2026

LOCAL ENERGY SOLUTIONS
Conference

DIGITAL PROGRAM

AGENDA
SPEAKERS & SESSIONS
INTERACTIVE CONTENT
EXHIBITOR MAP

CLEAN ENERGY NH
Your Voice in All Energy Matters

DEAR FRIENDS

Another year, another global fossil fuel pricing crisis.

This spring, a widening conflict in the Middle East disrupted shipping through the Strait of Hormuz and sent oil prices surging past $100 a barrel. By summer, we were hearing that heating oil would likely crest $6/gallon. Sound familiar? There was a very similar set up to the LES conference in 2022, just a year after I started at Clean Energy NH. In the grand scheme of things, I have not been at the helm of CENH that long, and I've already watched from this seat as the Granite State weather two global fossil fuel driven price shocks.

This is no way to run an economy. The Roosevelt Institute has found that 10 of the last 12 recessions in the United States were preceded by a spike in oil prices. Crude oil getting more expensive is one of the most reliable recession triggers we have.

When will we learn?

Every time this happens—the 1970s embargoes, 1990, 2008, 2022, and now 2026—we wring our hands and check our retirement accounts and appeal to heaven for mercy, as if it were a bolt from the blue. In reality, this is the predictable cost of hitching our homes, our businesses, and our household budgets to a commodity priced on a volatile global market, in a geopolitical arena over which we have essentially no control. Communities that depend on imported fossil fuels for heat and power will keep absorbing these shocks, again and again, for as long as we let them.

The difference in 2026 is that for the first time, we actually have options. Heat pumps, weatherization, rooftop and community solar, batteries, and electric vehicles are mature, available right now, and, over their lifetime, already cheaper than the oil, gasoline, or propane alternative. A family that electrified their home two years ago barely felt this spring's price spike. A town that had already invested in solar and storage did not watch its budget blown apart by this summer's rate hikes.

This is the collective work we're here to celebrate and accelerate at the LES Conference: getting off the fossil fuel rollercoaster before the next wild ride to the bottom. It is the one lever that is actually in our hands, ready for us to pull.

Maybe, finally, this is the year we learn.

Yours in Decarbonizing,



Sam Evans-Brown, Executive Director

PLENARY SESSION

10:15A - 11:15A

Armory Room

A SIGNAL FROM THE NOISE

There is a tremendous amount of uncertainty in the energy space at the moment, and a great many voices that pretend to speak with great authority about what will come next. Many such predictions will turn out to be wrong in the coming years, while others will seem prescient.

In this year's keynote panel discussion, three energy experts will weigh in on how to separate convenient but false narratives from durable trends, real world observed trends from ideologically motivated commentary, and signal from the noise.

MODERATOR: **Sam Evans-Brown**, *Clean Energy NH*



STEPHEN BIRD
Director
University of NH - Carsey School of Public Policy



ERIN MAYFIELD
Assistant Professor
Dartmouth College



ROB REESE
Industrial Policy Analyst
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

EXHIBITOR MAP

Visit the exhibitors: Connect with the organizations and businesses helping shape New Hampshire's energy future, learn more about their work, and discover opportunities to build new connections.



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AGENDA

9:45 AM *Registration, Exhibitor Hall and Networking*

10:00 AM **WELCOMING REMARKS:** Clean Energy NH and Presenting Sponsors: Calpine Community Energy and Community Power Coalition of NH

10:15 AM **MORNING PLENARY SESSION:** A Signal From the Noise

11:30 AM **MORNING SESSIONS**
SESSIONS

- **Why Your Bill Went Up: Making Sense of Electricity Bills (Armory)**
- **Making the Case: How to Talk About Energy (Piscataquog)**
- **Local Success Stories (Merrimack)**
- **Looking Over the Horizon (Contoocook)**

12:45PM *Lunch courtesy of ReVIsion Energy, Exhibitor Hall, Community Corner, and Networking*

1:00 PM **ENERGY CHAMPION AWARDS**

2:30 PM **AFTERNOON SESSIONS**
SESSIONS

- **Legislative Preview (Armory)**
- **What Still Pencils: How to Finance Local Projects (Piscataquog)**
- **EVs After the Tax Credits (Merrimack)**
- **Weather the Energy Affordability Crisis (Contoocook)**

3:45 PM *Networking*

4:00 PM *Conference Adjourns*

JOIN US FOR AFTER HOURS!

