



Save these Dates!



*** Registration Open ***

**PMEA 2023 Annual Conference – September 4 – 6, 2024
@ Omni Bedford Springs, Bedford**

**PMEA Business & Governance Workshop (*formerly Finance Workshop)
– September 4, 2024 @ Omni Bedford Springs, Bedford**

2024 Training for Line Crews – **Watch your email for registration details**

Crew Leadership

July 15 & 16 - Lansdale

July 18 & 19 - Chambersburg

July 22 & 23 - Grove City

Digger

September 23 & 24 - Lansdale

September 26 & 27 - Chambersburg

September 30 & October 1 - Grove City

Substation 101

October 28 & 29 - Lansdale

October 30 & 31 - Chambersburg

November 4 & 5 – Grove City



*** Save the Date***

**PMEA Spring Superintendents/ Foremen Meeting
April 10 & 11, 2025 @ The Nittany Lion Inn, State College**

Weatherly's Pudliner Receives APPA Seven Hats



The American Public Power Association (APPA) has awarded the Larry Hobart Seven Hats Award to Harold Pudliner. Pudliner is the manager of the Weatherly Borough and has served at the helm since 1996.

This award recognizes managers of small utilities serving fewer than 2,500 meters. These managers have a very small staff and must assume multiple roles.

Pudliner joined Pennsylvania's Weatherly Borough Electric as Borough Manager in 1997. In this capacity, he oversees every borough department, including water, sewer, and electric, and his tenure has seen the Borough undertake major upgrades to its road, water, and electric systems. Pudliner also led the upgrade of the Weatherly Substation, which helped improve system reliability and resilience, and oversaw the utility's installation of generators at the borough's

well systems to ensure uninterrupted operations. Pudliner has served with regional organizations such as the Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance, as well as the Carbon County Redevelopment Authority and Carbon County Planning Commission.

This is the second recognition for Pudliner. Last September, he was awarded the prestigious Seven Hats Award by AMP.

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Can the Grid Keep Up with AI and Data Demands

A new order from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission seeks to prod longer-term planning to address growing power demands and the transition to renewables.

America's energy demands are growing. New data centers are stressing the electricity grid in many parts of the country. Artificial intelligence "already uses as much energy as a small country," according to an International Energy Agency report, and its demands are expected to double in the next few years.

The federal government and many states are also pushing for a broader adoption of electric vehicles, which have lower carbon emissions than gas-powered cars but require more power from the electricity grid. At the same time, many states are trying to wean themselves off of traditional sources of power: Fossil-fueled power plants are gradually shutting down, while new wind and solar plants are being built.



The simultaneous growth in energy demands and the transition to renewable power sources have raised questions about the reliability of the power grid in many parts of the country. Wind and solar sources generate power differently than a traditional coal plant. But grid reliability isn't just about generating enough power. It's also about transmission — the process of carrying electricity from the generating source to the local utilities that distribute it to homes and businesses. That requires expensive infrastructure, namely high-voltage transmission lines that take a long time to plan and build. Anticipating future energy needs is key to making cost-effective investments.

Recently, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) adopted [a new order](#) mandating longer-term planning for transmission, in hopes of building more reliability and resilience into the nation's energy grids. The order applies to transmission planners, including regional transmission organizations (RTOs) and independent system operators (ISOs), which identify and plan for energy transmission needs. The new order says that those groups need to look 20 years ahead, as opposed to the current five years, when they're planning new transmission projects. And it lays out a scheme for how the costs of transmission should be allocated among states.

There's a lot of minutiae in the 1,300-page order. But its main aim is to improve the reliability of the power grid by pushing states to do more proactive planning. "[The FERC order] is intended to improve the planning and coordination of transmission development in the United States," says Greg White, executive director of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners. "Siting any kind of energy infrastructure these days is a challenge. People love the service, but they don't want to have to see it out their back door."

Looking Ahead

Transmission projects take a long time to plan and build — over a decade is the norm, according to regulators and researchers. In the case of renewables, the challenge is often to get power from the generating source in lightly populated regions to densely built places that are far away. "If you're crossing multiple states, or if you're crossing various national parks, national forests or things like that, it makes the permitting process challenging," White says.

Stakeholders involved in transmission planning include local utilities, state regulators, transmission developers and power generators, all with different interests. Transmission developers have a financial interest in building more projects, for example. Power generators may in some cases have a disincentive to add more transmission capacity, because it could introduce competition into an energy market. Those interests are negotiated by RTOs and ISOs.

