



DEMAND RESOURCES IN CT: PRIORITIES, STRATEGIES AND THE FUTURE

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The Office of Consumer Counsel (“OCC”) is involved in the conservation and load management (“C&LM”) planning in CT through the state’s Energy Efficiency Board (“EEB” or “Board”). The 2017 C&LM Plan update includes a section on demand that proposes several pilot programs that address ways in which consumers can help reduce energy consumption while maintaining grid reliability.

Demand Response (“DR”) focuses specifically on shifting electricity usage during peak periods of time in response to time-based rates or other forms of financial incentives. The DR pilots proposed have the potential to unlock valuable data that could allow for future programs that could have a significant impact on usage across the state.

There are three DR pilots being considered for 2017 kick-off. The first is a *Peak Time Rebate Pilot*, where customers receive a one-time incentive for reductions made to their average electricity consumption during a demand reduction event. The second is a *Wi-Fi Thermostat Pilot*, where customers have a “smart” thermostat device that allows reduction during peak-time events. The third is a *Smart Plug Load Control Pilot*, which would equip customers with a “smart” outlet, remote control unit and cloud-based networking that respond to demand-reduction events.

DR is an important addition to the overall energy efficiency landscape in CT and OCC feels strongly that it should be embarked upon with consideration of all barriers (cost, policy implications, value, etc.). It could certainly be an enhancement to our existing portfolio, but only if we approach DR initiatives collectively, with realistic eyes and with the understanding that the success of these pilots is not guaranteed.

It’s crucial that there is a high level of transparency and rigid oversight in place as these pilot programs are launched. OCC looks forward to being part of the team that follows the pilots and to considering what’s best for Connecticut’s future regarding demand.

The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (“DEEP”) is deliberating on the proposed 2017 C&LM Plan Update and will distribute its Decision at the end of this year.