nakayama, Leidos  
Briana Moore, Will County Land Use Department  
Bridget Williams, Guidehouse  
Cassidee Kido, Energy Solutions  
Cassidy Kraimer, Preservation Compact  
Cheryl Johnson, People for Community Recovery  
Chris Neme, Energy Futures Group, representing NRDC  
Chris Townsend, CJT Energy Law  
Chris Vaughn, Nicor Gas  
Christina Pagnusat, Peoples Gas & North Shore Gas  
Dan Moring, Slipstream

Danielle Kolp, Resource Innovations  
David Brightwell, ICC Staff  
Deb Dynako, Slipstream  
Dena Jefferson, Franklin Energy  
Diana Fuller, Walker-Miller Energy Services  
Elizabeth Horne, ICC Staff  
Greg Sidorov, Resource Innovations  
Hannah Collins, Leidos  
Jason Fegley, Ameren Illinois  
Jean Gibson, Peoples Gas & North Shore Gas  
Jeff Erickson, Guidehouse  
Jes Rivas, ILLUME Advising  
Jim Fay, ComEd  
Jonathan Skarzynski, Nicor Gas  
Kalee Whitehouse, VEIC (IL-TRM Administrator)  
Karen Lusson, National Consumer Law Center (NCLC)  
Kari Ross, NRDC  
Katherine Elmore, Community Investment Corp.  
Kathryn Brewer, CLEAResult  
Ken Parker, Community Investment Corp.  
Kumar Chittory, Verdant Associates  
LaJuana Garret, Nicor Gas  
Lance Escue, Ameren Illinois  
Laura Agapay-Read, Guidehouse  
Lionel Valencia, Aegis Foods  
Lori Burns, No Organization Identified  
Mark Milby, ComEd  
Marsha Belcher, Community Action Partnership of Lake County  
Matt Armstrong, Ameren Illinois  
Michael Brandt, Elevate  
Michele McSwain, Sustainable Environmental and Economic Development Solutions  
N. Arquette, Village of Bensenville  
Nick Lovier, Ameren Illinois  
Nick Warnecke, Ameren Illinois  
Nicole Popejoy, IACAA  
Omayra Garcia, Peoples Gas & North Shore Gas  
Pace Goodman, ILLUME Advising  
Paige Knutsen, MEEA  
Paul Higgins, Abacus Energy Works  
Pauravi Shah, ComEd  
Philip Halliburton, ComEd  
Philip Mosenthal, Optimal Energy, representing IL AG and NCLC  
Rick Tonielli, ComEd  
Ronna Abshure, ICC  
Ryan Kroll, Driftless Energy  
Sharon Mullen, Abacus Energy Works  
Ted Weaver, First Tracks Consulting, representing Nicor Gas  
Thomas Manjarres, Peoples Gas & North Shore Gas  
Tina Grebner, Ameren Illinois  
Travis Hinck, GDS Associates  
Victoria Nielsen, ScottMadden

Will Wilson, Leidos  
Zach Obert, Franklin Energy  
Zach Ross, Opinion Dynamics

### **Opening & Introductions**

*Celia Johnson, SAG Facilitator*

#### **Purpose of Meeting:**

1. To educate SAG on income eligible bill impacts research; and
2. For the SAG Facilitator to share an update on SAG activities.

### **Income Eligible EE Bill Impacts Research**

*Mark Milby and Rick Tonielli, ComEd; Greg Sidorov and Danielle Kolp, Resource Innovations*

- **Purpose:** To educate SAG on income eligible bill impacts research.
- **Materials:** [ComEd Presentation: Income Eligible Weatherization Customer Bill Impacts](#)

#### Introduction (Slide 2)

- Excerpt from ComEd stipulation agreement for the 2022-2025 EE Plan:
  - ComEd will track bill impacts and reduced energy burden based on deemed savings across all IE customers, for each IE offering
  - ComEd will also pilot ways to track actual bill impacts and reduced energy burden for a portion of IE Single-Family and Multi-Family customers, which will be for the purpose of facilitating follow up with customers to determine if actual savings were in line with projections.
- ComEd partnered with Nicor Gas, Peoples Gas & North Shore Gas. We worked together to do an RFP to identify a research partner, to inform this stipulation goal. Resource Innovations was selected for the research.
- Both ComEd and the gas utilities shared matching data sets of customer billing data. That allows us to get a comprehensive look at what customers are saving.
- The research goals:
  - To estimate achieved energy and bill savings across five different income eligible programs, using customer billing data.
  - To investigate best practices for utility communication on potential bill impacts of EE projects to customers.

