

## **NASEO Assists North East and Mid Atlantic States with Final Recovery Act State Energy Program Plans**

With two weeks to go until final, comprehensive ARRA SEP plans must be submitted to US DOE, NASEO, in conjunction with CONEG, conducted a lively conference call meeting of the northeast and mid-Atlantic states to discuss best bets for these upcoming applications. This conference call was not a "dog and pony" show, but rather a focused give and take among the state energy directors. One SEO director would describe a particular program, and others would raise pointed and helpful questions so as to understand better the applicability of a given strategy in another, neighboring state. As David Terry, NASEO executive director remarked, "this is exactly the kind of communication and coordination we want to foster with our new regional coordinator program."

Most of the thirteen states in this corner of the USA, ranging from Maine all the way down to Virginia along the east coast, intend to operate programs aimed at making energy efficiency improvements in state facilities, schools and hospitals, industrial customers, and other institutions.

Vehicles to be used to accomplish this end include performance contracting, revolving loan programs, and outright grants. Similar programs are also being proposed by the various states for residential customers, especially those who are low income and/or living in multi family structures.

Some states are seriously considering bulk purchasing programs, and other forms of support, of such renewable energy measures as solar panels and wind turbines, to further drive down the cost of these projects and to help them qualify for tax incentives provided in ARRA.

Among the other, innovative ideas being proposed by these states are:

- training for energy code officials as a means to upgrade code enforcement;

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

#### **Chair**

WILLIAM (DUB) TAYLOR  
*Texas*

#### **Vice Chair**

JANET STREFF  
*Minnesota*

#### **Treasurer**

JEFF HERHOLDT  
*West Virginia*

#### **Secretary**

RYAN GOOCH  
*Tennessee*

#### **Parliamentarian**

LARRY SHIRLEY  
*North Carolina*

#### **Regional Representatives**

FRANK MURRAY  
*New York*

PHILIP GIUDICE  
*Massachusetts*

STEVE WALZ  
*Virginia*

MALCOLM WOOLF  
*Maryland*

MOTICE BRUCE  
*Mississippi*

JOHN CLARK  
*South Carolina*

JONATHAN FEIPEL  
*Illinois*

ROYA STANLEY  
*Iowa*

VAUGHN CLARK  
*Oklahoma*

JIM PLOGER  
*Kansas*

JIM ARWOOD  
*Arizona*

THEODORE PECK  
*Hawaii*

#### **Affiliates' Chair**

KEN MENTZER  
*NAIMA*

#### **Affiliates' Vice Chair**

TOM WALTHER  
*Johnson Controls*

#### **Executive Director**

DAVID TERRY

#### **General Counsel**

JEFFREY C. GENZER

- fielding of a team of performance contracting specialists to aid state agencies in the implementing of such programs;
- providing a competitive solicitation opportunity for entities to propose "best energy efficient ideas" that don't fall within other categories;
- expanding programs that already operate with either REGGI or SBC funds; and
- reaching out to localities within their states to help them with implementation of ARRA funded initiatives, with such innovative programs as the MA "green communities" program [see separate article below].

Interestingly, some states intentionally are limiting their program initiatives with ARRA SEP funds to just three or four offerings, in order to keep their oversight burden manageable, while others are proposing up to eight discrete strategies in order to provide benefit to the maximum number of end-use categories.

All states seemed keenly aware of the "supplement, don't supplant" dictum in the ARRA legislation. Clearly the message being promulgated by NASEO executive director David Terry and general counsel Jeff Genzer to ensure that all ARRA funds be spent properly has been delivered effectively and heard clearly by all NASEO members.

Another pattern noticed in the preliminary submissions of all the states in these two regions is lack of - so far - any ARRA SEP proposals that cross state lines. This is an area where NASEO, especially through its growing network of regional coordinators, hopes to facilitate greater communication and coordination in the near future. Particular emphasis will be placed on ways states can combine efforts to train auditors and installers of energy efficiency and renewable energy measures. Home Performance with Energy Star also seems like a strong candidate for further interstate coordination.

A specific insight offered on the conference call about green jobs training was the importance of ensuring that ARRA DOL dollars that are available to states for this purpose are captured by appropriate sister agencies, thereby enabling the SEOs to partner with such agencies to provide training and in the process save SEP dollars for other programmatic purposes.

The call was preceded by a state by state survey of ARRA SEP initial plans, conducted by NASEO regional coordinators Chuck Guinn and Chuck Clinton. Their survey was summarized into a document entitled "NE and Mid Atlantic SEO ARRA Initial SEP Plans Summary." This document was distributed to all conference call participants in advance of the call which was held on Tuesday, April 28th. Please contact NASEO staff if you would like a copy of this document.

Additional conference calls are planned as a service of NASEO and CONEG to these two regions. Likely topics of interest include:

- performance contracts, and how to leverage them with other revenue sources, and
- solar applications, and how to encourage further innovation with them.

## **Massachusetts Launches Green Communities Program To Reach Out to Localities**

Commissioner Phil Giudice of the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) wants to share the news with NASEO about the launch of a new Green Communities Program in his state on Earth Day, April 22, 2009.

This new MA initiative, which features the creation of a new Green Communities Division within the Department of Energy Resources, will help municipalities throughout Massachusetts pursue clean energy projects, and cut energy bills through greater efficiency and locally generated renewable power through use of federal stimulus funds.

The Green Communities Program is a component of Governor Patrick's Massachusetts Recovery Plan, making information and technical assistance available for communities to help them prepare for and make the most of federal recovery funds targeted for energy investments.

"Coupled with federal recovery funds for energy efficiency and renewable power, the Green Communities Program will help communities across Massachusetts reduce costs, spur economic activity, and strengthen our collective commitment to a clean energy future," said Governor Patrick.

Created by the MA Green Communities Act – a pioneering energy reform law enacted last year – the Green Communities Program will support local efforts that further ambitious clean energy goals shared by the Governor and legislative leaders. Envisioned as a way to encourage municipalities to make greener energy decisions, the Green Communities Program is mandated to offer grant and loan opportunities to municipalities in order to be designated as "green communities."

Types of assistance offered by the Green Communities Program will include helping communities qualify for state funding by adopting local by-laws and regulations that facilitate the siting and permitting of renewable energy facilities, benchmarking municipal energy use and reducing energy consumption, purchasing fuel-efficient vehicles for municipal fleets, and taking steps to reduce lifecycle energy costs for new commercial, industrial and residential buildings. The Act allows funding of \$10 million per year from the proceeds of Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative allowance auctions for the program.

Federal funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) includes \$42 million in Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants to fund efficiency and renewable energy investments by municipalities. The Green Communities Program is now in the process of assigning four regional coordinators who will provide communities around the state with technical assistance on becoming Green Communities and on making choices about energy investments with federal funds.

"Now open for business, the Green Communities Program stands ready to help cities and towns across the Commonwealth make energy choices that save them money and create a greener energy future for all of us," said DOER Commissioner Philip Giudice. "We look forward to working with communities from Cape Cod to the Berkshires."

Please feel free to contact Phil Giudice at (617) 626-7339 for more information about the Green Communities Program, or visit <http://www.mass.gov/energy/greencommunities>.