

SESSION 1B

DOING IT BETTER! USING RESEARCH TO IMPROVE PROGRAMS AND EVALUATIONS

Moderator: Ken Keating, PhD

PAPERS:

Myth-Busting Savings Calculations

Dan Barbieri, Engineering Manager, RLW Analytics, Inc.

Eric Swan, Senior Engineer, RLW Analytics, Inc.

Energy Efficiency Best Practices: What's New?

The Latest from the Current Phase of Work for the National Programmatic Energy Efficiency Best Practices Study

Jennifer Fagan, Itron, Inc.

Michael Rufo, Itron, Inc.

Rafael Friedmann, Pacific Gas and Electric Company

Integrating Process, Impact and Market Assessments: A Case Study in Maximizing the Value of Evaluation Results

Tami Rasmussen, KEMA, Inc.

Peter Lemoine, KEMA, Inc.

Evaluation Resuscitation: Breathing life into a slumbering evaluation group and defining the role of evaluation in the emerging 'utility of the future.'

Rich Hazzard, Energy Market Innovations, Seattle, WA

Eric Brateng, Puget Sound Energy, Bellevue, WA

SESSION SUMMARY:

This session rests on the purposes of the evaluation conference for the last 24 years: to learn from the experiences of others and pass on information and ideas. Energy efficiency and its evaluations have been on an upward learning curve for nearly three decades. Yet some lessons need to be back-filled, if not re-learned. These authors all are documenting lessons of evaluation for others. The lessons: 1) don't assume anything that you haven't carefully tested; 2) look outside your experiences to find out what has worked elsewhere; 3) evaluation is a holistic enterprise; and 4) building organizational credibility and management support is essential to successful evaluation functions.

The paper on "Myth-Busting Savings Calculations" will be a good start to lively discussions on what we know and what we think we know. Many listeners will have examples of their own or will want to question some of those of the authors. With all the attention in evaluation on net-to-gross, we often forget that some of what appears "obvious" in gross savings is often unreliable, and may be even more important.

It may not have been "invented here," but learning from the experiences of others is the theme of "Best Practices" research. This paper looks at the Portfolio level of practice; examines non-residential information programs; and explores with experts where energy efficiency has opportunities to improve in the future.

The third paper reminds us the "Integrating Process and Impact Evaluation" isn't a catch phrase from the past, but still is a challenge today, when the tendency of analysts is to create silos and distinctions that can be dysfunctional. These authors use a single large program to illustrate the

advantages of a holistic approach to evaluation.

The last paper, "Evaluation Resuscitation," was selected from many abstracts submitted this year on the issue of establishing an evaluation function in organizations that may not have been doing a lot of evaluation over the years. This is one example, in one utility, but the lessons are very broadly applicable.