IMPROVING EM&V: WHAT'S WORKING AND NOT WORKING?

Moderator: Michael Li, U.S. Department of Energy

PANELISTS:

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SUMMARY DESCRIPTION:

This panel will take an introspective look at common practices in the evaluation industry and the panelists will discuss whether anything needs to change. For example, a study by Quad ROI at the ACEEE Summer Study in 2016 highlighted significant divergences from one technical reference manual to another for assessing energy savings. Some would say the differences are justifiable or don't matter. Others say that big, unexplained differences in savings estimation undermine energy efficiency. Who is right? This panel will explore a number of topics (beyond TRMs) where improvements or changes might be considered to increase the value of EM&V. These are some of the questions and topics that the panel will highlight:

- Do evaluations answer the right questions?
- Are the stakeholder working groups on EM&V helpful?
- How could EM&V be improved?
- If X were different, would evaluators be more useful to advancing energy efficiency?
- Are our evaluation practices rigorous enough? Should we be more frequently using randomized control trials?
- Are the evaluation practices to "blame" for perceived lack of rigor in the results?
- Should evaluators have a professional certification?
- Why does measure life vary so much from TRM to TRM? Is this a problem?
- We often say that because of efficiency programs, the average bill goes down by X dollars. How valid is this statement? How useful is it as a metric for progress?
- There is often concern that the national Uniform Methods Project will lead to commoditization of M&V studies. Is this good or bad?
- Would it benefit stakeholders if requests for proposals were structured in a common format? Are there standard terms or contracts like there are in other fields?
- What do deemed savings values vary so much from TRM to TRM? How much of this is justified? How much isn't?
- TRMs are often the result of a stakeholder negotiation. Is this valid? Or should we base our TRMs more on "science" or "engineering"?