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Long time friends to public power retire **Cotte calls it a career at R.W. Beck**



Roger Cotte

One of public power's staunchest allies and best friends is retiring after nearly 40 years of serving as a consultant, advisor and mentor to electric utilities and the individuals who lead them. Roger M. Cotte, who has worked extensively with public power systems and officials throughout the country, announced his retirement from R.W. Beck in late 2005, after more than three decades with the company. Cotte's career with R.W. Beck spanned three decades of important changes in the electric utility industry, including the development of nuclear power generation, the rise of independent

power producers, and the development of competitive wholesale power markets and regional transmission organizations as a result of deregulation. His long career at R.W. Beck followed 7 years with the American Electrical Power company in New York, for whom he went to work following his graduation from Northeastern University in the 1960s, in the school's famous cooperative study program. While in New York, he received an MBA from New York University.

At R.W. Beck, Cotte established himself

Continued on page 11

DesRoche will retire from Norwich

Richard DesRoche, general manager of Norwich Public Utilities, will be retiring at the end of this year after 35 years of service to the utility and its community.

He came to Norwich originally as an environmental consultant in 1972 when he designed the first water treatment plant. In 1977, he became manager of Water and Waste Water and general manager in 1980, overseeing electricity, water services, wastewater and gas. Norwich is the only public power utility in the Northeast to offer all four services.

"I've had to wear a lot of hats," he said.

Looking back over his years of service, DesRoche takes the most pride in the change in the culture of the organization from facilities management to customer service.

"I read somewhere that an organization can be good at a lot of things but very good at just one," he said. "We picked customer service and we became the utility company around the corner."

He says a personal turning point in his career happened when he took an executive management course from NEPPA in

Continued on page 11



Building a Winning Team for Your Utility

Friday, March 24, 2006
10 am – 2 pm
Basketball Hall of Fame
Springfield, Mass.

The NEPPA 2006 Customer Service Conference will be held at the Basketball Hall of Fame, one of the country's outstanding sports museums and one of New England's major tourist attractions.

This conference is an annual meeting of professionals in the public power industry. It provides a unique opportunity for participants to hear about new ideas and "best practices" in serving retail customers – whatever the business, as well as the chance to learn from and share experiences with their colleagues throughout New England. Conference participants will leave with new insights, renewed enthusiasm, and a better understanding of how they can improve customer service in their own organizations.

The Basketball Hall of Fame is a new, state-of-the-art, interactive facility which celebrates the history and the game of basketball throughout the world, and the players, coaches and others who have made major contributions to its development. Visitors will not only enjoy the experience, but also walk away informed, encouraged and

inspired.

Everyone in an electric utility serves customers, from top management to field staff, from billing clerks to commissioners. It is not a responsibility that can or should be isolated from other activities, although it frequently is. Customer service is more than just a department, it is a mission. Participating in this conference will strengthen customer service in your organization. Public power officials from all levels of the organization are invited. It's a team game, so bring the whole team!



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

APPA briefs members on Energy Policy Act

In early November, the American Public Power Association (APPA) held the first in a series of seminars in Washington, DC, to help its members understand the implications of the recently enacted Energy Policy Act of 2005 (EPAAct 2005). The first day of the seminar was an "Overview of the Energy Policy Act of 2005" and the next morning was dedicated to "The Energy Policy Act and its Revisions to PURPA."

Following welcome remarks by APPA President and CEO Alan Richardson, Joe Nipper, APPA's senior vice-president of government relations, laid the foundation with a general overview of what is included in EPAAct 2005, highlighting issues of importance to the oil industry, natural gas industry, nuclear issues, investor-owned utilities and cooperatives. Nipper also took participants through a "walk down memory lane" by going as far back as 1996 and recapping the various iterations of a federal energy bill.

Joy Ditto, APPA's director of legislative affairs, went on to explain the provisions in EPAAct 2005 impacting public power utilities (e.g. reliability, infrastructure development, and native load/service obligation). Ditto reminded the participants of APPA's goals in helping to craft the legislation. She then took a closer look at the fuel diversity provisions in the bill, as well as those related to reliability, infrastructure development, and transmission availability for load-serving entities. While the bill included many provisions that APPA supported, there are "bitter pills" affecting public power that the association has to "swallow," such as repeal of the Public Utility Holding Company Act. In addition, Ditto described those provisions in the bill which increased FERC jurisdiction over public power (i.e. FERC-lite and refund authority) as well as other separate provisions in the bill of interest to utilities, such

as energy efficiency and LIHEAP. Ditto also identified the many accompanying regulations needed to implement the Act.

