

LIVELines

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Members Exchange Ideas at the MEUW Customer Service Roundtables

In total, approximately 90 participants, representing 48 member communities, gathered to exchange ideas and information at this year's MEUW Customer Service Roundtables. MEUW Accounting and Customer Service Committee members moderated the roundtables at various locations throughout the state. Some of the topics covered were legislative and regulatory issues, Act 274, TRIP and SDC fundamentals, a summary of the Public Service Commission (PSC) spring utility roundtable and the PSC utility billing audit results.



Participants gather to discuss best practices and other customer service issues affecting member utilities at the Hartford Customer Service Roundtable.

The format of the roundtables has been a favorite of MEUW members because of the ability to start discussions and share ideas in a relaxed, small group atmosphere. Here's what some of this year's attendees had to say:

- *"This was a great way to hear how other municipalities handle disconnects, DPA's, customer service, etc."*
- *"The small group format is very nice. It makes it easy to ask questions and the information gathered during discussions is very informative and helpful."*
- *"I learned a lot on what I should be doing; including written procedures for the utility and law changes. I was also surprised at what other utilities write-off for tax roll compared to us."*
- *"The discussion regarding the PSC Billing Audit was very beneficial as we have begun preparing our utility information for this audit - so we are ready when our turn comes up!"*
- *"We are all facing the same issues and it is good to hear how others handle "like" situations."*



MEUW Executive Director's Corner

By Zak Bloom, MEUW Executive Director

At its May 21, 2015 open meeting, the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (Commission) issued its final decision approving the application of Wisconsin Energy Corporation (WEC) for approval to acquire the outstanding common stock of Integrys Energy Group, Inc. The transaction has also been approved by FERC and regulators in Michigan.

WEC sought approval of the acquisition under Wis. Stat. § 196.795(3), which essentially states that no person may acquire more than 10 percent of a holding company (Integrys) unless the Commission has determined that the acquisition is in the best interest of utility consumers, investors and the public. The Commission approved the acquisition subject to a number of conditions to meet the requirements of 196.795(3). Most notably, the conditions include:

1. WEC and its subsidiaries must follow specific record keeping and accounting practices to ensure that the Commission has adequate information to exercise continuing jurisdiction, including ensuring proper rate recovery of acquisition and transition related costs so that Wisconsin ratepayers do not pay costs for which they receive no benefit.
2. A 10.2 percent earnings cap for We Energies and a 10.3 percent earnings cap for Wisconsin Gas. Any profits that exceed the Commission's cap must be shared with customers by buying down high-interest debt.
3. Wisconsin Public Service Corporation will be required to withdraw its \$517 million application to construct a new natural gas power plant in the Fox Valley. The Commission also directed the company to prepare and file a plan addressing the power needs of the combined entity.
4. Any proposed relocation of company headquarters from Milwaukee for the first 10 years after the acquisition would need Commission approval.

Conditions imposed by the Commission are in addition to several voluntary conditions that WEC provided in its initial application. Among the most important are:

1. WEC will not recover the acquisition premium nor the transaction costs from ratepayers.
2. There will be no reduction in headcount among employees in Wisconsin represented by a labor union for two years unless through attrition.
3. Voting a minority interest are all operation matters requiring a vote of the owners at American Transmission Company.

A number of customer groups and coalitions, including Citizens Utility Board, Wisconsin Industrial Energy Group and Wisconsin Paper Council intervened in the proceeding arguing that the proposed transaction must be in the customer interest and produce quantifiable savings for the customer. In its final decision, the Commission was concerned that forceful economic actions, such as a rate freeze, could actually create greater risks to ratepayers. Ultimately, the Commission was comfortable with the conditions imposed and the likelihood that they would provide an opportunity for ratepayers to benefit from the transaction.

The transaction could be completed as early as July if approved by regulators in Illinois and Minnesota. The acquisition will create one of the largest utility companies in the United States, serving approximately 4.3 million customers in Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois and Minnesota. One out of every two electric and gas customers in Wisconsin will be served by the new company.



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MEUW Safety Corner

By Chris Schlechta, MEUW Director of Safety Services

At the beginning of May, the board of directors provided the final approval to begin rolling out our new Municipal Safety Services Program (MSSP). This new program is essentially an à la carte version of our popular Regional Safety Management Program (RSMP). By providing a service plan that allows a member to select which services they need, it provides a very cost effective option for those members for which the RSMP isn't a feasible option.

Through this new program arrangement we also have the ability to provide consultative services beyond what we were able to provide previously. One of the more common requests that we've received is for assistance in determining the adequacy of a utility or municipality's existing programs and efforts, or those that they've received from another safety service vendor. With the MSSP we can provide a complete needs assessment to include recommendations on improvements. The same needs assessment is also a great tool to confirm that you are on the right track and taking the appropriate measures to provide a safe work place.

Another common request we receive from utilities and municipalities is assistance addressing deficiencies identified by a state inspector. MEUW has a good working relationship with the Department of Safety and Professional Services staff and have been very successful in working with employers and inspectors to resolve issues. We can provide everything from simple consultation to all the training and documentation services needed.

If you have any safety training, inspection or audit needs please feel free to contact me for a quote. I would also love the opportunity to provide a comparison of our services and pricing to any other service you may be using now. Not only do we operate the largest safety services program exclusively designed for municipal employers, but our pricing structure can provide a substantial savings over other services.

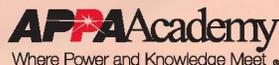
As always, if I can be of service please don't hesitate to contact me.

