



Natural Gas Advisory Committee

Q3 2026 Webinar Notes

September 9, 2026

1:00pm – 2:30pm Pacific

Virtual Only

Meeting Attendees

Committee Members:

Jodie Albert (Cascade Natural Gas)

Ian Casey (Northwest Natural)

Jackie Goss (Energy Trust of Oregon)

Carlos Limon (Avista)

Michelle Wildie (Puget Sound Energy)

Guests: Ed McGlynn and Tobias Barth (Minnesota Center for Energy and Environment)

NEEA Staff: Suzi Asmus, Alexa Hujik, Jason Jones, Chuck Karras, Nick Leritz, Alisyn Maggiora, Nick Michel, Emily Moore, Stephanie Quinn, Deborah Sunada

Resources

- Agenda Packet: [Q3-2026-NGAC-Webinar-Packet.pdf](#)
- Slide Deck: [Q3-2026-NGAC-Webinar-Slides.pdf](#)

Welcome, Agenda & Packet Review ([Slides 1-6](#) | [Packet 1-2](#))

Alisyn Maggiora (amaggiora@neea.org) opened with a reminder of the committee's purpose and role, now a standing item at the start of each meeting at a member's request. NGAC advises on the optimal composition of NEEA's program portfolio, including a formal vote for program advancement at three points in the initiative lifecycle, consistent with NEEA's Business and Operations Plans. Its responsibilities are portfolio optimization and milestone votes, coordinating downstream marketing, monitoring relevant workgroups and Cost-Effectiveness and Evaluation Advisory Committee meetings, and advising the Executive Director on portfolio decisions.

Alisyn then reviewed the packet. Tier 1 items were the 2027 Operations Planning process (page 3) and the Program Expansion Opportunity Review for Luminaire Level Lighting Controls plus HVAC (pages 4 and 5). Tier 2 covered the gas expansion of Advanced Performance DOAS, or dedicated outside air systems, and the December vote (page 9) and recruitment updates for the Dual-Fuel Residential HVAC field study (pages 6 through 8). Tier 3 held the quarterly newsletters, past NGAC meeting materials and the NGAC charter, all linked on page 2.

Round Robin Updates

Members introduced themselves and gave organizational updates against the standard prompts: big changes in programs or personnel; current challenges and lessons learned; how utility activities relate to NEEA's; sharable tools and materials; policy directives with customers; and findings, filings and integrated resource plans.

Jodie Albert (Cascade Natural Gas): Cascade just sent out the draft low-income weatherization impact EM&V report to Conservation Advisory Group (CAG) members which will be filed within the next 30 days. Additionally, they got the contract complete on their CPA filing, and overall, the new program plan that we started in March has been going really well. They are so far doing a great job with our firm savings goal which has been positively impacted by the increased rebates they are offering.

Michelle Wildie (Puget Sound Energy): PGE is participating in the upcoming Navien project with NEEA, which they are very excited about. They are also starting their annual plan and general rate case which seems to be overlapping despite the conservation requirement being separate. Current areas of interest include running bill impacts for HVAC and other programs because, as shown on our rate request, affordability is a big deal, and PGE is wanting to quantify potentially the benefits of energy efficiency of various programs on a customer bill. On the electric side, we're doing a pilot for residential pay for performance which can have implications across energy lines. Lastly, for those of you who might have worked with Brian Russo over at Tacoma Power, he's now working at PGE on our commercial evaluations.

Ian Casey (Northwest Natural): Laney from NW Natural is currently at the recessed open meeting for Washington Biennial Energy Efficiency Report. The staff recommendation right now is to approve. There were a few questions related to NEEA's savings in the WUTC staff report, but mostly just looking for clarity on how we plan to account for savings on those plans and reports. Also, NW Natural will be filing separate IRPs coming up in Oregon and Washington. The Washington IRP will be filed in 2027 and the Oregon IRP in 2028. NW Natural is also continuing our internal investigation with hybrids. We've begun to do some coordination with Energy Trust to develop a work plan for a hybrid measure by the end of the year, so we also may be looking to NEEA for some technical support. Lastly, NW Natural is working closely on a commercial gas heat pump pilot with GTI. We have done our site visits and are hoping to finalize site selection in the next couple of weeks.