#### Background (Slide 4)

- During the spring/summer, Resource Innovations worked with ComEd, Nicor Gas and Peoples Gas to conduct a study of their income eligible weatherization programs.
- The primary goal of this research is to support improvements to program design and customer experience through the following tasks:
  - 1- Determine achieved energy and bill savings attributable to program participation and estimate future bill savings potential of the programs
  - 2- Identify opportunities, challenges, and best practices for communicating bill savings to customers
- The study included five programs (slide 5):
  - SF IHWAP (Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program, Single Family)
  - MF IHWAP (Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program, Multi-Family)
  - IEMS (Income Eligible Multi-Family Savings Program)
  - PHES (Public Housing Energy Savings Program)

- CBA / CFIE (Chicago Bungalow Association Program / Single Family Income Eligible)

#### Approach (Slide 6)

- For savings analysis, Resource Innovations obtained utility billing data, in the form of monthly consumption and bill dollar amounts. That data was used to perform a pre-post regression analysis.
- Future potential savings is another component. Additional information is available in the final report.

#### Billing Analysis Challenges (Slide 7)

1. Low program participation
  - a. Research only included programs
2. Inability to perform measure-level savings analysis
3. Lack of control group
4. Customers with multiple measure installation dates

#### Outcomes / Solutions (Slide 7)

1. Only programs having adequate sample can be reliably evaluated.
2. Measures are offered in bundles and therefore, measure-level savings cannot be estimated.
3. Absent a control group, a weather-normalized pre/post regression analysis is the best approach for estimated savings using monthly billing data.
4. For customers who implemented multiple measures separated by more than one month, use the earliest implementation date to define the post period.

#### Program Participation (Slide 8)

- Small sample sizes lead to inconclusive results
- Several programs were impacted by low participation and/or attribution during the data cleaning process
- Programs that do not produce statistically significant results are excluded from the study.

#### Bill Savings Analysis Results (starting on slide 9)

- IHWAP program showed average annual savings of \$106 for electric participants and \$97 for gas participants (combined). Seasonal patterns were identified.

*Karen Lusson: You mentioned there were not enough statistically-significant numbers in multi-family program. Can you explain low numbers?*

*Greg Sidorov: From an analytical perspective, it can be difficult to obtain raw data. We requested monthly billing records for all participants over a 3-4 year timespan, and what came through to Resource Innovations is what is represented. If your question is more about recruitment I would defer to the utility. Statistical significance is a function of sample size – you need a large enough sample size – as well as inherent variability in data.*

*Mark Milby: We will follow-up to give a more complete answer. I think the issue is data-matching. When it comes to multi-family the challenge is about matching what the meters represent.*

*Zach Ross – via chat: For multifamily programs, were you analyzing individual tenant units, common area spaces, or both?*

*Chris Neme: Are you saying that the savings for whole-building programs are a combination of \$106 and \$97 per year, or does the \$106 represent gas savings when ComEd runs both fuels?*

*Greg Sidorov: It is the former. Numbers are independent of each other and \$106 is for customer electric utility bills. We did two rounds of analysis, one geared towards quantifying energy savings achieved by participants and round two was the dollar amount of savings. We have similar results and graphics related to energy savings achieved (that can be found in full report) but this presentation only focuses on bill (dollar) savings.*

*Chris Neme: One of the things affecting gas bill savings is the gas rate. If you had extended this into 2022 where prices were so different, how would this have looked?*

*Greg Sidorov: There were some cases in some months when the bill showed negative bill savings (bill increases). Those increases in rates during the period affected the bill amount even though energy savings went down.*

*Chris Neme: Did you talk to customers to understand if there were any take-back effects?*

*Greg Sidorov: it was not part of the scope. Research was geared towards program administration and there were no customer interactions.*

*Mark Milby: We see this research as a baseline, once we have a process for identifying customers at an individual level who are not seeing savings, then we need to reach out and understand why. That would be a second phase of the research.*

*Chris Neme: Even for customers that are seeing bill savings, it is not inconceivable that they would think that they can now turn their thermostats up a bit and therefore counteract savings.*

*Zach Ross – via chat: To Chris's question, do you know if this was just a \*bill\* savings trend, or if that same pattern also holds in therms? Curious if this is just a function of different utility tariffs or customers reaction to billing. Wondering if those spikes are seen in energy savings as well.*

*Greg Sidorov: I believe we saw a similar pattern between therms and bill impacts.*

*Phil Mosenthal: Similar question to Zach. Did you estimate therm savings, applied to consistent rates? Or was it truly monthly dollar amounts? Because I believe QIP changes monthly and then it is reset.*

*Greg Sidorov: On the gas side, we received actual monthly bill dollar amounts.*

- Multi-Family IHWAP (Slide 11)
  - We saw average annual electric bill savings per customer of \$111.

