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NEPPA awarded grant for video on power markets

NEPPA has been awarded a grant from the American Public Power Association's DEED program to develop a training video which will explain the fundamentals of competitive wholesale power markets in New England. The video is the brainchild of the NEPPA Regional Power Supply Committee, which proposed the project last year while discussing how the complexities of power markets could best be communicated and explained to public power commissioners and other interested local officials. The grant, for a total of \$25,000, was approved by the Board of Directors of DEED (Demonstration of Energy-Efficient Developments) during their fall meeting. DEED was established by APPA in 1980 to sponsor and conduct activities related to energy innovation that improve efficiencies and enhance the value of providing electricity and services to customers of publicly owned electric utilities. Since its inception, DEED has committed over \$6 million to qualified projects.

As stated in the grant application, the goal of the project is to "provide policy-makers and other public power officials with a simplified explanation of wholesale power markets as they currently operate in the New England region. Also, to provide understandable descriptions of how public power utilities interact with day-ahead and real-time markets, as well as more traditional bilateral markets, to plan

and secure their power supply requirements."

The video, which will run for approximately 15 minutes, will be developed in conjunction with an advisory committee of power supply experts drawn from the Power Supply Committee, along with several consultants on technical issues and video production. NEPPA has also contracted with Elaine O'Neill, a professional communications consultant, to assist with script development. The advisory committee held their first meeting in mid-November, and suggested specific topics and approaches to communicating the details of market operations.

It is expected that the video will be completed by the summer of 2005, and made available to all NEPPA members for their own use.

Year in Review

2004 was a busy year for the Northeast Public Power Association, as well as a year of growth in our membership and technical training resources. During the year, NEPPA committees and staff planned and held a variety of programs to serve the diverse needs and interests of our members. There is a brief summary of selected programs and events that took place during the year on pages 10-11.



Letters

*Thank you
from Florida
Power & Light
Company*

To NEPPA:

I wanted to thank you for your support during FPL's 2004 hurricane restoration efforts. An unprecedented three storms within a six week period caused serious damage to our electrical system and impacted many of our 4.2 million customers.

Without your assistance, and that of your dedicated and hard working restoration crews, we wouldn't have been able to restore power to all our customers as quickly as we did.

Thank you,

Rob Adams

Florida Power & Light Company

Many Thanks from Carl Benson's Family

The Carl Benson Golf Tournament was a tremendous success thanks to Mark Kelly, Wayne Snow, Rowley Municipal Light Plant employees as well as all the golfers and contributors. The tournament was a wonderful tribute to Carl's life and the multitude of friendships he had forged over 35 years in this industry. Carl's wife Michele and his son John wish to profusely thank all those who contributed in Carl's memory. The proceeds from the tournament are going towards a scholarship fund for nursing and to the Winchester Oncology Clinic where Carl received his treatments.

Michele Benson



Editor's Note:

Approximately 70 golfers participated in the tournament and over 100 attended the dinner that followed. Nearly \$4,000 was raised. Senator Bruce Tarr conducted a raffle and a 50/50 drawing was won by Jim Barbieri of Georgetown who donated back his winnings. Carl Benson was general manager of the Rowley Municipal Light plant until his death in August of 2004.

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The Northeast Public Power Association is an organization representing and serving consumer-owned electric utilities in New England.

General foremen participate in roundtable discussion

NEPPA hosted a General Foreman's Roundtable in November in Marlborough, Mass. Ed McDonald of Hingham Municipal Light Plant opened the roundtable and introduced the first presenter, Bill Turner, regional sales manager for Powell Electrical Manufacturing Company. His presentation addressed arc-resistant metal-clad switch-gear, which is designed to resist the effects of arcing due to an internal fault. He reviewed the four stages of internal arc faults and demonstrated what happens when an arc fault occurs.



McDonald

The second presenter, Mike McManus of Hydron Inc., reviewed new battery power equipment including wire cutting and crimping tools along with hand-stripping tools.

These well-attended roundtables for NEPPA utility members are provided to help facilitate discussions about common and uncommon problems that may affect more than one utility.

"Discussion about how one utility handled a situation could be helpful to another utility if a similar situation occurs," said Lori O'Donoghue, NEPPA administrative assistant.



