

Wednesday, February 6, 2025 | 1:00 PM– 3:00 PM

Contractor Technical Advisory Committee (CTAC) Meeting Minutes

[Meeting Recording](#)

Discussion

1. Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) Introduction

DEEP reviewed the meeting agenda, which was to include both Commercial and Industrial and Residential topics.

2. Public Comment 00:04:25

Public comment from Edgardo Mejias.

3. DEEP Updates 00:010:28

DEEP provided updates on federal funding, the 2025-2027 Conservation and Load Management (C&LM) Plan Determination, the proposed Home Energy Solution (HES) and Home Energy Solution Income-Eligible (HES-IE) Redesign Process, Residential Energy Preparation Services (REPS), and the legislative session.

- For federal funding, DEEP continues to work on all federally funded programs that have been contractually obligated to CT DEEP as required under the terms of awards.
- DEEP is currently working through a draft 2025-2027 C&LM Plan determination with the intention to circulate the draft for public comment before issuing a final determination. DEEP has reviewed the public comments, data and information request responses, and is working to address stakeholder input in the draft determination.
- DEEP will be hosting a technical meeting on February 25th, 2025, on the proposed HES/HES-IE program redesign.
- REPS has expended all available funding, and new referrals are being placed on a waiting list. DEEP has instructed the implementor to continue and complete projects where remediation is already underway. DEEP is currently assessing options for the next iteration of REPS and hopes to share updates soon.
- DEEP is tracking legislative session and offering testimony when necessary. There are discussions regarding the Public Benefits Charge, of which efficiency programs represent a portion. Efficiency is the one part of the electric and natural gas bills that helps to lower costs for all ratepayers. Efficiency remains the lowest-cost energy resource, so for every dollar invested in efficiency, all ratepayers benefit from not needing to buy more expensive supply and minimizing infrastructure costs.
- The CTAC Tracker is up on the [CTAC website](#). DEEP aims to have responses to questions in the tracker posted prior to regularly scheduled CTAC meetings. Questions from the previous

CTAC meeting were recently shared with the utilities for responses. These outstanding questions from December 2024 will be addressed before the next CTAC meeting in April.

4. Commercial & Industrial (C&I)

a. Commercial Contractors Consortium (CCC) 00:017:10

- Dan Robertson reviewed the agenda
- 2024 Business Performance & Collaboration:
 - In review of 2024, many contractors experienced a slow start with recovery in the second half of the year. Many contractors expanded efficiency service offerings. In collaboration with the Companies, Christina Damato and Dan Robertson reviewed how communication with the Companies led to incentive multipliers, Small Business Energy Advantage (SBEA) expansion, streamlining of requirements for pipe insulation, and aid when needed.
- 2025 Market Shifts:
 - Dan Robertson reviewed 2025 Opportunities and Threats. Opportunities included expanding scope, leveraging incentives, growing contractor-utility partnerships, and increasing volume to offset lower-margin product mix while sharing ideas across states. Threats include tariffs as key materials/products come from Mexico and Canada, the Public Benefits Charge backlash, and employee retention.
- Heat Pump Input & Industry:
 - The Consortium explained that many contractors see heat pumps as a great solution when replacing existing electric or delivered fuel heating. However, they are less viable when natural gas is the existing heat source, solar is not installed, or AC is not being added. The Consortium suggested creating additional rate codes to lower the demand charge profile for commercial customers with natural gas. The Consortium notes that insulation upgrades help, but solar integration needs a clear mechanism and better timing with efficiency programs.
- New Technology Evaluation:
 - The Consortium reviewed a new product, LuxWall, a retrofit solution for existing windowpanes that preserves the original window frame. This is approved by Con Edison and currently under evaluation by Eversource and Avangrid. The best fit is existing single-pane or double-pane windows that do not have e-Film.
- Open Discussion:
 - DEEP asked some questions of the Consortium regarding market shifts. The Consortium explained that finding the right mix of products can be difficult. Additionally, there may be other measures that people are interested in implementing beyond lighting. Stakeholders note that conversations around weatherization are being well-received. Christina Damato believes that the new structure around the Small Business Energy Advantage program will bring growth. DEEP, the Consortium, and the Companies also discussed payment challenges when it comes to electric vehicles.

