

Hi Everyone,

I have been recently added to the Working Group as an alternate for Jim Slusher representing low-income interests. I will be at the meeting tomorrow in place of Mr. Slusher. I would like to take a minute and toss a couple of ideas into the mix before we get into tomorrow's session.

Low-Income Household's Contribution to Meeting Carbon Goals

- Low-income households make up a significant proportion of the residential customer base of Oregon utilities – some reliable estimates place the proportion of Oregon low-income households at between 20 to 25 percent of all households. This represents a sizeable block of residential customers that need to be directly included in the push to achieve Oregon's overall carbon reduction goals. Low-income dwellings (both owner-occupied and rental units) should be made as energy efficient as possible and customers should have access to effective energy and carbon efficiency devices, appliances and control technology. Low-income households need to be part of the Oregon solution in meeting its carbon reduction goals.

Smart Grid Concept

- As the smart grid expands and evolves to become an essential component of Oregon's carbon reduction strategy I believe it is essential that low-income customers have the capability to fully participate in it's application. This means that low-income households will need access to the appropriate technologies that will accept and respond to utility price and carbon signals in a manner that will both reduce their overall energy expense as well as their carbon footprints. It will not be acceptable if a majority of the residential sector has access to modern "smart" appliance and devices while low-income customers are burdened with "dumb" appliances that consume expensive (and/or carbon intensive) power.

In addition, the "Smart Grid" concept should be expanded to include the future possibility that "carbon" signals as well as "price" signals might be sent by utilities to alter the consumption of electricity by end-use devices. For example, a greater proportion of peak usage (assuming it is natural gas-fired generation) may be curtailed in order to allow the shifting of a proportion of hybrid car recharging to peak times rather than at night when more carbon-intensive generation (coal) would be available. In short, curtail more regional load at 5pm to make room for hybrid car recharging at that time and curtail operations (several weeks, months, permanently?) of a coal unit.

Number of Concepts

- I believe the Working Group should consider the development of several energy efficiency concepts for consideration by the Governor rather than struggle to coalesce around just two or maybe three. Maybe our efforts going through the Bucket List tomorrow will help narrow things down. But I feel that there is so much that CAN be done that we should be prepared to forward a host of ideas and then let the Governor and his team go through the sifting, review and political reality process of developing the '09 energy agenda.

Just a couple of thoughts on a hot (at last!) Thursday afternoon. See you tomorrow.

Jim Abrahamson, Community Action Partnership of Oregon