

**2024 Public Input Sessions – March & April**

[Meeting Materials](https://app.box.com/s/10n8hgklgjj6mltx64kb8q8jkfozfqr8)

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| **Tuesday, March 26, 2024 | 5:30PM – 5:30PM** | [Meeting Recording](https://app.box.com/s/380gejezv6ssx2h9fibm7pts8t44ojro) |
| **Wednesday, April 3, 2024 | 12:00PM – 1:00PM** | [Meeting Recording](https://app.box.com/s/x2rapvaay1hf44o604fz448uqpsvox1f) |

**Public Comment Summary**

Anne Hulick (CT Clean Water Action) – 3/26/24

Ms. Anne Hulick (CT Clean Water Action) addressed the landlord-tenant dynamics regarding the implementation of energy efficiency upgrades. She advocated for strategies that would not overly burden tenants with the responsibility of liaising with landlords and coordinating among themselves within the same building. Her suggestion aimed to shift some of the initiative onto landlords to facilitate these upgrades.

She mentioned a specific instance involving the community partnership initiative in Waterbury, which proved beneficial but highlighted some operational challenges. She explained that the sign-up process was cumbersome for low-income residents who often lacked access to computers and found it difficult to schedule follow-up appointments. She suggested that a more streamlined, "one-stop shop" approach would significantly enhance accessibility and impact. Further elaborating on tenant concerns, she emphasized the hesitation many feel about approaching their landlords regarding energy efficiency matters, especially given the coordination required among multiple tenants. She proposed exploring ways to incentivize landlords who proactively undertake such improvements and considering mechanisms to hold reluctant landlords accountable, thereby easing the burden on tenants who face significant obstacles.

**Mr. Peter Schweinfurth (Greenwich, CT citizen) – 3/26/24**

Mr. Peter Schweinfurth (Greenwich, CT citizen) highlighted the efforts in Greenwich related to load management in collaboration with Smart Power, noting an ongoing campaign and plans for a subsequent event. He mentioned that Smart Power, the next generation of solar ICT, is promoting the use of solar energy as either a standalone resource or in conjunction with residential solar photovoltaic (PV) systems.

He reflected on the lack of concern about using energy-intensive appliances like dryers during peak hours, suggesting that time-of-day pricing could be a useful strategy for managing energy load more effectively. He proposed discussing this with utility stakeholders, such as PURA and Eversource.

Additionally, Mr. Schweinfurth advocated for the adoption of technologies that contribute to grid stability, such as EV adoption and home battery backups integrated with solar PV systems. He emphasized the potential of these technologies to help balance the grid, especially during peak demand in the summer months.

**Heather Desse (Dandelion Energy) – 4/3/24**

Ms. Heather Deese (Dandelion Energy), provided feedback on multiple potential priority areas, primarily from a ground source heat pump perspective:

She pointed out a significant barrier for customers considering heat pump installations—the inadequacy of existing ductwork. She explained that since furnaces produce much hotter air than heat pumps, modifications are often required, resulting in expensive upgrades. Additionally, many sites require main service panel upgrades as part of heat pump installs; the program should also consider how to address this barrier. She stressed the importance of making heat pumps accessible to moderate and low-income households. Drawing from experience in Massachusetts, she suggested offering enhanced rebates for such households and advocating for the inclusion of ground source heat pumps in direct install programs for income-qualified individuals. A comment was made that ground source heat systems often provide the lowest operating cost of alternatives; this is an important consideration when evaluating systems for low-income customers.

Ms. Heather Deese also proposed aligning incentives not only with energy efficiency savings but also with additional benefits such as seasonal thermal storage and decreased peak load, particularly for ground source heat pumps. She emphasized the significance of these benefits for both residential and commercial buildings. She recommended streamlining rebate pre-approval processes to provide customers with more reliable incentives. Additionally, she advocated for offering flexibility in rebate pathways, allowing customers to choose between new construction rebate pathways or HVAC heat pump rebates.

An additional concern was raised regarding HVAC contracting regulations in Connecticut, highlighting challenges faced by individuals seeking to transition from apprenticeship to journeyman status. Heather explained that HVAC contractors in Connecticut are required to be trained and have work experience on both fossil fuel equipment and heat pumps. However, apprentices cannot advance to journeyman status without prior work experience on furnaces. This licensing requirement poses a barrier to hiring and promoting within the company.

She noted that resolving this issue would likely require legislative action in Connecticut to amend licensing requirements for HVAC contractors. She mentioned that while there is a cooling license category allowing work on air conditioning systems only, working on heating systems, including heat pumps, typically requires additional licensing levels that mandate experience with both furnace and heat pump systems. A written comment was provided up as a follow-up outlining [Dandelion’s fact sheet on “Establishing a Heat Pump Installer License”.](https://app.box.com/s/4w3k20pvf079sr7jn02cwv7365bkv4hu)

**Mike Uhl (System Smart) 4/3/24**

By Zoom Chat, Mr. Mike Uhl asked; “ Is EEB, the Companies, and/or public agencies participating in the Node Collective to align incentive/rebate information with a national tool? <https://www.nodecollective.org/>” (The Utilities committed to researching further and providing follow-up.)

Mr. Mike Uhl also inquired about the availability of a process, that would allow customers to access the full technician data collected at their homes. He emphasized the importance of this data for customers to properly size equipment, specify solar requirements, and make informed decisions regarding building electrification and other plans. He noted that many contractors may not directly interact with customers, highlighting the necessity for customers to have access to technician data to facilitate expanded scopes of work and to further building electrification efforts.

He suggested that customers participating in weatherization programs should be able to request the full technician-collected data from their home assessments, previously known as an “EDS”, now termed as site assessment data. However, he noted that customers have experienced mixed responses when requesting this information from weatherization teams or Utilities. He highlighted the detrimental effects of not having access to this data, as it can complicate planning for subsequent projects, delay financing or funding acquisition, and hinder participation in State programs. He proposed a streamlined method where customers could authorize the sharing of this information between contractors, facilitating quicker project progression and alignment with priority goals.

Mr. Mike Uhl provided examples to illustrate the importance of ensuring that customers receive full access to data collected during home assessments or analyses. He likened the situation to when companies provide a credit report to customers after conducting a credit check. In such cases, regulations typically require companies to furnish the full data to the customer. He suggested similar protections should be in place for customers when companies perform deep analyses of their properties or homes.

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