Photos by Lori O'Donoghue

GF Roundtables are scheduled periodically throughout the year. Anyone who has suggestions for topics or products to be discussed at any of these roundtables should contact either Ed McDonald, Hingham Municipal Light Plant (781) 749-0134 or Lori O'Donoghue, NEPPA (508) 482-5906 or email epmcdonald@hmlp.com or lodonoghue@neppa.org

"We look forward to seeing everybody at the next meeting," said O'Donoghue.



Mike McManus of Hydron and Bill Turner of Powell Electrical



Employment

*Employment
advertising in News
Line is \$30 with a
maximum of
50 words or is free
to NEPPA members.
Deadline for the next
issue is Dec. 17*

Journeyman Lineworker

The Third Taxing District

The Third Taxing District of the City of Norwalk Electrical Department has an immediate opening for a journeyman lineworker. Candidate will have or must obtain a Connecticut Commercial Driver's License and will have at least three years experience as a lineworker, including climbing experience.

Candidate will be knowledgeable of safety and work procedures followed when working in and around 28KV substations, of all overhead and underground standards and work procedures including transformer connections and pole mounted primary metering, and experienced in troubleshooting both overhead and underground primary and secondary wiring.

The Third Taxing District Electrical Department offers one of the best compensation and benefit packages in the industry today and is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We are located on Long Island Sound in a desirable residential community. Please send resume to the attention of George Leary, General Manager, Third Taxing District Electric Department, 2 Second Street, East Norwalk, CT, 06855 or geleary@ttd.gov.

Lineworker

Westfield Gas & Electric

Westfield Gas & Electric is accepting applications for a Lineman. This individual is responsible for the installation, removal, maintenance, repair and documentation of the systems and devices comprising the Department's electric distribution system. Minimum entrance requirements include but not limited to:

- Three years experience as Journeymen/First Class Lineman
- Qualified Lineman under MGL c.149 s 129c
- Formal training under an approved apprentice line program
- Massachusetts Class A or B Commercial Driver's License
- Excellent written and verbal English communication skills
- Working knowledge of the safe practices and procedures utilized maintaining energized circuits of 23,000 volts and below
- Ability to work flexible hours and respond to emergency events after business hours

An attractive wage and benefits package is associated with this position.

Qualified candidates are requested to send a resume by December 10, 2004 with cover letter to: Westfield Gas & Electric; P.O. Box 990; Westfield, MA 01085-0990
Attn: Operations Dept.

For Sale

Maverick Construction Company, a New England regional utilities contractor, is selling excess inventory of new communications and electrical construction material. Items include clamps, connectors, splicing material, and insulators. Retail value of this inventory is in excess of \$300K; actual selling price is negotiable. Limited delivery is available. Contact mbernato@comcast.net for listing of items.

Happy Holidays Happy New Year

2005 Calendar

January 19

Vermont Safety Workshop

Hillary's Restaurant
Morrisville, Vermont

February 8 – 10

APPA Legislative Rally

Washington, DC

April 11 -13 Spring Session

October 3 – 5 Fall Session

Public Utility Management Program

New England Center
Durham, N. H.

June 7 – 8

Utility Conference & Expo

Holiday Inn
Boxborough, Mass.

August 14 – 17

Annual Conference

Marriott Hotel
Newport, Rhode Island

September 10

Annual Lineworker's Rodeo

North Beach
Burlington, Vermont



(front) Kris Nicolas, Mary Harrington, Lori O'Donoghue
(middle) Bob Henriksen, Sheila Boone, Bob Gautreau,
(rear) , Pat Hyland, Bill Hesson, John Jankowski, David Fabrizio , Lou Gabriele
(missing) Linda Calderiso

*A very warm wish
for a wonderful holiday season
to all our members, affiliates
and friends of public power.
We look forward to serving
you in the coming year.*

The NEPPA staff

Public power seeks accountability from RTOs

It is crucial that the operators of electric power markets be held accountable for limiting costs to consumers. If not, they will continue to use the prospect of reliability and efficiency benefits to justify “the imposition upon customers of almost any expense, no matter how outlandish,” according to comments filed recently by a group of New England publicly owned utilities with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

The comments are in response to the FERC’s inquiry into the financial oversight, accounting and cost recovery practices of Independent System Operators (ISOs) and Regional Transmission Organizations (RTOs). The inquiry seeks comments on whether such organizations have appropriate incentives to minimize costs, and whether the FERC should modify its methods for reviewing ISO and RTO rates.