APPA Academy Webinar Series



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- Public Utility Governance Webinar Series: Overview of Utility Financial Operations for Board and Council Members **June 16**
- Accounting and Finance Webinar Series: Accounting Standards and Reporting Framework Update **June 18**
- Accounting and Finance Webinar Series: Industry Rate Trends and Future Rate Structures **July 9**
- Public Utility Governance Webinar Series: Rate Making for Utility Boards and City Councils **July 14**
- Negotiating Power Purchase Agreements: A Practical Guide **July 22**



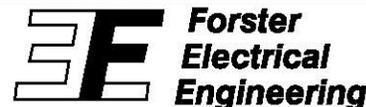
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Coming Events

June 2	Management Training Program Session B, Wisconsin Dells	July 14, 15	MEUW JT&S Excavation Competent Person Workshop... Register to attend!
June 17-19	MEUW Annual Conference, Wisconsin Rapids	September 11	Save the Date! MEUW Board of Directors Meeting, Stevens Point
June 30	MEUW Executive Committee Meeting, Sun Prairie	September 23	Save the Date! MEUW Accounting & Customer Service Seminar, Wisconsin Dells
July 7, 8, 9, 15, 17	MEUW Utility Management Roundtable Series... Register to attend!	<i>Mark Your Calendars! Visit the MEUW website for a full list of events scheduled through summer 2016.</i>	

2015 USA Hockey Names Weber Adult Member of the Year

USA Hockey recently announced its annual award winners for 2015. Among them is our very own Pat Weber, utility manager for Eagle River Light & Water Department. Weber will be receiving the Adult Member of the Year award for being an integral part of the Labatt Blue/USA Hockey Pond Hockey National Championships since its inception back in 2005, serving as the local event director.

The Adult Member of the Year Award is presented to an individual who has made outstanding contributions during many years of service to the ice hockey community as an adult player and/or volunteer. From laying out and plowing rinks to rallying local support, Weber is the first to arrive in the morning and the last to leave at night. This year, the lifelong Eagle River, Wisconsin, resident and volunteer fire chief spearheaded the tournament's temporary relocation to the Eagle River Derby Track when the usual locale, Dollar Lake, was out of commission. As a dedicated supporter to the game of ice hockey, Weber served nine years as the president of the Eagle River Recreation Association and even longer on the ERRA board of directors. He also spent time as a local youth hockey coach, and serves both as a member of the board of directors and the president for the Wisconsin Hockey Hall

of Fame. In 2009, Weber was also inducted into the hall of fame as a builder and promoter. During his time with ERRA, Weber was the auction committee chair and his efforts helped raise funds and construct new high school and youth locker rooms.



Devoted to all facets of the game and well respected by the Eagle River community, Weber's encouragement and support helped Northland Pines receive a Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association varsity girls hockey program. Weber has been playing hockey for nearly 60 years and is still at it today, playing in a no-checking adult league in Eagle River.

Weber is among 14 other various award winners who USA Hockey will honor during its 2015 Annual Congress June 3-6, in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

USA Hockey. (May 21, 2015). 2015 USAH Annual Award Winners Announced [Press release]. Retrieved from http://www.usahockey.com/news_article/show/517066?referrer_id=1093254



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Classifieds

FOR SALE: The city of Elkhorn Electric Department has transformers for sale for 25kv systems. Anyone interested in obtaining a list or more information should contact operations manager Tim Leach by calling 262-723-3138.

The village of Pardeeville is accepting applications for the position of village clerk/treasurer/utility clerk. Applications and resumes must be submitted to the village of Pardeeville by 8:00 a.m. on June 2, 2015. [Click here](#) for a complete job description and application details.

The city of Fennimore seeks to fill the position of a full-time utility worker-electric. Applications will be accepted until Friday, June 5, 2015 at 1:00 p.m. [Click here](#) for a complete job description and application details.

The village of Muscodia Utilities is accepting applications for a journey-level electric lineworker, apprentice lineworker or an applicant willing to attend an apprentice lineworker school. The application deadline is 12:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 9, 2015. [Click here](#) for a complete job description and application details.

Wisconsin Rapids Water Works and Lighting Commission is looking to fill the position of electric engineering technician. All application materials must be submitted in a sealed envelope and must be received by 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 10, 2015. [Click here](#) for a complete job description and application details.

The city of Two Rivers is seeking an individual for the position of electric utility director. Interested candidates should send a detailed letter of intent and resume by June 15, 2015. [Click here](#) for a complete job description and application details.

The city of New Lisbon is accepting applications for the position of water/wastewater treatment facility operator. Applications and/or resumes must be returned to the city of New Lisbon by 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 17, 2015. [Click here](#) for a complete job description and application details.

Menasha Utilities is accepting applications for an electric meter technician. Qualified candidates should submit a resume by June 19. [Click here](#) for a complete job description and application details.

Hartford Utilities is accepting applications for an utility technician. Applications must be received no later than Friday, June 26 at 3:00 p.m. [Click here](#) for a complete job description and application details.

Send your employment opportunities to info@meuw.org.

Member News & Tidbits

MEUW Members Recognized for APPA Awards and Designations

MEUW Members received recognition from APPA for safe operations over the 2014 calendar year. Recipients of the 2014 APPA Safety Award of Excellence are Brodhead, Kaukauna, Lodi, Medford, Muscodia, Rice Lake, Richland Center, Shawano, Sturgeon Bay, Trempealeau, Waupun, Whitehall and Wisconsin Rapids. A full list of recipients from around the country can be found [here](#).

MEUW Members also received recognition from APPA for providing the consumer with the highest degree of reliable and safe electric service which lasts for three years. Designees of the 2015 APPA Reliable Public Power Provider (RP₃®) are Evansville, Oconomowoc, Richland Center, River Falls, Two Rivers and Wisconsin Rapids. A full list of designees can be found [here](#).

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