Jackie Goss (Energy Trust of Oregon): Energy Trust is announcing their workplan for 2027 including new measures, what's new in the programs, what's sunseting, and updates on everything presented at our Winter 2026 meeting. Currently working with NW Natural on dual-fuel heat pump work, also published Building Analysis on Commercial Gas Furnaces in August, which was lower than we were hoping but we're keeping in mind it's not a retrofit, it's a full replacement. There is also a Customer Gap Analysis, which was released this week, focused on barriers in efficiency and renewables for mostly residential customers. To see the new reports follow this link: [About: Documents - Energy Trust of Oregon](#)

Carlos Limon (Avista): Avista is working on both the annual plan and general rate case happening now. Also looking to start standardization on potential new pilots, starting a technology review group for these pilots internally to see who we should leverage to partner with, whether it be NEEA, or GTA, or another utility. There's talks about rooftop units, thermostat controls, or even our current dual-fuel work; I think there could potentially be something that could initially go through all the data and decide whether there's any outcomes to come out from a programmatic standpoint, or if it's just more of a study to create general awareness for our customers. We are also still working on the affordability roadmap as well as the action items that came from our white paper on affordability last year. Ruben at

Avista has also taken on the energy innovation group and has appointed one of our engineers, Andy Paul, as the temporary point person for our team while he is working with the group. So if you are reaching out to him for anything, please copy Andy.

Housekeeping and Looking Ahead ([Slides 9-24](#) | [Packet 3](#))

Alisyn Maggiora reviewed the notes and action items from the June 2 meeting. No action items were outstanding.

Three informational memos were in the packet. Deborah Sunada's memo on the Dual-Fuel Residential HVAC switchover temperature field study reported that the program is working with Swift Strategy to find the switchover setpoints that maximize heat pump use while keeping homeowners comfortable and limiting post-installation adjustments. Swift is engaging HVAC contractor partners and testing messaging to build out its contractor network. Sites will be recruited from jobs where a contractor is already installing a dual-fuel system, and Swift staff may join the contractor and ask the customer to participate. Homeowner recruitment runs September through November 2026, with at least fifty participants across the four states and data collection through March or April 2027. Participants complete three to four surveys and receive a \$250 gift card or similar afterward. The team will build a participant tracker listing the relevant gas and electric utilities, and NEEA staff may contact utilities in the operating territory as contractors come on. Only NEEA and Swift appear in materials sent to contractors or homeowners, and nothing is required of utilities.

The second memo, from Emily Moore (emoore@neea.org) and Dave Hammond (dhammond@neea.org), reminded the committee that NGAC reviews the Program Advancement milestone in Q4 to add Advanced Performance DOAS to the natural gas portfolio and start co-investing in Market Development. A successful vote makes the program dual-fuel funded, tracking and reporting both electric and gas savings, which should speed up market transformation by engaging building owners and designers whatever their fuel. Alisyn said the milestone document is expected on or just after the October 22nd meeting, where the committee discusses the vote ahead of the December 9th webinar. NEEA staff will keep RPAC posted on proposed scope and intervention changes, benefits and risks, and the co-funding methodology and funding share between the two portfolios. The third item was the Q2 2026 Market Progress Report on program progress toward annual goals (p. 10 in packet).

2027 Operations Planning

Emily Moore reviewed the 2027 Operations Planning timeline. A draft plan goes to the Board, RPAC and NGAC by October 8, with an overview webinar October 15; calendar holds are out. Feedback is due November 2. The plan then goes to the Finance and Audit Committee on November 10 and to a vote at the December Board meeting.

Emily also previewed the plan. Near-term savings stay the priority. Two electric program expansions come to NGAC as advancement votes: Advanced Performance DOAS adding units paired with gas heating, voting Q4 2026, and Luminaire Level Lighting Controls adding HVAC control, expected Q4 2027. The gas portfolio also starts co-funding BetterBricks in 2027, and NEEA expects to advance at least one new electric program concept during the year.

