



October 22-24
AC MARRIOTT
WORCESTER, MA

2024 Energy Connect Conference Agenda

AC Marriott, 125 Front Street, Worcester, MA

Agenda details are still being finalized and are therefore subject to change.

Tuesday, October 22, 2024

8:00 am	Registration/Coffee & Light Refreshments
9:00 am – 4:00 pm	<p>New England Electrification Leadership Summit <i>(Separate fee, Registration through Beneficial Electrification League)</i> Lead by: Alex Hofmann, Chief Strategy and Operations Officer for the Beneficial Electrification League</p> <p>Advances in end-use technology and low-carbon electric generation, coupled with improvements in grid connectivity and consumer awareness and acceptance, have increased the value of beneficial electrification. This event will convene leaders from New England to discuss opportunities and challenges around further electrification of our economy.</p> <p>In addition, Uncle Sam is opening his pocketbook for Federal infrastructure investments that can be used toward beneficial electrification programs and projects. While the concept of beneficial electrification is appealing, the question remains – how do we implement? This meeting will bring together stakeholders from a variety of backgrounds to discuss next steps to meeting both challenges and opportunities provided by advancements in electric technology.</p>
11:30 am - 12:30 pm	Lunch
1:00 – 4:00 pm	<p>IT Roundtable <i>(Separate fee)</i> Facilitator: Mike Hyland, Executive Director of Northeast Public Power Association</p> <p>NEPPA's IT Roundtable is an opportunity for small group discussion among those interested in technology related topics. The facilitator will encourage and prompt exploration of the following topics: Ability to accept technology changes and the role company culture plays, How to handle employee burn out, Working within budget and funding constraints and Vendor Dependency.</p>
4:00 pm	Welcome Reception

Wednesday, October 23, 2024

7:00 am	Registration
7:30 am	Continental Breakfast
8:30 am	Welcome & Opening Remarks
8:45 am	<p>General Session: NOW SHOWING: "Lifecycle of a Customer" - Best Practices of Customer Interaction through Roleplay with Commentary <i>Lead by: Anne Finley, Administration Assistant/ Public Utility Accounting, Hull Municipal Light Plant & Haleigh Dufour, Business Services, Littleton Electric Light and Water Department</i></p> <p>The "NEPPA Players" (a team of volunteer members) will serve as actors and commentators as they bring the audience through a step-by-step of the stages of customer service in public power. Touching upon how best to navigate the challenges of getting a new customer set up, adding solar, new construction, technology issues, hardship services, making payments, storm damage, aging customers, account turnover and more.</p>
9:45 am	Break with Sponsors
10:00 am	<p>Breakout Sessions:</p> <p>Energy Innovation Track: Machine Learning & Artificial Intelligence for Utility Customer Engagement <i>by Mike Filippone, Enterprise Account Executive, Blastpoint</i></p> <p>Join us for a live talk on leveraging AI and machine learning for utility customer engagement. We'll dive into real-world use cases like predicting CSAT scores, segmenting customers, and boosting low-income engagement. Learn how utilities can use predictive analytics while addressing challenges around data privacy, ethics, and AI limitations.</p> <p>Business Track: Recruitment, Selection and Retention: Finding the Perfect Fit <i>by Dr. Arthur Graziano, Division Manager of Human Resources and Technology at Braintree Electric Department</i></p> <p>Human capital is like a jigsaw puzzle. For a company to look great, every piece must fit properly. Determine the person's skills and qualities needed to fit the role, then begin the process. Don't settle for less than great quality. It will give you less than great performance.</p>
11:00 am	Break with Sponsors

