



NARUC

*Serving the consumer interest
by seeking to improve the
quality and effectiveness
of public utility regulation
in America.*

Interconnecting Consumers and Utilities

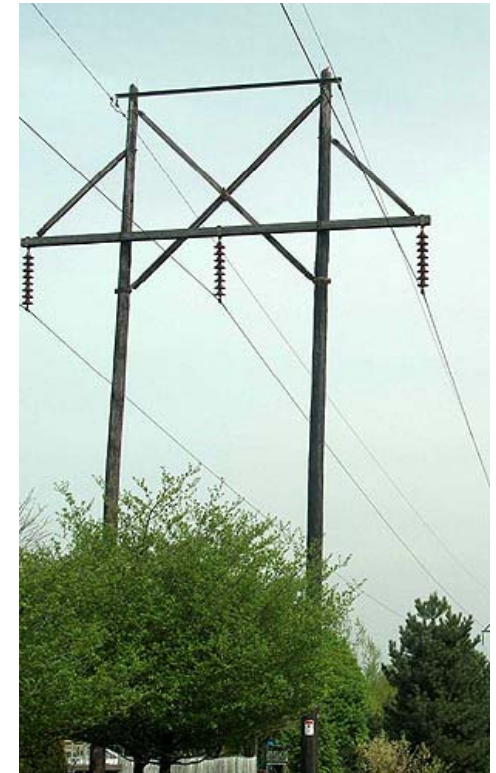
David Coen, Commissioner
Vermont Public Service Board

**9th US-EU Regulators Roundtable
3-4 October, 2011, Chicago, IL**



Engaging the Public in the Planning Process

- Lack of prior engagement leads to increased controversy and costs
- Transmission Project without public engagement - 50 days of hearings
- Similar project with significant advance public engagement – 1 day of hearings





Renewable Energy and Public Perception

Clean air
vs.
Scenic and
Natural resource
Impacts





Energy Policy Planning

- Consumer preference and the complexity of energy issues
- To what extent does the public understand the challenges associated with renewable energy?
 - Capacity factors
 - Integrating variable generation
 - Land use impacts



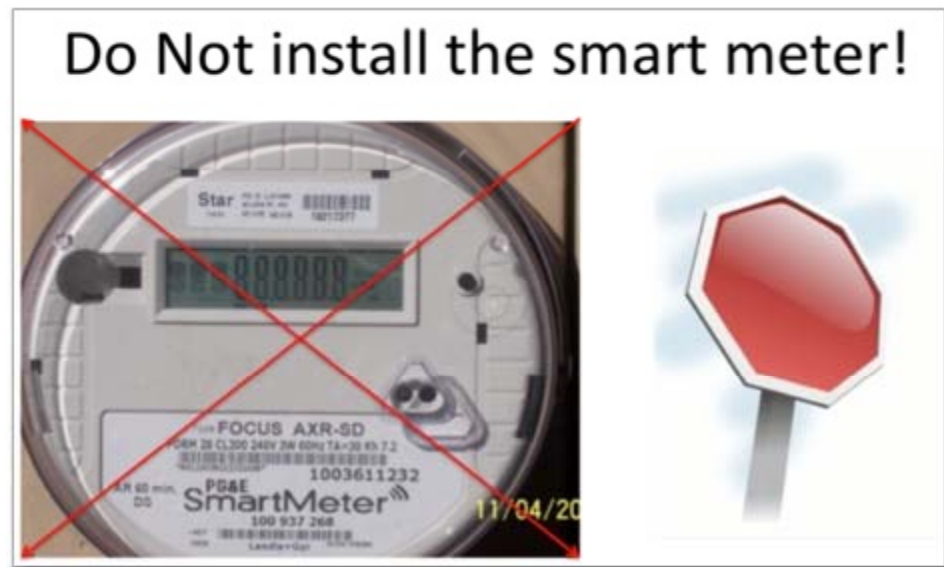
How Utilities View Smart Meters

- Reduction in outage time
- Reduction in peak loads
- Technological potential (iphone apps)



How Some Customers View Smart Meters

- Represents an Invasion of Privacy
- Imposes a Potential Health Hazard
- Increases Costs





Reducing Costs for Consumers

- Regulatory flexibility
 - Reducing costs for consumers is more important than strict adherence to traditional ratemaking
- Direct assistance programs
 - Targeted energy efficiency programs
 - Discounted rates



Engaging Consumers

- Ensure that stakeholders understand the regulatory goal
- Involve stakeholders early in the planning process
- Encourage consumers to provide input to the regulatory process
- Explain the consequences of policy choices



Contact Information

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