Navien project update and upcoming Product Council

Chuck Karras updated the committee on the Navien residential dual-fuel water heater project. Lab testing and the final report are complete, and the report is on neea.org. A manufacturer survey is open through September 15, 2026, and members were asked to take it. Lab results will be presented by GTI Energy at a Product Council on September 22, 2026 at 10:30am; members can sign up in advance. U.S. safety certification and product

launch are both estimated for October* 2026, and field testing runs October* 2026 through October* 2027. (*post-meeting note: due to delays in production, these dates are now estimated to be October instead of September in all cases)

- **REQUEST:** Participate in Navien Survey [here](#)
- **SIGN UP:** Lab Results Product Council [here](#)

Anyway to tell who has already responded to the survey? – Its anonymous, but we can tell by state and type of organization you're with if you're interested in knowing that information. We are hoping for as many respondents as we can get since most people have different levels of knowledge and information, so different perspectives are helpful with us finding our information.

Announcements and reminders

The New Homes Workshop is Monday, September 14, 9:00am to 1:00pm at NEEA's office, hybrid option available. The goal is regional alignment on where new construction programs go next: performance path, prescriptive path, income-qualified versus market rate, and NEEA's role. Contact Tess Studley (tstudley@neea.org) to be added to the invitation.

[Leadership in Energy Efficiency Awards](#) nominations run August 3 through September 18, for three categories: Rising Star, Innovative Collaboration and the Tom Eckman Lifetime Achievement award. Nominations are open to electric, natural gas, dual-fuel and fuel-neutral efforts, and to individuals, teams, projects, companies and organizations. Awards are presented 9:00 to 11:00am on December 4, the second day of the NEEA Q4 board meeting.

The 2026 Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey runs September 28 through October 27. NEEA fields it about every two years with all board and committee members, asking about their experience with NEEA staff and forums and about what they need. A roadshow is expected to follow.

The next NEEA / Market Transformation 101 session is Wednesday, October 7, 9:00 to 10:30am, with a special feature on NEEA's Codes and Standards work. The ninety-minute webinar runs twice a year and suits both committee members wanting a refresher and colleagues who touch NEEA's work without serving on a committee. Contact [Alisyn Maggiora](#) to join.

Two NGAC meetings remain in 2026: the Q4 standing meeting Thursday, October 22, and a final webinar Wednesday, December 9, 1:00 to 2:00pm virtual. Other NEEA meetings coming up: the Q3 Board meeting in Spokane on September 17-18, the Regional Emerging Technology Advisory Committee on September 30, the Market Transformation 101 session on October 7, the 2027 Draft Operations Plan webinar on October 15, the Cost-Effectiveness and Evaluation Advisory Committee on October 28, the Commercial and Industrial Coordinating Committee on November 4-5, and the Residential Coordinating Committee on December 1-2.

Proposed 2027 NGAC dates, as listed in the packet:

Quarter	Day(s)	Date(s)	TIME (PST)	LOCATION
Webinar	Wed	Jan 27	1-2pm	Virtual
Q1	Thurs	Mar 18	9am-4pm	Virtual
Webinar	Thurs	Apr 15	1-2pm	Virtual

Q2	Tues	June 1	9am-4pm	Hybrid (Seattle)
Webinar	Wed	Sept 22	1-2pm	Virtual
Q4	Thurs	Oct 28	9am-4pm	Virtual
Webinar	Wed	Dec 8	1-2pm	Virtual

Efficiency Exchange 2027 session topics can be submitted September 14 through October 16 at neea.org/EFX. EFX27 is May 18-19 in Wenatchee, Washington.

Other regional / industry events or announcements: None noted.

Program Expansion Opportunity Review: LLLC + HVAC ([Slides 26-38](#) | [Packet 4-5](#))

Emily Moore opened with the stakeholder engagement timeline for the Luminaire Level Lighting Controls (LLLC) plus HVAC expansion. The opportunity was initially socialized with both committees from 2025 through Q2 2026. This session is the formal Opportunity Review. Advancement into the gas portfolio is expected in late 2027.

Nick Michel (nmichel@neea.org) gave a refresher on the Luminaire Level Lighting Controls technology and proposed interaction with HVAC. These are networked lighting controls with at least one sensor and one controller per fixture, which allows flexible zoning, space-utilization data and control of other building loads. LLLC program work has focused on cutting high first cost, improving product readiness, building designer and installer capability, and making the value proposition clearer, working through manufacturers, market actors, national organizations, extra-regional partners, utility program development and demand creation.

The [last three Market Progress Evaluation Reports](#) (MPERs) for LLLC show real progress. Ninety-four percent of installers are aware of the technology. Seventy-three percent of designers and specifiers recommend it and sixty-seven percent have written it into project plans. Eighty-nine percent of installers say they can bid projects that include it. Most major manufacturers now offer products, they are carried widely across the region, and availability is no longer a significant barrier. That base is what makes the gas expansion possible.