*Chris Neme: Is this by apartment or for whole building divided by number of apartments?*

*Greg Sidorov: This is at the population level. Without a flag that identifies an individual unit versus building meter, it is difficult to parse out. Presumably this data is a mix of whole-building and apartments.*

*Mark Milby: It was challenging to match multi-utility billing datasets and how utilities characterize MF meters. We will craft a response that can be sent out and shared with group.*

*Phil Mosenthal: Is this only buildings that aren't electrically heated?*

*Greg Sidorov: Probably a mix. The information on heating fuel type was not provided, but I think it is safe to say it was mostly gas-heated buildings.*

*Karen Lusson – via chat: Wouldn't the common areas be billed to the building owner?*

*Mark Milby: That is correct, but projects take place in common areas and tenant-units. We need to go back to the data and reconstruct how these groups were compiled.*

- Income Eligible Multi-Family Savings (Slide 12)
  - For PG&NSG, research shows similar results. Annual savings per customer is \$480, this is likely because there was a much higher rate of common areas in this program. But seasonal patterns are the reverse of what was seen in previous slides where gas savings are higher in summer months.

*Phil Mosenthal: Do you know why this is happening? It seems strange.*

*Greg Sidorov: We do not. There were a couple possible explanations that we came up with. One of them is that given that there are more common areas, maybe pool pumps and pool heating activities might show up more in summer months, and different gas uses in this population vs other programs. But it is difficult to tell given what is observed in the data.*

*Chris Neme: Do you have ability to know how many of these buildings was master-metered?*

*Greg Sidorov: Not with the data available. We saw a wide range of consumption patterns among this population.*

*Chris Neme: That doesn't surprise me because you might have some 5-unit buildings and some 100-unit apartments.*

*Karen Lusson – via chat: Anecdotally, significant numbers of customers disconnect during the summer months because gas service isn't needed as much and bills are unaffordable. Also, gas disconnects by the companies continue during the summer as LIHEAP is closed. Could this be a factor in seeing bill savings during the summer? It would be interesting if we can get an idea of summer disconnects.*

*Omayra Garcia: I would agree with Karen. In summer months many customers turn off their gas.*

- Chicago Bungalow Association (Slide 13)
  - Results were similar for gas and electric.
  - On the electric side annual savings per customer were \$32/year, on the gas side it was \$86/year with high seasonality and savings achieved predominantly during winter months.

*Karen Lusson: What measures are included in Chicago Association Bungalow program?*

*Greg Sidorov: There is a table in an appendix in the final report.*

- Per Unit Gas Prices (Slide 14)
  - Discussion related to the commodity price of gas and how bill savings are influenced by market conditions. Even in months when a customer consumes less gas they can see increases in their bills due to the increased price. Prices increased significantly in 2020 to 2021 and at that point we saw program savings go in the opposite direction. Bill impacts on gas side are not just a function of how much is consumed but also economic conditions and commodity prices.

#### Research and Interviews (starting on slide 15)

- For this portion of the research we did a literature review of other income-eligible weatherization programs, interviews with participation utilities and other stakeholders to understand the programs, measures, and bill tracking.
- As far of lessons learned, we were hoping to find a summary of methods used to track cost and energy savings, as well as challenges and best practices.
- Slide 17 shows states covered in interviews.

#### Key Findings (Slide 18)

- The way energy usage is calculated is through TRM or through household billing analysis. Communication of expected bill savings to customers should be done with caution, if at all. It is important to manage customer expectations. Among utilities interviewed, actual utilities around bill tracking are limited and mostly done for evaluation purposes at macro-level (not at a premise-by-premise level).

#### Red Flags (Slide 19)

- We posed questions about how bill savings are communicated to customers and across the board utilities said it was risky because of five different categories that include, equity, changes in usage, weather, commodity price, education barriers. Details in slides.

