

NECPUC 73rd Symposium Agenda
Newport, Rhode Island and virtual, October 27-29, 2021

Wednesday October 27

5:45-6:45 p.m.

Pre-dinner Reception

Sponsored by Pierce Atwood LLP, Womble Bond Dickinson LLP, and Day Pitney LLP
Location: Rose Island Foyer/Heritage Room

7:00-8:00 p.m.

Dinner

Location: Rose Island Room

8:15-9:30 p.m.

Dessert Reception

Sponsored by Hewitt & Hewitt, National Association of Water Companies, and Nuclear Energy Institute
Location: Rose Island Foyer/Heritage Room

Thursday October 28

7:00-8:00 a.m.

Run or Walk with a Commissioner!

Location: Meet in Hotel lobby at 7:00 for a 3 mile or 6 mile loop!

7:30-8:45a.m.

Breakfast

Location: Rose Island Room

8:55a.m.

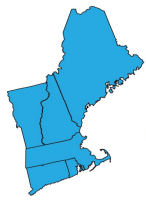
Symposium Opens

Hon. Ron Gerwatowski, Chairman, Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission, NECPUC President
Location: Ballroom

9:00a.m.

Welcome, Hon. Dan McKee, Governor, State of Rhode Island

Introduction by Hon. Ron Gerwatowski, Chairman, Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission, NECPUC President
Location: Ballroom



9:15-10:00a.m. **Keynote Address: Hon. Richard Glick, Chairman, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission**
Moderated by Hon. Abigail Anthony, PhD, Commissioner, Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission
Location: Ballroom

10:30-11:45a.m. **Plenary: Wholesale/Regional Energy Issues Panel**
As the region focuses on mitigating climate change, it increasingly must also adapt to it. The sobering events caused by winter storm Uri in Texas and the Midwest, devastating western wildfires, and records for extreme weather in our own region put into focus the increasing frequency and severity of weather-related energy disruptions. This extreme weather or “tail risk” to electric reliability is at issue nationally, and here, as this region also continues its work to meet climate and clean energy needs.
How should the region analyze the risk? How do we assess the risks and the potential options to reduce them? What is the role of public engagement on the expanding importance of electric reliability? As the ISO prepares to analyze “tail risk” here in New England, what information do we need to make sensible decisions to ensure reliability in a rapidly evolving landscape, and as we continue to work on transforming to a 21st century power grid?
Location: Ballroom

Moderator: Hon. Ron Gerwatowski, NECPUC President and Chairman, Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission
Panelists:

Jason Shafer, PhD, Professor of Atmospheric Sciences; Director, Vermont Institute of Applied Meteorology;
President and CEO, Northview Weather

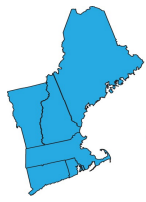
Gordon van Welie, President and CEO, ISO New England

Hon. Judy Chang, Undersecretary of Energy, Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Heather Takle, CEO, Power Options

Dan Dolan, President, New England Power Generators Association (NEPGA)

11:45a.m.-12:45p.m. **Luncheon**
Location: Rose Island Room



1:00-2:15p.m.

Concurrent Sessions

A. *Gas Panel: Planning for the Future of Gas*

By 2050, natural gas utilities will need to sell a very different product or transition to new fuels to avoid greenhouse gas emissions exceeding safe limits. The transition to electrification and cleaner thermal fuels will require massive adoption of new consumer equipment and investment in power systems. Experts will discuss the viability of potential options, the enormity of the task, and what regulators should be considering.

Location: Brenton Hall

Moderator: Paul Roberti, Rhode Island PUC Commissioner Emeritus

Panelists:

Erin Blanton, Senior Research Scholar, Center on Global Energy Policy, Columbia University

Sheri Givens, Vice President, US Regulatory & Customer Strategy, National Grid

Audrey Schulman, Co-Founder and Co-Executive Director, HEET

Megan Anderson, Associate, Regulatory Assistance Project

B. *Telecom Panel: Creative Approaches to Increasing Connectivity Part I; Roles for the Public Sector and Utilities*

The COVID pandemic has made the need for high-speed internet access for all more urgent. With work, school, telemedicine, and other activities going online, those without robust high-speed connectivity, whether urban, suburban, or rural, are at risk of being left behind. At the same time, there is a growing recognition that communications and energy are increasingly interdependent. This panel will explore what states, municipalities, cooperatives, and utility regulators are doing to increase access to communications, and the role that regulators and policymakers can play in developing solutions.