- Jack Cunningham, LuxWall, described many of the benefits of LuxWall and the energy savings it can provide. Ricky Jordan noted that they do not typically see many window projects, which is likely due to the large capital cost of window replacements. The Companies noted that they look forward to evaluating LuxWall.
- Becca Trietch (DEEP) asked if the Companies adhere to a process for vetting new technologies. The Companies noted that they are open to hearing about new technologies and have a robust internal review process, but are also working to propose a clearer, public process in the near future.
- Edgardo Mejias described that the refrigerant change on heat pumps will require all manufacturing of new equipment, and they are estimating a 20% increase on cost between manufacturing and installation of new systems. George Lawrence, a technical consultant for the Energy Efficiency Board, explained that they are researching solutions for this problem.

b. Barriers to Weatherization in Commercial and Industrial Properties 00:58:29

- Dan Robertson noted that vermiculite is a big concern. He has not seen as much mold but is unsure if this is true for the residential side. There is some debate on practices for roofs, such as the debate over insulation or spray foam on the bottom of a roof, and an unconditioned space or attic.
- Becca Trietch (DEEP) asked if there were conversations in the Commercial & Industrial sphere regarding partially conditioned spaces. George Lawrence mentioned that there were some conversations ongoing. Dan Robertson mentioned that there may be opportunities for incentives.
- George Lawrence raised that when it comes to building science, the science is not as settled on things like flat roofs. It may be valuable to come up with a set of best practices to help provide guidance. This guidance could include characteristics of buildings and the best way to address adding more insulation and air sealing.
- Dan Robertson described a building envelope training held for Commercial and Industrial contractors, which was well received. One contractor expressed that it can be more difficult to make money in the Commercial & Industrial space.
- Edgardo Mejias expressed that there are still concerns regarding the thermal envelope. Mr. Mejias expressed that he was in favor of a best practices resource for Residential and C&I programs. A barrier he noted that is not physical is the application of savings that address the entire thermal boundary. He advocated for designing comprehensive solutions for customers.

c. Utilities Presentation – Communication process between contractors and the utilities & program modification processes 01:07:58

- The Companies presented on the role of different stakeholders and the communication escalation processes currently in place.

i. Discussion

Discussion occurred between DEEP, the Companies, and Contractors. It was agreed that different types of communication are needed depending on the settings, and that various issues may need tailored escalation processes. Historically, communications have been

confusing and frustrating. Contractors expressed that enhanced, clear, consistent, and concise communication would be helpful to their work. Communication regarding evaluations also needs to be improved.

5. Residential

a. Utilities Updates/topics 01:10:00

- Diane Del Rosso (Eversource) and Amy McLean (Avangrid) presented on Contractor Technical Advisory Committee (CTAC) Residential topics.

i. Attic and knee wall access for blower door testing.

The Companies presented that this topic was addressed at the last CTAC meeting, when Ralph Valenti suggested running pressurized blower door tests in instances where homes have inaccessible knee walls and/or attics, and no other barriers. Contractors must be able to confirm the absence of health and safety barriers and conform with BPI Protocols. Discussion occurred amongst stakeholders, which included scenarios when it may not be possible to run blower doors and potential solutions. Contractors noted that the number of blower door tests they are able to complete is decreasing due to recent changes.

ii. Revisit wall insulation requirements from the December 18th meeting.