For the FERC to meet its statutory responsibility to protect the interests of consumers, the New England public power utilities recommend that FERC (among other things):

- Require RTOs to adopt express corporate objectives to minimize costs and maximize value for RTO customers;
- Permit RTO stakeholders to commission and fund independent audits of RTO operations, and require that RTO rate filings address the recommendations of any such stakeholder-funded audits;
- Require cost-benefit analyses of major new RTO initiatives and other RTO filings that may result in significant costs to consumers; and
- Permit RTO stakeholders to vote on RTO budgets on a line-item basis, and require RTOs to include the results of such votes with their filings.

The FERC inquiry is particularly timely in New England, as the region is poised to move from an ISO to an RTO structure that gives the market operator even more independence from market participants.

“As ISOs become RTOs, the problem only gets worse, as the ‘independence’ that accompanies RTO status diminishes the ability of those who pay the bills to hold the RTO accountable for its expenditures and decisions,” the filing states.

Supporting their comments, the public power utilities cite the pending ISO-New England proposal to impose a Locational Installed Capacity (LICAP) charge on consumers, who would be subjected under the proposal to paying extremely high prices for power that is far in excess of their needs.

“While requiring consumers to fund this level of generation resources might give the ISO operational flexibility, there is a point at which the extra cost associated with this sort of reliability security blanket exceeds the benefits to be realized,” the

group states. The group also cites that ISO-New England’s staffing levels and revenue requirements have more than tripled in the past seven years, with the number of ISO-NE staff increasing from 130 to 400, and the organization’s annual revenue requirement increasing to \$125 million. This does not include the considerable cost to participants of taking part in ISO-related activities and FERC proceedings, or the significant costs to participants of adapting their own business processes to accommodate those of ISO-NE.

“We encourage the Commission to take a more rigorous, proactive approach across the board in order to ensure that consumers will in fact benefit from the RTOs whose development the Commission has encouraged,” the public power systems state.

Administrative Conference addresses comfort in the workplace

Carolyn Raitt defines networking and where and with whom people network.

Dr. Albert Forgione, demonstrates accu-pressure to ease muscle tension on Sharon McDonald of Pascoag (R.I.) Utility District.



In late October, utility office personnel attended a conference at Lake Pearl Luciano's in Wrentham, Mass. It focused on networking skills and relieving stress in the workplace.

Albert Forgione, Ph.D., head of clinical research section at the Gelb Craniomandibular Pain Center, Tufts

University School of Medicine, held an interactive session on the principle causes of stress and demonstrated techniques to control it.

Carolyn Raitt, SPHR, discussed network survival skills and the tools and techniques involved when interacting with people.

Business managers attend roundtable

Business managers and financial staff from 12 public power utilities throughout New England attended a roundtable on Nov. 18 at the Shrewsbury (Mass.) Town Hall, hosted by NEPPA and the Public Utilities Risk Management Association. The purpose of the roundtable was to provide a forum for the discussion of common issues of interest, and to share information on utility financial and business matters. Jeff Panger, a public finance specialist with Standard & Poor's, opened the roundtable with a presentation on credit ratings for public power systems, and explained the role and importance of credit ratings for both publicly owned and investor owned utilities. He also highlighted the trends in electric utility ratings over the past several years, and the most

important factors contributing to ratings upgrades and downgrades. He showed statistics on rating changes during the past few years, which reflect public power's overall strong and stable financial condition, as compared with investor-owned utilities.

In addition to credit ratings, participants discussed a variety of other topics, including relationships with municipal governments, fiscal year conversions, billing systems, and financial and reporting issues. The group also agreed to hold periodic roundtables in the coming year, with guest speakers on different topics, such as work order systems, risk assessment and management, and business continuity planning.