Following the general overview, the presenters took a closer look at certain titles in the energy bill. Sue Kelly, APPA general counsel and vice-president of policy analysis; Bob Nordhaus, member, Van Ness Feldman; and Cindy Bogorad, partner, Spiegel & McDiarmid, made up the first panel, which provided details of the provisions included in the electricity title important to public power.

Throughout the day, other speakers explained the impact of the new, mandatory reliability standards required under EPAAct 2005 and how they would be implemented as well as the hydro relicensing reforms required under the new law. Several panels were dedicated to describing the many renewable energy and energy efficiency programs authorized in the bill, including the Renewable Energy Production Incentive and Clean Energy Renewable Bond.

The second day was dedicated to the new requirements under the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act (PURPA). The panelists spoke in-depth about which utilities are affected by the new requirements and how the new law must be considered. The key messages, however, were that:

1) The new PURPA requirements apply to all utilities, including public power, that sell 500 million KWhs or more.

2) Those utilities that qualify need to consider and make a determination on each standard, including whether or not to provide net metering. It does not mean they have to adopt the standard, but they must follow a set of procedures in order to make that determination.

3) Utilities should consult with their attorney in this process.

Copies of each speaker's presentations are posted on APPA's website at www.appanet.org

APPA will be holding two more seminars in Washington, DC, related to EPAAct 2005:

*• Pieces of the FERC Puzzle III: EPAAct 2005, FERC and Public Power
Dec. 15-16, 2005*

*• Conservation & Renewable Energy: Clean Renewable Energy Bonds & Other Energy Policy Act of 2005 Programs
Jan. 19-20, 2006*

Stanwood P. Sparrow, of Middleboro G & E dies at 63

Stanwood Phillip "Stan" Sparrow, 63 of Middleboro, Mass., died unexpectedly on Nov. 12 at home.

Born in Middleboro, he was the husband of Elizabeth K. (Zemaitis) Sparrow, to whom had had been married for over 38 years, and the son of the late Ivan B. and Florence (Shaw) Sparrow.

He was a graduate of Middleboro Memorial High School, class of 1960. He was general foreman for Middleboro Gas & Electric, where he began his employment in the Line Department of the Electric Division on Nov. 22, 1964, his 22nd birthday. He worked there for 41 years.

He was past president of the Mitchell Memorial Club of Middleboro and served on the Board of Directors. He was a coach for the Middleboro Little League for over 25 years and had been a CYO basketball coach for a number of years.

His greatest joys were his family and motorcycle.

In addition to his wife, survivors include a son, two daughters, a brother, and several nieces, nephews and cousins.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory can be made to the Middleboro Little League, PO Box 261, Middleboro, Mass. 02346.

Stan will be sorely missed at the G&E.

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. 16*

Hudson Light and Power Department Assistant Manager

The Hudson Light and Power Department is conducting a search for a candidate to fill the position of Assistant Manager who will assist the General Manager in the day-to-day operations of the department, and who will assume the duties of Manager in the General Manager's absence.

The successful candidate must have a minimum of a BS in Electrical Engineering and will preferably hold a Masters in Electrical Engineering or Business Administration. A minimum five years prior experience with a private or municipal electric utility is preferred. Direct experience in Power Resource Management, Transmission and Distribution is an asset.

The Hudson Light and Power Department operates an electric system with two 115 kV interconnections and a 20 MW generating plant, a 70 MW load, and serves over 11,000 customers. The Hudson Light and Power Department is an Equal Opportunity Employer, offering competitive salary and benefits.