Anticipating future transmission needs could cause RTOs or ISOs to make different decisions in the short term, which could end up saving money and providing more reliability in the long term, says Johannes Pfeifenberger, an economist who studies energy markets at the Brattle Group. He gives an example: A group looking five years ahead might determine that they need to build one new high-voltage line based on short-term anticipated needs. But looking 20 years out, it might determine that two lines are likely to be needed in most planning scenarios.

In that case, they could still complete just one line in the short term but build it on infrastructure that could carry a second line later on. That would increase the upfront cost, but would still be much cheaper than building all new infrastructure for a second line. "Transmission planning is very compartmentalized currently, which makes it quite inefficient," Pfeifenberger says. "Ideally, the required long-term planning process would look out to identify all transmission needs over the next 20 years to then make better near-term investment decisions."

Allocating Costs

Determining long-term transmission needs requires consideration not just of likely future energy demand, but also the development of new generating facilities and the retirement of old ones. Public policy set by the states plays a role there. States with aggressive decarbonization goals are more likely to have new solar and wind facilities that need to be hooked into the power grid, for example. One criticism of the new FERC order is that it would require some states to pay for others' climate policies. Mark Christie, one of three FERC commissioners and the only one to vote against the order, said that it would "socialize the cost" of some states' climate agendas.

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Grid Demands (*continued*)

The order is “a gift to developers of solar and wind projects at the expense of consumers and taxpayers,” one former energy regulator wrote for the libertarian-leaning Cato Institute.

But others say FERC was careful to allocate the costs of long-term transmission planning fairly among states. Under the order, while there are still complexities in determining how much benefit a state gets and should pay for, states only pay for transmission projects that will benefit them.

Some RTOs see real advantages in long-term transmission planning of the type that FERC requires in its order, says Claire Wayner, a senior associate at RMI, a clean energy think tank. Non-RTO regions are likely to comply with the letter of the order, but not strive to meet its full potential.

In any event, FERC worked overtime to make the order agnostic about state policies, she says. If one state decides to build lots more fossil fuel plants, and another state would benefit from the transmission infrastructure required to enable that generation construction, the cost-sharing responsibility would flow that way as well.

“States can go and pass whatever policies they want,” Wayner says. “It is up to the planner to then make sure that the grid is reliable and that that reliability is maintained in an affordable way. That’s what this order is about. And all these near-term reliability challenges you’re pointing to are directly a result of a lack of long-term planning.”

Michigan is part of the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), one of the biggest regional transmission organizations in the country, covering 15 states. It includes states with diverse political cultures and energy markets, from Minnesota and Illinois to Louisiana and Texas. During its last big transmission-planning push, MISO used many of the planning principles called for in the new FERC order, including gaming out different future energy scenarios and trying to find solutions that would work for most of them.

In that sense, FERC “saw what was happening in MISO and said, essentially, this is what we’d like to see happening across the country,” Scripps says.

But it will take time to see how states and RTOs react to the order. “It’s different when it’s a requirement versus when we’re trying to get somewhere together,” Scripps says. “Whether [the long-term planning mandate] accelerates or short-circuits the process, we’re waiting to see.”

Reprint from [Governing](#), June 4, 2024. Jared Brey is a senior staff writer for Governing. He can be found on Twitter at [@jaredbrey](#).

PEDA Revamp Could Bring in More Federal Dollars

Rep. Elziabeth Fiedler (D- Philadelphia) has introduced legislation which could allow the Commonwealth to access hundreds of billions in federal funding for clean energy projects. House Bill 2338 amends the authorizing statute for the Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority (PEDA) to grant the authority power to own energy projects.

In her co-sponsorship memo, she shared that “States as diverse as South Carolina, Colorado, Michigan, and Maine have prepared for this moment by creating publicly run entities that seize federal funds, attract private investment, and finance and initiate clean energy infrastructure projects. Fortunately, Pennsylvania already has a public financing authority — the Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority (PEDA) — that is well-suited to play this role.”

For PEDA to be able to accomplish this new mission, the enabling statutory language needs to be rewritten and “modernized.”

