

Energy Information Hotline

The Companies are extremely aware of the impact that rising energy costs have had on customer's financial well being. At the same time, a rising consciousness of the impact energy usage has on our environment has spurred interest in controlling energy consumption. The combination of these two factors has created a groundswell of interest in energy, energy consumption and energy conservation strategies. The result is an ever increasing need to provide information to customers regarding energy, energy usage, and programs to assist customers reduce consumption.

In order to create a mechanism that is useful to a variety of stakeholders, a collaborative input process for the ongoing administration of the incoming calls is an important feature. The Companies suggest a stakeholder group under the auspices of the ECMB be established to provide such a collaborative environment for input, review and oversight.

The Companies submit this plan in compliance with order #10 in Docket 06-10-02. The Companies are responsive to the Department's desire to have additional resources available to handle not only questions regarding energy efficiency, but all energy related questions and topics. To that end the Companies propose the following organization of information:

Energy Efficiency

The Companies will continue to receive calls regarding CEEF energy efficiency programs through the existing CEEF Hotline 877-WISE USE. The Companies currently track all customer inquiries and have bi-lingual staff to handle calls. The Companies staff also have access to confidential customer account information that allows them to thoroughly answer customer inquiries. In addition, they can direct customers to the appropriate program staff, to address questions about energy efficiency, energy assistance, financing options, tax benefits, energy education, and green building standards.

CMEEC customers can also be served by a separate prompt that directs calls to a dedicated CMEEC number. The Companies have created such a prompted effective July 25, 2007.

The Companies also plan on reviewing the current list of prompts to more quickly direct customer's requests.

Distributed Generation

The Companies are well suited to answer questions on rates, distributed generation and load response. Those questions will be routed to the Companies' DG departments through one of the menu prompts for the 877-WISE USE number. These individuals are well equipped to handle questions about the DG capital grant process, rate issues and the interconnection application process.

Clean Renewable Technologies

Prompts can be established for clean and renewable technologies at the request of program sponsors.

Alternative Fuels, General Questions

The ISE has been approached regarding their ability to field non- CEEF program questions such as alternative fuels, and other energy related inquiries. One of the phone prompts would be directed to ISE where student interns will staff a call center-type environment. The ISE will be making a budget proposal to the ECMB.

The Companies believe that this is the most cost-effective and customer friendly approach to address customers' inquires for information. The current 1-877- WISE USE telephone number would continue to be the main number to call because of the extensive marketing it has received in all CEEF advertising, collateral materials and promotional products. Customers who call the number would be presented with a limited number of menu options (five or less) to route them quickly to the appropriate party to best address their needs.

In providing such a Plan, it would be the Companies hope that other state entities would utilize the 877-WISE USE number in their marketing and collateral materials to provide customers with the opportunity to learn/inquire about all Connecticut energy-related questions.