Location: Ballroom

Moderator: Hon. Michael Caron, Commissioner, Connecticut Public Utility Regulatory Authority

Panelists:

Hon. June Tierney, Commissioner, Vermont Department of Public Service

Daniela Fairchild, Director of Operations & Special Projects, RI Commerce Corporation

Sean Gonsalves, Senior Reporter, Editor, and Researcher, Institute for Local Self Reliance



2:15-2:45p.m. ***Break***

2:45-4:00p.m. ***Concurrent Sessions***

A. ***Water Panel: Hot Topics in Water***

Access to clean, secure, and reasonably priced water has become an increasingly important goal around the country, as we deal with a pandemic and the increasing impacts of climate change in our communities. Here in the Northeast, water utilities, regulators, and advocates are exploring new approaches to these challenges. At the same time, the region is preparing for a major influx of federal funding which will support some of these efforts. This panel will provide updates on these topics, and share ideas for protecting access to clean water.

Location: Brenton Hall

Moderator: Hon. John “Jack” Betkoski III, Vice Chairman, Connecticut Public Utilities Regulatory Authority

Panelists:

Hon. Robert Scott, Commissioner, New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services

Sue AnderBois, Climate & Energy Program Manager, The Nature Conservancy RI

Mark Vannoy, Vice President, Maine Water Company

B. ***Telecom Panel: Creative Approaches to Increasing Connectivity II; Roles for the Private Sector***

The COVID pandemic has made the need for high-speed internet access for all more urgent. With work, school, telemedicine, and other activities going online, those without robust high-speed connectivity, whether urban, suburban, or rural, are at risk of being left behind. With an increasing focus – and new resources – on this issue, this panel will explore what private sector efforts to increase access to communications, and the role that they can play, with policymakers and regulators, in developing solutions.

Location: Ballroom

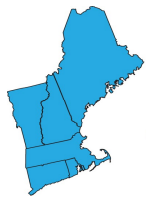
Moderator: Hon. Karen Charles Peterson, Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Telecommunications and Cable

Panelists:

Anna Read, Senior Officer, Broadband Access Initiative, Pew Charitable Trusts

Benjamin Aron, Assistant Vice President, State Regulatory Affairs, CTIA

Timothy Wilkerson, President, New England Cable and Telecommunications Association

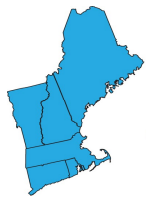


New England Conference of Public Utilities Commissioners
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- 4:00-6:45 p.m. ***Break***
- 4:15-6:00 p.m. Optional Newport History walking tour (*Space is limited; pre-registration is required*)
Location: Meet in Hotel Lobby at 4:15 for walk to Newport History Tours
- 6:45-8:00 p.m. ***Dinner***
Location: Rose Island Room
- 8:15-9:30 p.m. ***Dessert Reception***
Sponsor: Northeast Gas Association
Location: Rose Island Foyer/Heritage Room

Friday October 29

- 7:30-8:45a.m. ***Breakfast***
Location: Rose Island Room
- 8:00-9:00 a.m. ***Concurrent Informal Telecom Breakfast***
Location: Vanderbilt Room
- 9:15-10:10 a.m. ***Fireside Chat with Hon. Sheldon Whitehouse, United States Senator, State of Rhode Island***
Hosted by Hon. Ron Gerwatowski, NECPUC President, Chairman, Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission
Presentation of George Dunn Staff Award, Hon. Abigail Anthony, PhD, Commissioner, Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission
Location: Ballroom
- 10:10-10:30 a.m. ***Break***



10:30-11:45 a.m. ***Plenary Session***

What if TOU is OUT? The Case for Grid Modernization

There is broad consensus that modernizing our electric grid is necessary to achieve resiliency and climate goals. Panelists will make their best case for grid modernization and putting new technology on the power system. To challenge the panelists, we have asked them to explore how to achieve grid modernization goals without the potential benefits of time-of-use rates.

Location: Ballroom

Moderator:

Donald M. Kreis, Consumer Advocate, New Hampshire Office of Consumer Advocate

Panelists:

Angela Amos, Director, Market Development and Regulatory Innovation, Uplight

Theresa Gilbert, Vice President External Affairs, Utilidata

Travis Kavulla, Vice President, Regulatory Affairs, NRG Energy

Invitation to 2022 Symposium and Closing Remarks

Hon. Ron Gerwatowski, NECPUC President, Chairman, Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission

Hon. Matthew Nelson, NECPUC Vice President, Chairman, Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities

Location: Ballroom

12:00-1:00 p.m. ***Luncheon***

Location: Rose Island Room

To go options will be provided for those departing