Rep. Fiedler has advocated for the change as “the framework for Pennsylvania to do big things.” These, according to the Representative, are to:

- Jumpstart energy production thereby safeguarding and magnifying Pennsylvania’s position as a national energy leader.
- Create good jobs by forging partnerships between labor unions and workforce programs to train workers for the local, family-sustaining jobs of the future.
- Secure energy independence by leveraging federal dollars to invest in energy production and protect taxpayers from rising energy prices and fluctuations in the future.

House Bill 2338 is moving quickly and has already been approved by the House Consumer Protection, Technology & Utilities Committee with a technical amendment. Fiedler hopes for full House action this month.

Annual Conference Registration Open

Registration for the PMEA Annual Conference and Business (formerly Finance) Workshop, September 4 – 6, at the Omni Bedford Springs is now open! This year, we are planning a few surprises for attendees while also offering opportunities for networking with member communities and our associate member companies. Please remember that there is no registration fee to attend the business workshop or the conference for PMEA member boroughs.

Topics expected to be covered during the Business Workshop include:

- Landlord Tenant Act
- Municipal Leasing Options
- Financial trends & options for utilities
- Key Financial Indicators for Electric

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Conference Registration (continued)

Topics expected to be included during the annual conference include:

- Generations in the workplace
- PA's energy priorities – hydrogen, renewables
- Energy & the Future
- Market Update
- Utilizing Data for an Effective and Accelerated Energy Transition



Scott Corwin, APPA President & CEO, will be joining us to share the national perspective and how APPA is responding to pressing energy issues.

Please watch your email for updates and registration information. If you have not received the registration information, please contact Diane at bosak@papublicpower.org.

APPA Upcoming Deadlines

The APPA Utility Salary Survey deadline is **July 18, 2024**. The survey features annual base pay information for twenty-nine salaried positions and twenty-five hourly positions. Public power utilities with at least 50 percent retail sales, with some exceptions, are eligible to participate in this survey. Each participating utility will receive the full final report, which includes a breakdown of salaries by revenue and customer class and regional salary summaries. Access the survey here: <http://publicpower.2024-APPA-Utility-Salary-Survey.alchemer.com/s3/>.

DEED Grant deadline is **August 15, 2024**. DEED grants encourage and promote energy innovation and support the development and demonstration of new, innovative technologies and techniques, and the creation of useful products and tools for the betterment of public power utilities and their customers. Grants often support pilot projects, new technology demonstrations, early commercialization projects, and the development of best practices. For more information, visit <https://www.publicpower.org/deed-funding-utilities>.

Reliable Public Power Provider (RP3) Application Deadline is **September 30, 2024**. APPA's RP3 program is based on industry-recognized leading practices in four important disciplines: Reliability, Safety, Workforce Development, and System Improvement. An RP3 designation is a sign of a utility's dedication to operating an efficient, safe, and reliable distribution system. Currently 254 of the nation's more than 2,000 public power utilities hold a RP3 designation. To apply, please visit <https://www.publicpower.org/rp3-how-apply>.

Associate Member Spotlight

PowerSecure, your Hometown Connections Partner, is a leading provider of Advanced Microgrids and Innovative Energy Solutions to electric utilities and their industrial, institutional, and commercial customers. PowerSecure provides Advanced Microgrid Solutions in the following areas: distributed generation, energy storage and renewables. The



company is a pioneer in developing distributed power systems and integrating distributed energy resources (DERs) in Advanced Microgrid deployments. This includes the ability to provide utilities with dedicated electric capacity to utilize for grid resiliency, provide customers with industry leading reliability, and optimize the value streams to the utility and its customers from distributed energy resources (DERs). With more than 2,500+ MWs of integrated energy assets including distributed low-emissions generation, fuel cells, energy storage, CHP and solar, deployed and actively managed across 2,500+ sites. PowerSecure is recognized by Wood Mackenzie Power Renewables, a leading industry consulting firm, as the largest commercial microgrid developer in the United States.

For more information, please visit <http://www.hometownconnections.com/engineering-operations/powersecure/> or contact Robert Tugwell, Vice President Public Utilities, at rtugwell@powersecure.com.

2024 Will Be Better If You Share Your News....

Please share with us your exciting new projects, photos, personnel updates, and any other news you want to spread the word about. We know there is much happening in our member communities! Your submissions should be sent to bosak@papublicpower.org at any time and we will use them in upcoming editions. We also welcome your suggestions for topics of interest for our newsletters.

Pennsylvania Municipal Electric Association

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