Customer service professionals learn the “Fish Philosophy”

Fish Principles

- *Choose your Attitude*
- *Play*
- *Be There*
- *Make their Day*

What does the Pike’s Place Fish Market in Seattle, Washington have to do with serving electric customers in New England? That’s what 35 customer service professionals from NEPPA member utilities came to Shrewsbury, Massachusetts to find out on November 16th. The connection, it turns out, is quite a lot, if a positive attitude in the workplace is as important as the employees of Pike’s Place believe it is. The participants in the Shrewsbury workshop were attending the second of two training programs offered this fall by the NEPPA Customer Service Committee. The first, held in October, focused on Self Awareness and Effective Teamwork, and used behavioral profiles and tendencies to make customer interactions more effective. The second program was based on the famous “Fish Principles” of customer service and employee moral.

As discussed in detail throughout the workshop, the Fish Market employees

have adopted these four simple principles to guide their interactions with customers and their own feelings about their work. The result, for anyone who has visited the market or seen the training video, is apparent: a group of employees who bring positive attitudes to their work; who combine work and play every day; and who want to make sure that their customers are having as much fun as they are.

Michael Seabury, the trainer who led the class discussions, took the group through a number of team exercises to demonstrate how the Fish principles can be adapted to any workplace. He showed how the combination of positive, playful attitudes and a commitment to being fully present with customers (and fellow employees) can transform a person’s daily work experience, and make anyone a more positive force in their organization. All in all, some pretty good lessons from a fish market thousands of miles away.

*Contact Kris Nicolas
at the NEPPA office
and wear your
NEPPA colors
with pride.
knicolas@neppa.org*

Celebrate 40 years with 3-Season Jacket

2005 is NEPPA’s 40th anniversary, and you can join the celebration! NEPPA members and friends are invited to purchase a handsome heavyweight nylon jacket with a water-resistant finish, proudly displaying the NEPPA logo and “Forty years of Service.” While it won’t last for the next forty years, it will keep you warm and get you through some cold New England weather.

*Available for
purchase for \$45*

Colors: Tan logo on Royal, Navy, Red, Black, Forest, or Maroon

Sizes: S-3XL (big and tall sizes are available with limited color choices)



Safety & Training Update

Information on training and safety registration has been mailed

NEPPA has mailed program information, pricing and registration forms for technical training courses and safety classes for 2005. **Please complete the registration forms and return by fax to Lori O'Donoghue at NEPPA at 508-482-0932 by Dec. 15, 2004.**

Lineworkers splice secondary cable during an exercise at the 2004 Apprentice Lineworkers Program.



It is not necessary to complete registration forms for employees currently enrolled in ongoing training programs (Utility Technician Development, Meter Technician, Substation and Distribution System Apparatus). A form needs to be completed only for new participants.

A 2005 education/training schedule, as well as a 2005 safety training calendar with your utility's dates, assigned topics and costs, will be mailed as soon as registration forms are received. These calendars will serve as confirmation of registration.

If you have any questions or require additional information, contact Lori O'Donoghue at 508-482-5906 ext. 11 or via e-mail: lodonoghue@neppa.org.

Watch your mail and feel free to contact us with ideas for new training sessions.

Additional information about our training and safety programs can be found on our website www.neppa.org.

Mark Your Calendars! 2005 Utility Conference and Expo

**June 7 & 8
Holiday Inn
Boxborough, Mass.**



Year in Review 2004

This is a brief review of activities for 2004. Check our calendar and watch your mail for news of events coming up in 2005.

February

Members and staff from New England and key Congressional committees, along with New England public power officials and colleagues, attended NEPPA's **New England Congressional Reception** on Capitol Hill. The event was held in concert with the American Public Power Association Legislative Rally.

William Hesson joined the NEPPA Safety and Training Department staff as a consultant working in New York State. He has been conducting safety meetings and teaching first and second year apprentices in the Utility Technician Development program.

Boxboro, Mass. The conference featured a one-day trade show with adjoining indoor and outdoor exhibit areas, hands-on demonstrations of the newest utility tools and equipment, and a reception and dinner for all exhibitors and conference participants. On the second day, the NEPPA safety and training staff hosted a special **"Safety Summit"** to review utility safety issues, OSHA regulations, safety manuals, national electric safety codes, enforcement actions, and accident investigations.

The Public Communications Committee held a **Leadership Workshop** that focused on the skills of influence and motivation, in order to secure commitment to one's ideas, plans and proposals. Public power leaders and leaders-to-be learned to use the powers of persuasion and influence, and not simply the power of authority, as well as the proper techniques and appropriate skills involved in gaining support for one's ideas.