Nick then described the expansion play with HVAC. Occupancy data from sensors in networked luminaires goes to a rooftop unit thermostat, which makes small occupancy-based setpoint adjustments instead of running a fixed schedule, cutting heating and cooling runtime when spaces are lightly used or empty. Six points framed the opportunity: it builds on the existing Luminaire Level Lighting Controls base through a rooftop unit interface controller; it is occupancy-driven; it captures incremental savings while strengthening the case for advanced lighting controls; it reaches an underserved small and medium commercial market of single-zone rooftop units where lighting savings alone may not justify the investment; it is fuel neutral; and it is an inexpensive add-on for additional savings. Thermostats are typically under \$1,000, which makes this a lighting-adjacent upgrade rather than a major HVAC project. It is also far simpler than full BACnet building automation integration, which is complex and expensive and in practice limited to larger buildings. The architecture is LED fixtures with a Luminaire Level Lighting Controls system talking wirelessly to packaged rooftop unit thermostats, plus an edge device running the control logic.

On savings, single-zone gas furnace rooftop units under occupancy control modeled strongest across all three climate zones, averaging nine to twenty-one percent. These are early estimates and need more modeling and

field validation. Estimated twenty-year regional gas technical potential is 51,504,950 therms at a ten percent savings rate, 61,805,940 therms at twelve percent, and 77,257,425 therms at fifteen percent. The technology is fuel neutral, but most Northwest rooftop units are gas-fired and the region is heating-dominant, so the near-term opportunity sits in natural gas, with some electric savings from air conditioning.

Suzi Asmus (sasmus@neea.org) covered the planned development activities, aimed at savings validation, market understanding, program planning and stakeholder alignment: develop an energy savings forecast; support funder-led pilots and gather early performance data; research market size, barriers, value proposition and channels; develop a measurability plan and data strategy; find and support more pilots to verify performance; engage national stakeholders on technical specifications and qualified product list development; and develop and review the naturally occurring baseline and forecast assumptions. Estimated gas portfolio investment is roughly \$60,000 to \$100,000 in 2026 and \$160,000 to \$220,000 in 2027, and the 2027 range could rise if more pilot opportunities come up. Suzi noted this is a small increment of gas investment, and that the work will show up in the 2027 Operations Plan in the Emerging Technology and the Market Research and Evaluation sections rather than the Luminaire Level Lighting Controls program plan.

Suzi then presented the pilot opportunity. Candidate sites are one- to two-story commercial buildings with a single-zone rooftop unit, a Luminaire Level Lighting Controls system installed or eligible, varied occupancy, and not using an energy management system or building management system. That generally means buildings under roughly 50,000 square feet, though zone size and having a single rooftop unit matter more than floor area. NEEA may be able to co-fund pilot activities like site access; and data acquisition, analysis and reporting. Contact Chris Wolgamott to discuss pilot collaboration. NEEA is drafting a one-page summary of the opportunity and asked the committee what additional information they and their account representatives would need to evaluate hosting a pilot.

For 2027, the LLLC program itself stays focused on manufacturer and representative engagement, highlighting champions of the technology, influencing designers, engineers and installers, and strategic national engagements. The program expansion work covers product development, pilot development, data collection and market research, the measurability plan and establishing the baseline.

Any additional detail would you need to help shop a pilot opportunity inside your organization? Follow up with Suzi Asmus (sasmus@neea.org) or Chris Wolgamott (cwolgamott@neea.org)

Wrap Up & Adjourn ([Slides 39-42](#))

- Public comment – n/a
- Meeting feedback – n/a
- Action Items
 - **ACTION:** NEEA staff will draft and share an LLLC+HVAC pilot opportunity one-pager with the committee (timing TBD).
 - **ACTION:** NGAC members to provide feedback on the LLLC+HVAC pilot one-pager.
 - **ACTION:** NGAC members to identify opportunities in their territory to collaborate on LLLC+HVAC pilot sites and follow up with NEEA to initiate collaboration.
 - **REQUEST:** Participate in Navien Survey [here](#)
 - **SIGN UP:** Lab Results Product Council (Sept 22) [here](#)
- Next meeting
 - October 22, 2026 - virtual