The Companies noted that they have presented on the current prequalification criteria for walls several times. It was indicated that there are still disagreements from contractors regarding the prequalification of Connecticut program rebates. The existing wall prequalification is for insulation R4 or less. If the insulation is R4 or less, the Companies recommend dense packing the exterior walls. This is the same prequalification that has been in the Companies' Program Savings Documents (PSD) for the past ten years. On June 10, 2024, after learning that some contractors were utilizing the Department of Energy (DOE) Home Energy Score Assessor Calculator default values, the Companies issued a memo regarding exterior wall R-value assessment to ensure everyone was following the same guidelines. The Companies want to ensure the Program Savings Document (PSD) requirements are followed in alignment with program incentives for cost effectiveness. After surveying the Connecticut Insulation Installers Network, the Companies found that on average, enclosed cavities require about 3 inches of available cavity space between any existing old insulation and the exterior part of the walls in order to properly dense pack. Additional guidance was presented regarding accepted methods to evaluate exterior walls for qualification.

iii. Comprehensive benefits in customer reports

The Companies presented that they are in the process of working with an external firm to facilitate a customer report redesign. The scope of work is in continued negotiation and the launch can be expected after the program redesign is confirmed. The process will include engagement of all stakeholders and an assessment of the DOE Home Energy Score through the Hancock MINT mobile tool. Currently, customers receive an Energize CT report and a Home Energy Score report separately. The goal of this redesigned effort is to combine the

reports to improve customer experience as well as add scores to the US Green Building Registry.

b. DEEP facilitated discussion

- Ben McMillian (DEEP) asked about the timeline on the attic and knee wall process.
 - Diane Del Rosso (Eversource) stated that the contractors had 30 days to respond to the Companies to evaluate agreement with the recommendation and will share results after the 30 days. After the 30 days the Companies plan to give another 60 days for an effective date, but the Companies indicated this may change if contractors request a quicker adoption.
- DEEP opened up the discussion to contractors. Edgardo Mejias raised a request for adequate communication, documentation, and applicable training as program changes occur. Vivian Perez shared experiences of positive communication with the Companies and the ease in resolving issues together.
- Becca Trietch (DEEP) reiterated that the Utilities have committed to improving their communication protocols and that they have been adhering to this process with the new solutions for attic and knee wall access.
- Mr. McMillian reminded attendees that CTAC agendas are typically posted 2 weeks prior to the meeting date and contractors are welcome to add specific items they would like addressed to an agenda. An agenda set in place allows the Utilities to prepare meeting materials ahead of time.

6. Public Comment 1:29:45

Amber McDonnell of Lantern Energy shared they would like to move forward with a Request for Proposal (RFP) as soon as possible. Vivian Perez seconded this comment about moving forward with the new program as quickly as possible.

Ben McMillian stated that a report out from the Home Energy Solution (HES) and Home Energy Solutions- Income Eligible (HES-IE) redesign working group will be coming out next week. DEEP will be reviewing this report out heavily.

Edgardo Mejias explained that delaying the Request for Information (RFI), specifically, is very impactful to vendors as they run the risk of not being able to be compensated for services they have completed as well as workflow disruption. Mr. Mejias expressed concern about the contractors' financial struggle. Mr. Mejias has urged for a pricing solution by March 1, 2025.

Announcements

1. On October 10, 2024, DEEP issued a letter to the Companies asking them to pause their RFI and RFP processes related to the proposed HES and HES-IE changes. On October 28, 2024, DEEP issued a request for written comments on the proposed public process.
2. December 31, 2024, DEEP issued a Notice of Progress and Technical Meetings. DEEP will be hosting a technical meeting regarding the HES and HES-IE redesign on February 25, 2025, and March 18, 2025, at 10:00am EST.
3. DEEP encouraged the Companies, Program Contractors, and the Energy Efficiency Board Technical Consultants to collaborate on a solution regarding the proposed residential

program changes. A meeting was held on December 13, 2024, and summary notes were provided to DEEP. DEEP lifted the Vendor Pricing RFI restriction. A follow-up meeting was held on January 31, 2025.

4. The [CTAC Tracker](#) is up on the CTAC website, which will be updated following each meeting.
5. The next CTAC meeting is scheduled for April 16, 2025, at 1:00pm EST.