Send resume, including salary history, references, and educational background to:

Manager
Hudson Light and Power Department
49 Forest Avenue
Hudson, MA 01749

Town of West Boylston General Foreman

West Boylston Municipal Light Plant located in central Massachusetts is accepting applications for the position of General Foreman. The candidate we seek will have: Minimum Requirements:

A minimum of 7 years experience as a first class lineman. Supervisory experience is required. Must possess a valid Massachusetts Commercial Drivers License or have the ability to obtain one within 6 months of employment and live or be willing to move within 10 miles of West Boylston. Knowledge of primary electrical distribution systems including but not limited to the installation of overhead conductors and equipment; underground conductors, devices and equipment; pole mounted primary metering and transformer connections. The ability to troubleshoot outages and respond appropriately to customer complaint.

Preferred Requirements: Demonstrated experience with supervising, scheduling and instructing crews, inspecting work in progress, approving daily work reports and preparing reports. A working knowledge of the National Electrical Safety Code (NESC) and the National Electrical Code (NEC). Wages commensurate with experience and qualifications. Pre-employment physical examination and drug testing are required. For immediate consideration, mail, fax or email your resume by December 16, 2005 to: General Foreman Search, Municipal Light Plant, 4 Crescent Street, West Boylston, MA 01583 email: lgosler@wbmlp.com fax: (508) 835-2952.

Happy Holidays Happy New Year

*to all our members, affiliates
and friends of public power.*

from NEPPA

*We look forward to serving
you in the coming year.*



*Pat Hyland
Kris Nicolas
Mary Harrington
David Fabrizio
Sheila Boone
Lori O'Donoghue
Bob Henriksen
Bob Gautreau
Bill Hesson
John Jankowski
Lou Gabriele
Linda Calderiso
Wyn Braun*

Safety & Training Update

Technical training in Maine

In response to a meeting held in September in Houlton Maine, NEPPA will begin a substation training program in 2006 for Maine utilities. It will be hosted by Madison Electric and will be open to all utilities throughout New England.

It was determined at the meeting that Maine Utilities need more technical training. Participants came from Houlton Water Company, Eastern Maine Electric Cooperative, Fox Islands Electric, Madison Electric and Kennebunk Light & Power.

American Heart Association

Beginning in 2006, CPR/AED Training will be associated with the American Heart Association because some states do not recognize the Medic First Aid program which NEPPA has been using

for many years. Vermont and New Hampshire will continue with the Medic First Aid Program, and NEPPA will retrain and use this American Heart Association program in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut and Maine.

Vermont meeting

Public Power employees from from Swanton, Hardwick, Barton, Stowe, Johnson, VEC, WEC, Burlington Electric, Morrisville, VPPSA attended a meeting in Stowe, Vt. The discussion addressed the use of the NEPPA training calendar and website. It was determined that Vermont utilities are seeking a single entity to help meet all requirements related to VOSHA, VT DOT and other environmental issues. Pat Hyland advised the utilities that NEPPA would research and attempt to meet their needs.

Professional development program for public power officials offered again in 2006

The NEPPA Public Utility Management Program has been scheduled for 2006. Human resource issues, writing skills, and conflict resolution are some of the issues that will be addressed in the spring session, as well as a review of industry changes and challenges. The fall session will offer presentations on leadership, managing the generational mix, public relations and financial concepts using mathematical tools for utility managers.

The program takes place at the New England Center on the Campus of the University of New Hampshire. It offers participants the opportunity to work with colleagues from around New England as they update their skills and knowledge in an intense, interactive and enjoyable setting.

This program was designed by and for New England public power officials to help them meet the challenges of deregulation, new technologies, and changing workplace dynamics. Public power officials from all areas of utility operations have benefited from participation in this program which has helped them sharpen management skills and gain a thorough understanding of industry changes. Present or future managers and supervisors will find the classes relevant to their responsibilities and interests. Also, utility Board members, municipal officials, or others with an interest in utility management will find the program to be of value.

(Watch your mail for details.)

Spring Session Dates

Monday, April 3

1 - 5 pm

Tuesday, April 4

9 am - 5 pm

Wednesday, April 5

9 am - noon

Fall Session Dates

Monday, October 2

1 - 5 pm

Tuesday, October 3

9 am - 5 pm

Wednesday, October 4

9 am - noon

Do I Smell Alcohol On Your Breath?

What should you do when you think that one of your employees--maybe one of your better employees, may have a drinking problem, particularly when the only "evidence" that you have is the smell of alcohol on his breath?