*Karen Lusson – via chat: Are these "red flag" conclusions Resource Innovations, the utilities or both?*

*Danielle Kolp: Both, it is a summary. Seen more pointedly the interviews because people spoke candidly. Some of these items are normal things to have to contend to, but the equity and education barriers specifically came back from interviews.*

*Mark Milby: To clarify, these are utilities from around the country and not Illinois utilities that were interviewed to inform the research.*

*Karen Lusson: The red flags become less important if these are communicated when trying to analyze zero-cost weatherization programs. We know there are many benefits to these programs that can be conveyed. But when utilities begin offering pay-as-you-save program and begins marketing it to customers (this is a financing program requiring people to pay a co-pay and a monthly surcharge on bill), for these programs the results and continued examination of bill savings is shared with the department that will oversee EEUP program because we believe this program should not be marketed to people who qualify for no-cost weatherization.*

*Mark Milby: Noted and agreed. This methodology is intended for the specific purpose of follow-up with customers that participate in specific offerings.*

#### Tracking and Communication Methods (Slide 12)

- Summary about different saving tracking methods. As far as bill tracking methods there is a pre- and a post- treatment comparison, but there is also a self-guided comparison method where often utilities have tools online (green button) where usage or cost can be compared month-to-month or year-by-year. When this tool is readily available, customers may be pointed to it to perform their own analysis.

#### Next Steps (ComEd)

- Today's presentation represents "phase 1" of research.
- For "phase 2", ComEd has started working with their internal data team to see if we can use customer's usage data to pre and post determine what customers outcomes are for specific projects. This would allow us to find customers that had a less-than-optimal experience, understand them, and use this information to improve overall program in terms of cost-effectiveness. This would also be used to better target the ideal customers.

*Phil Mosenthal: How are you defining bill savings? Bill savings should be what your savings are compared to what they should have been.*

*Mark Milby: From ComEd's perspective, that is how we are approaching the electric side. The thinking is that when we take this down to individual model it would be done through the lens of kWh savings. The next step is deciding what outreach will look like.*

#### Next Steps:

- ComEd to share final bill impacts report.

#### **SAG Facilitator Update**

*Celia Johnson, SAG Facilitator*

- **Material:** [SAG Facilitator Update: Q3 2023 Meeting](#)

#### Policy Manual Update

- The SAG Policy Manual subcommittee spent 14 months working on updates to Policy Manual version 3.0. The Writing Committee met twice in September and final policy documents will be circulated next week for an "errors only" review.
- The final consensus policy documents will be submitted to the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) soon, requesting approval.

### Greenhouse Gas Savings Working Group Update

- Update on a change to greenhouse gas (GHG) Working Group: the SAG had planned to convene a GHG Working Group this Fall. This was a result of a policy proposal submitted by Nicor Gas in the Policy Manual update process, which was later withdrawn on the suggestion that a Working Group would be convened. However, Nicor Gas does not think this group is needed at this time, so the Working Group will no longer be convened.

### SAG Reporting Working Group Update

- Illinois utilities prepare quarterly and annual reports that are filed with ICC. Utilities also report to SAG group twice per year. There is a lengthy list of reporting requirements in the Policy Manual and stipulated agreements.
- There are four new “reporting principle” policies added to Policy Manual Version 3.0, and conversations need to be had on the specific metrics that will be reported. This process will begin in fall 2023, and wrap-up in January 2024.
- Anyone who would like to join the SAG Reporting Working Group should contact the SAG Facilitator: [Celia@CeliaJohnsonConsulting.com](mailto:Celia@CeliaJohnsonConsulting.com)

### **Closing and Next Steps**

*Celia Johnson, SAG Facilitator*

- Bill Impacts Presentation
  - ComEd will share the final bill impacts report.
  - ComEd will review the multi-family data, per questions about common area vs. tenants.
  - Karen Lusson (National Consumer Law Center) and Katie Elmore (Community Investment Corp.) are interested in more information about low IQ multi-family participation numbers (slide 8).
  - Karen Lusson (National Consumer Law Center) requested additional information about why the data shows higher gas bills in the summer.
- The SAG Reporting Working Group will develop reporting metrics this fall, to finalize by end of January 2024. This is a follow-up to four new policies that were added to the updated Policy Manual (Version 3.0).
  - Income Qualified Multi-Family Reporting Principles
  - Income Qualified Health and Safety Reporting Principles
  - Equity and Affordability Reporting Principles
  - Diverse Contracting Reporting Principles
- Anyone who would like to join the SAG Reporting Working Group should contact the SAG Facilitator: [Celia@CeliaJohnsonConsulting.com](mailto:Celia@CeliaJohnsonConsulting.com)