Evaluation Committee Report

May 9, 2008

Evaluation Committee Notes

The Evaluation Committee met on May 9, 2008, with Debbie Kitchin, chair; Philipp Degens, Evaluation Manager; Brien Sipe, Evaluation Analyst; Sarah Castor, Market Research and Evaluation Analyst; Fred Gordon, Planning and Evaluation Manager; Kate Scott; Energy Efficiency Contractor; Matt Braman, Planning Analyst; Ken Keating, Evaluation Expert; Robert Cross, CSG; and Tom Eckman, Northwest Power and Conservation Council. Also present for the second item were: Steven Grover, ECONorthwest; Pete Catching, Planning Manager; and Lakin Garth, Planning and Evaluation Intern. The meeting began at 11:00 AM with an overview of the meeting's agenda.

Brien Sipe presented early results from the Home Energy Monitor (HEM) pilot study. Major initial findings were:

- Generally similar results for both participants who were selected from Home Energy Reviews (HERs), and participants who signed up via the Energy Trust website ('early adopters')
- High overall satisfaction with HEMs for all users
- 68% of HER participants and 55% of early adopters believe they have reduced their energy consumption as a result of using the monitor
- Low willingness to pay for the monitor, with majority in the $0-40 range.

Follow-up will include another survey to same participants in six months, survey of HER participants who did not receive the monitor as a control group, and billing data analysis.

Discussions about the evaluation included:

- Extension of HEM offer to additional 120 early adopters after offer was advertized by PGE
- Significant interest in HEM technology from other utilities
- Ability to compare results to other studies of HEM pilots in Canada and elsewhere

Phil Degens presented results from a revised draft of the 2005-2006 Home Energy Solutions Process and Impact Evaluation. Major initial findings were:

- Revised free rider rates (ranging from 7% to 48%) lower than in last draft
- Low participant spillover rates (0% to 16%)
- High participant spillover rates for windows (713% to 1,162%) and CFLs (372% to 623%)
- Net realization rates of 99% for windows and insulation in electrically heated homes
- Gross realization rates of only 27% for windows and insulation in gas heated homes
- Gas model very imprecise due to low number of observations

Major recommendations were:

- Review nonparticipant sample to make sure they are a good comparison group
- Incorporate more billing data into the model for gas heated-homes
- Attempt a cross-section time-series model for both gas and electric

Discussions about the evaluation included:

- Specific questions used to compute free rider estimates
- Arriving at a mutually agreed upon free rider estimation methodology is delaying the HES, NB and PE evaluation studies
- Large spillover effects for nonparticipants and whether NEEA is capturing those savings
- Whether there is measurement error for the nonparticipant sample, i.e. were the installed items really efficient enough to otherwise qualify for HES program
- The number and outcomes of various models attempted to estimate realization rates

The Evaluation Committee meeting concluded at 1:00 PM.

The next Evaluation Committee meeting will be scheduled for June 27, 2008 from 10:00 AM-1:00 PM.