By Rick Dacri, Dacri & Associates, LLC.

Rick Dacri is an organizational development consultant, coach and President of Dacri & Associates, LLC. Since 1995 his firm, Dacri & Associates, has focused on improving the performance of individuals and organizations. Dacri & Associates is a business partner of NEPPA and consults with a number of NEPPA members. Rick can be reached at 1-800-892-9828, rick@dacri.com or www.dacri.com

The problem of alcohol and substance abuse in the workplace is prevalent today. According to U.S. Department of Labor, 71% of all illegal drug users are employed. This translates into a problem that nearly every employer must address, and the cost associated with this is staggering. Studies show that those who abuse drugs or alcohol are less likely to come to work, have lower productivity, increased errors, use their

medical benefits at a higher level than other employees, and file more workers' compensation claims.

So what can you do? How should you address this workplace problem?

If substance abuse is contributing to an employee's deteriorating performance, ignoring the situation won't help. It will likely only get worse and have costly--and possibly disastrous--consequences for everyone unless some action is taken.

Clinical diagnosis of an alcohol or other drug problem, however, is not the job of a supervisor, but work performance is. A key part of every supervisor's job is to remain alert to changes in employee performance and to work with employees who are having problems so that performance improves.

When an employee's performance begins to deteriorate, for whatever reason, the supervisor has the right and

responsibility to intervene. The supervisor does not need to be an expert on alcohol or other drugs to intervene appropriately if substance abuse is suspected since the intervention should always be focused on the performance problem.

From an organizational strategy, employers have many options to combat this problem and because you employ individuals with CDL licenses, there are also government mandates which must be followed. All employers should establish and enforce policies prohibiting alcohol and drugs in the workplace. Supervisors must be trained in both understanding the signs of substance abuse and in addressing performance-based issues. Employees should understand that the organization will not tolerate alcohol or drugs in the workplace, but will provide help for those who truly want and need it. Employers may also want to implement drug and alcohol testing. For those employees with CDL licenses, there are testing requirements under five circumstances: pre-employment, random, post-accident, reasonable suspicion and return to duty. For non-CDL employee testing, different states have different requirements and employers should understand these before considering testing programs. And finally, the use of an employee assistance program to support the organization and problem employees can also prove invaluable in addressing this crisis.

The problems of drugs and alcohol in the workplace are not going to go away any time soon, but employers do have the ability to ensure that their workforce is both productive and safe.

Year in Review

2005 is the 40th anniversary of the Northeast Public Power Association, and represents an important landmark for our organization. The benefits of this collaboration have been realized many times over, in education and training, mutual aid, joint purchasing, communications services, public advocacy, risk management and strategic alliances.

As the electric utility industry in New England has been transformed during the past forty years, NEPPA has served as a common ground for developing policies and programs to serve the needs and interests of all public power systems in the region. A review of 2005 NEPPA activities follows:

January

Public power officials from four Vermont utilities attended a NEPPA one-day workshop in Morrisville, Vt. on utility safety. Regulations and standards of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) were reviewed as they relate to electric power generation, transmission and distribution operations.

February

Thirty NEPPA members, representing public power systems from each New England state, traveled to the nation's capital to attend the annual Legislative Conference of the American Public Power Association, and to meet with their own Congressional Delegations. The meetings covered a wide variety of legislative and policy issues of concern to municipal electric utilities, ranging from transmission pricing and access to renewable energy development and clean air. For NEPPA members, topics of discussion centered on the new Regional Transmission Organization in New England, and concerns over RTO costs, benefits, and accountability to the region's electric utilities and their customers.

March

The 2005 Customer Service Conference drew over 80 participants from utilities throughout New England. Held at Jordan's Furniture in Natick, Mass., the conference featured speakers on the topics of utility security, identity theft and fraud prevention. The Carol Tracey Customer Service

Awards were presented to eight customer service professionals, and a Jordan's Furniture representative provided an overview of the company's unique approach to customer service.

Utility officials from around New England participated in an Information Forum on Cutout Failures in Portsmouth, N.H., which was jointly sponsored by NEPPA and the Energy Council of New England (ECNE). Manufacturers of cutouts discussed their products' design, production and testing procedures, and possible reasons for failed cutouts. Following the presentations, a discussion roundtable was held and utility officials described their own systems' experience with cutout failures and the steps being taken to address the problem.