11:15 am	<p>Breakout Sessions:</p> <p>Customer Service Roundtable: Time Management: A Proactive Instead of Reactive Approach to Collections <i>Co-Facilitators: Linda Seaman, Operation Manager, Middleborough Gas & Electric Department & Scott Munn, Utilities Sales Manager - Utilities, ONLINE Information Services, Inc.</i></p> <p><i>A roundtable discussion on proactive collections, including policies, best practices and creative approaches</i></p> <p>Business Roundtable: Dealing with Legacy Systems, Implementing an AMI Program <i>Facilitator: Chris Adley, Engineering Technician at Littleton Electric Light and Water Departments</i></p>
12:15 pm	Lunch and Awards Presentation
1:30 pm	<p>General Session: Team Building Activity: Bike Building Relay for Charity <i>Lead by: Rebecca Rivas, Senior Sales Instructor for The Leaders Institute</i></p> <p><i>This Build-A-Bike ® event is an energetic and competitive shared experience that involves small groups working together to complete challenges. Groups who complete their challenges, will earn the bike parts they need to complete their bike. Bikes will be donated to kids in need through partnership with a local charity. No bike building experience necessary.</i></p>
3:30 pm	Break with Sponsors
3:45 pm	<p>General Session: Come and "Wine" About Your EV Charging Programs - Drinks and Discussion <i>Facilitator: Craig Spinale, General Manager for Belmont Light</i></p> <p><i>Attendees will get the opportunity to share the good and the bad about their EV Charging programs, including charging station troubleshooting, range anxiety, charging rates, benefits of a proactive vs. hands-off approach. Alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks will be provided for those who wish to take part.</i></p>
4:45 pm – 5:45 pm	Happy Hour

Thursday, October 24, 2024

7:00 am	Registration
7:30 am	Continental Breakfast
9:00 am	<p>General Session Panel Session: Social Media Mastery for Public Power: Strategies for Success <i>Facilitators: Jackie Campbell, Member Services Coordinator, Northeast Public Power Association</i></p> <p>Join public power professionals and social media experts as they discuss the role of social media in building community connections, share successful strategies, and explore best practices for content creation, engagement, and measuring success. Gain insights into emerging trends and learn how to strengthen your online presence.</p>
10:00 am	Break with Sponsors
10:15 am	<p>Breakout Sessions:</p> <p>Customer Service Track: Electricity 101 - Understanding the Basics of Field Operations to Better Assist Customers <i>By Anthony Calascibetta, Electric Operations Manager, Ipswich Utilities</i></p> <p>This session is meant to give administrative staff an overview of how the electric distribution system works, so they have the tools to answer customer questions without needing to divert the call to operations or engineering personnel. Anthony will review the electric distribution system's essential components with definitions and standards of safety.</p> <p>Energy Innovation Roundtable: Benchmarking - Comparing Energy Rebates and Incentive Programs <i>Facilitator: Dani Taylor, Energy Services Specialist, Middleborough Gas and Electric Department</i></p> <p>When it comes to energy efficiency, rebates and incentives are commonly used terms. Join this roundtable as we dive into rebates and incentives programs and discuss the success and challenges that are faced in developing, promoting, and carrying out such programs.</p>
11:15 am	Break with Sponsors
11:30 am	<p>Breakout Sessions:</p> <p>Customer Service Track: Truly Protecting Organizations and Employees Against Today's Threats <i>by Terry Choate, CEO/President, Blue-U Defense</i></p>

	<p><i>Today's threats to our nation's public utilities are at an all-time high. Protecting services and employees is our responsibility. The challenge is doing it practically, effectively, and within time and money constraints. The remedy, thankfully, is not extremely difficult or time-consuming. In this short session, Blue-U will discuss the powerful basics of what you need to secure your services and employees.</i></p> <p>Business Track: Peak Shaving for Impact: Groton's Substation and Microgrid Battery Storage Projects <i>by: Rory Jones, Lighshift Energy, Joseph Leavitt, Lighshift Energy, John Patterson, General Manager, Groton Electric Light Department</i></p> <p><i>Groton Electric Light Dept and Lighshift Energy partnered to bring two battery energy storage peak shaving projects onto the Groton system earlier this year. Combined, the projects will save well over \$10 million for Groton ratepayers, while also providing critical backup power services to the community and delivering impactful emissions reductions. Groton GM Jon Patterson and Lighshift CTO Joe Leavitt will share early operational results and lessons learned from building and commissioning these innovative projects.</i></p>
12:30 pm	Grab and Go Lunch
1:30 pm	Adjourn