Customer Service Award recipients Anne Olivari, Debra Healy and Diane McGrath with General Managers Dick Joyce, Stan Herriott and Joe Blain.

March

Groton Electric Light Department became a member of NEPPA. The 4,300-meter utility serves Groton, Mass., a rural, no-traffic-light town that has a growing population of approximately 10,000.

Three customer service professionals were recognized at NEPPA's annual **Customer Service Conference**, held at the Yankee Candle Company in South Deerfield, Mass. The conference was attended by over 60 public power officials from around New England, and featured presentations by Paula Lyons, a well-known consumer investigative reporter in the Boston area, as well as a representative of Yankee Candle.

July

The **Annual Golf Tournament** raised \$2500 for the NEPPA Benevolent Fund created to provide financial assistance when accidents or illness cause serious financial hardships to public power employees or their families. The tournament also provides public power decision makers and service suppliers an excellent way to socialize and network while supporting a worthwhile cause.

August

The Legislative Committee hosted a three-day **Congressional Staff Tour** in Northern Vermont. The event gave New England Congressional aides the opportunity to hear first-hand how energy and environmental issues affect public power communities in New England. The tour included briefings on New England public

June

The 2004 Utility Conference and Expo, New England's premier meeting for electric utility vendors, service providers, and public power officials, was held in

Continued on next page

Year in Review 2004 (Con't)

power's legislative and policy priorities and tours of alternative energy sites.

The **2004 Annual Conference** provided NEPPA members an opportunity to meet professional colleagues and learn about industry developments from some outstanding experts.

The event included two days of informative sessions on issues affecting public power in New England. Topics included ethics, governance, crisis communications, customer surveys and RTO New England. Participants gained new perspectives on their industry and met their colleagues from the larger public power community in New England.



George Lague of Swanton Village, Vt., finished out his term as NEPPA president and handed the reins over to John Clark of Houlton, Maine.

September

The sixth annual **Northeast Public Power Lineworkers' Rodeo**, held on the shores of Lake Champlain, featured 13 teams of public power lineworkers showcasing their skills while emphasizing safe work practices. The event provided an opportunity for lineworkers to establish professional relationships and lifetime friendships.

Seventeen crews from 16 public power systems in New England headed south on Sept. 28 to help restore power to storm-ravaged towns in Florida. NEPPA's **Mutual Aid Committee** and the American Public Power Association helped to communicate the request for assistance and to coordinate the massive effort.



October

The Public Utility Management

Program brought together 25 officials from 16 different public power systems throughout New England, who participated in interactive sessions on a variety of topics, designed to sharpen their management skills and keep them abreast of regulatory and technological changes affecting their companies and their own responsibilities. The program, now in its eleventh year, included "Critical Issues in Personnel Management" and "Cutting Edge Technology for Public Power Managers."

A one-day **Administrative Conference** was held in late October for public power administrative professionals. The conference featured speakers on stress elimination and networking skills, and was attended by public power officials from four different New England states.

The Customer Service Committee held the first part of a two-part training program designed to address the needs and interests of public power customer service professionals. The program, "**Self-awareness and Effective Teamwork**," addressed behavioral profiles and behavioral tendencies. The second part of the program, **Boosting Morale and Improving Results**, was held in November and used the world famous Fish Philosophy principles from the Pike Street Fish Market in Seattle, Wash.

November

A Roundtable was held for business managers and financial staff members of NEPPA member utilities. A representative of Standard & Poor's discussed credit evaluation factors for municipal utilities, and participants discussed other business and financial issues of common interest.

Committee Meetings

December 2

Legislative
NEPPA Office
10:00 a.m

December 10

Board of Directors
Lake Pearl Luciano's
Wrentham, Mass.

December 3

Customer Service
NEPPA Office
10:00 a.m.

December 16

Public Communications
NEPPA Office
10:00 a.m

Upcoming Events

December 10

Annual Membership Meeting

Lake Pearl Luciano's
Wrentham, Mass.

September 10

Annual Lineworker's Rodeo

North Beach
Burlington, Vt.

January 19

Vermont Safety Workshop

Hillary's Restaurant
Morrisville, Vt.

February 8 – 10

APPA Legislative Rally

Washington, DC

April 11 -13 Spring Session
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Public Utility Management Program

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