April

Public power officials from five New England states participated in the 2005 NEPPA Public Utility Management Program's spring session. The program, now in its 12th year, focused on critical workplace skills such as coaching and mentoring employees, preventing workplace harassment and managing multiple priorities. It featured in-depth classroom discussions using case studies drawn from the actual experience of participants. In addition, a half-day seminar was presented on "ethical fitness," which covered the value systems and principles that are involved in making ethical decisions.

May

NEPPA held a one-day workshop addressing financial forecasting and modeling skills. An overview of cost-of-service and rate design helped utilities to better understand how decisions made will impact cash flows, TEIR and debt service coverages.

Year in Review

June

NEPPA's 2005 Expo and Operations Conference, New England's premiere meeting for electric utility vendors, service providers and public power officials, was held in Boxborough, Mass. The conference opened with a session on clothing and safety products for protection from electrical arc hazards and flash fire conditions. The second day featured a session on chain saw safety. The event included 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. Also during the conference, NEPPA hosted a Blood Donation Drive in collaboration with the American Red Cross. More than 40 donations were made by conference participants, in commemoration of NEPPA's 40th anniversary.

The NEPPA Customer Service Committee hosted a roundtable at the Reading Municipal Light Department to review and discuss "best practices" in processing new customer accounts. More than 20 customer service professionals from 10 public power systems participated. System procedures relating to application forms, deposits, security, service transfers and other issues were discussed, along with regulatory requirements in different New England states.

July

The Annual NEPPA Benevolent Fund Golf Tournament was held on July 11 and raised nearly \$1,000. The fund was established to aid public power employees or their families who are facing financial difficulties due to accident, illness or loss of life.

August

NEPPA's Annual Conference, held this year in Newport, R.I., served as a forum for unification and strength, and provided an opportunity to connect with public power colleagues, share information and resources, and attend the sessions led by experts in their fields. The 2005 event featured outstanding presentations on electric restructuring, energy legislation, mutual aid, broadband over power lines, and investing in the workforce. Concurrent roundtables were offered for governing board members and utility managers. The annual awards banquet was transformed into an anniversary party for NEPPA to celebrate the forty years of service that NEPPA has provided to public power in New England.

The association also produced an informational video on wholesale power markets in New England and made it available to members. First proposed by NEPPA's Regional Power Supply Committee as a training tool for public power officials and policy makers, it explains some of the important features of deregulated wholesale power markets in the region. The project was funded by NEPPA and the American Public Power Association through its DEED program.

September

The annual Lineworkers Rodeo was held at beautiful North Beach in Burlington, Vt., under blue skies and a warm late summer sun. Ten teams representing four states competed in this year's rodeo, demonstrating outstanding skills, knowledge and teamwork as they represented their systems in an exemplary fashion.

Representatives from New England
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Year in Review

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public power utilities from Vermont, Maine and Massachusetts attended a workshop in Waterbury, Vt. designed to help them communicate with more confidence. The one-day event provided guidance on structuring village and town reports and writing clearly and concisely. The afternoon session was devoted to discussions and interactive exercises that focused on telephone skills.

The Customer Service Committee hosted its second roundtable of the year on the topics of collection and bankruptcy practices. Over thirty customer service professionals attended and participated in the discussions.

October

The fall session of the Public Utility Management Program was held at the New England Center in Durham, N.H. and was attended by twenty students from throughout the region. Topics in the fall program included leadership skills, organizational communications, politics and public power, and managing risk in the electric utility industry.

Thirty public power officials attended a one-day NEPPA workshop on Revenue Protection, learning about the theft of electric service and methods to protect their systems. The workshop covered a wide variety of challenges to electric systems in the areas of meter tampering, computer system hacking and identity theft, along with ways to detect and investigate different cases, and to recover lost revenues.

NEPPA also presented a one-day workshop in Morrisville, Vt. for field operations and management personnel with responsibility for moving soil, setting poles, or other types of excavation activities. It was followed the next day by a breakfast meeting for Vermont member utilities to discuss Association services and training programs for 2006.