The Penstock Room **4:00PM - 6:00PM**



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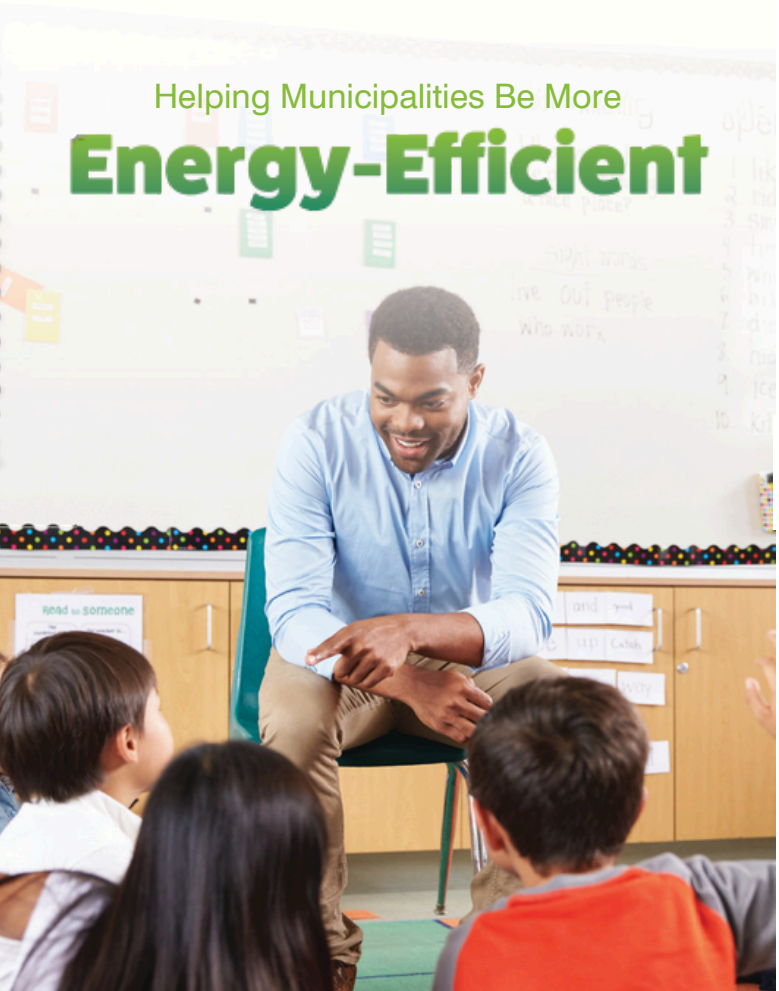
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MORNING SESSIONS

11:30A - 12:45P

Armory Room

WHY YOUR BILL WENT UP: MAKING SENSE OF ELECTRICITY BILLS

Affordability is the buzz word of the moment, and since 2021, electricity bills are rising at rates faster than inflation for the first time in a generation. From current market conditions to efforts to upgrade our aging infrastructure, this panel will help to break down what is driving up electricity rates and bills, and what is not. It will point towards solutions both in the immediate term and over the long run, and participants will leave with a greater understanding of where the electricity system is heading.

MODERATOR: **Lauren Collins Cline**
PANELISTS: **Deana Dennis**, *Community Power Coalition of NH*; **Alec O'Meara**, *Unitil*; and **Nicholas Shostak**, *Freedom Energy Logistics*.