2006 Calendar

March 1 – 3

APPA Legislative Rally

Washington, DC

March 24

Customer Service Conference

Basketball Hall of Fame

Springfield, Mass.

April 3 – 5

Public Utility Management Program

Spring Session, Durham, N.H.

June 6 – 7

Expo & Operations Conference

Holiday Inn, Boxborough, Mass.

July 11

Benevolent Fund Golf Tournament

Heritage Country Club

Charlton, Mass.

August 6 – 9

Congressional Staff Tour

New Hampshire

August 20 – 23

Annual Conference

Radisson Hotel, Plymouth, Mass.

September 9

Lineworker's Rodeo

Burlington, Vt.

October 2 – 4

Public Utility Management Program

Fall Session, Durham, N.H.

December 8

Annual Membership Meeting

site TBD

Cotte

Continued from page 1

NEPPA joins with their many friends and colleagues in wishing Roger and Dick long, happy and healthy retirements. It is very well deserved.

DesRoche

Continued from page 1



DesRoche reflects on 35 years of service to Norwich Utilities.

as a skilled engineering consultant and talented salesman, and he and his wife Karen fostered relationships with many of New England's public power systems. He built the company's municipal utility practice and went on to become national director for the firm's growing energy business. He was subsequently elected to the Board of Directors, where he mentored several of the company's future CEOs, and served for the past 7 years as the firm's managing director.

Throughout his tenure with R.W. Beck, Roger Cotte has had a special affection for consumer-owned utilities in the world of electric power, and made sure that his firm was responsive to their needs and interests. He and his firm played important roles in the formation of the three

1985. "Training Director Ed Maurer motivated me to manage people to work together as a team. NEPPA was way out ahead on the changing environment that utility managers have had to survive in."

DesRoche said he has worked with close to 400 people over the years and has seen employee attitudes change from "showing up -getting paid" to service-oriented team players who welcome change. "They're great people and I will miss them. They have allowed me to handle the strategic side of the business because I never had to worry about the daily goings on."

DesRoche served on NEPPA's Management Review team head up by Maurer in the '80s. He also has been active in the Connecticut Municipal Electric Energy Cooperative and is presently serving as chairman. He served as president of the American Public Gas Association.

DesRoche is proud of the facilities end

public power joint action agencies in New England, and also provided office space and administrative assistance to the Northeast Public Power Association during its formative years. For these and many other contributions, the New England public power community remains deeply indebted to Roger Cotte and R.W. Beck.

While he is officially retiring from the high pressure world of consulting, Roger plans to keep in touch with his industry friends, and to offer assistance to his colleagues when requested. He and his wife Karen are planning several trips, including one to his family's homeland of Italy which he has never seen. Weddings are also scheduled in 2006 for both of their sons, so it promises to be an exciting year for the Cotte family.

of the utility as well. Rates are well below adjoining communities and the utility has no debt. Ten percent of revenues go to the city which helps keep taxes down.

"We're proud to provide that dividend to the community," he said.

He will also miss the opportunity to lead his organization to "the leap to the next level," a utility transition which he believes will be focused on demand-side management and renewables. After retirement he would like to stay up to speed and active in those areas as well as continue to stay involved in some local organizations. He will pursue volunteer opportunities to advocate for the homeless and make affordable housing available. He serves on the Board of the Norwich Free Academy and has been an advocate for the school's fine arts and performing programs and the Slater Museum.

DesRoche has three grown children, and his wife Judi will retire from her teaching position the same day he does. Originally from Massachusetts, the couple will divide their time between a home in New Hampshire and a place in Boston. Travel, reading and four grandchildren will also be part of his retirement years.

Committee Meetings

December 15

Public Communications

10:30 am
NEPPA office
Milford, Mass.

December 19

Board of Directors

9:00 am
Radisson Hotel
Plymouth, Mass.

Upcoming Events

March 1 – 3

APPA Legislative Rally

Washington, DC

October 2 – 4

Public Utility Management Program

Fall Session, Durham, N.H.

March 24

Customer Service Conference

Basketball Hall of Fame
Springfield, Mass.

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Annual Membership Meeting

site TBD

April 3 – 5

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Spring Session, Durham, N.H.

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August 6 – 9

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Burlington, Vt.