Contoocook Room

LOOKING OVER THE HORIZON

This session is for the technically curious: a clear-eyed tour of the near-term portfolio that actually moves the needle. Demand flexibility, new nuclear reactor designs, and the next frontier of smart home grid interactive devices. None of these concepts are new, but does this new moment where energy has begun to feel more scarce create a window of opportunity for these ideas to finally reach commercialization? What would commercial readiness actually require? What does the current state of technology mean for New England in the 2030s and beyond? And what should local policymakers understand now, before the conversation gets oversimplified? Attendees leave with a sharper picture of what's available in the near term, what's genuinely on the horizon, and a better instinct for spotting when someone is being straight with them about either.

MODERATOR: **Sam Evans-Brown**, *Clean Energy NH*
PANELISTS: **Jake Felser**, *Reservoir*; **Todd Griset**, *Preti Strategies*; and **Steven Hopengarten**, *National Grid*.

MORNING SESSIONS

11:30A - 12:45P

Merrimack Room

LOCAL SUCCESS STORIES

Join us for four brief and inspiring stories from community-based clean energy projects happening right now across the state. We'll learn how Barrington transformed an existing building into an all-electric, solar-powered library, how the Monadnock Sustainability Hub connects residents with volunteer coaches and funding to tackle home energy projects, how Lebanon is working with local advocates and developers to plan ahead for EV charging infrastructure, and how Cornish partnered with HAREI to build community solar arrays with volunteer labor. Come ready to make connections with local energy champions from every corner of New Hampshire.

MODERATOR: **Sarah Brock**, *Clean Energy NH*
PANELISTS: **Clifton Below**, *Lebanon Energy Advisory Committee*; **Matt Myer Boulton**, *Monadnock Sustainability Hub*; **Cindy Hoisington**, *Barrington Energy Committee*; and **Chris Kolb**, *Hillsborough Area Renewable Energy Initiative*.

Piscataquog Room

MAKING THE CASE: HOW TO TALK ABOUT ENERGY

Energy is one of the most important issues shaping New Hampshire's future, but how we talk about it matters. Join the conversation bringing together media professionals, energy experts, and policy personnel to explore how energy issues are communicated, covered, and understood by the public. Through perspectives from across the media, energy, and policy landscapes, panelists will discuss how to make complex energy topics accessible, communicate data, and policy decisions clearly, and foster informed, productive conversations about the choices facing our communities and our state. Together, we'll explore how to bridge the gap between technical expertise, public policy, and everyday lived experiences by the public.

MODERATOR: **Kyana Burgess**, *Clean Energy NH*
PANELISTS: **Mike Davey**, *Energy Efficient Investments;* **Viggo Fish**, *McLane Middleton;* **Sarah Shemkus**, *Canary Media*; and **James Spalding, Ph.D**, *Sustainable Energy Advantage*.

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ENERGY CHAMPION AWARDS

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AFTERNOON SESSIONS

2:30P - 3:45P

Armory Room

LEGISLATIVE PREVIEW

As New Hampshire lawmakers prepare for the upcoming legislative session, energy is likely to remain a central issue for consumers, businesses, utilities, and policymakers especially with costs on the rise. This panel will tap into the wisdom of four seasoned lawmakers across the political spectrum who work on energy policy at the State House. They will provide a practical preview of the energy legislation and policy debates expected to emerge at the State House, including rising electricity costs, grid reliability, emerging technologies and how to utilize them, energy efficiency, renewable energy, the future of the Renewable Energy Fund (REF) and Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI).

MODERATOR: **Katharine Cusack,** *Clean Energy NH*

Contoocook Room

WEATHERING THE ENERGY AFFORDABILITY CRISIS

Fuel prices are on the rise and NH communities are bracing for a long winter. Learn about the challenges faced by our neighbors and the programs that serve them, and discuss ways communities and the state can best navigate this challenging moment. Hear a first-hand account from Strafford County Community Action Partnership about the realities and challenges of running energy assistance and related programs heading into next year. And review results from a recent statewide Environmental Justice Survey revealing what Granite Staters are most concerned about and challenged by.

MODERATOR: **Carolyn Sweet**, *Keene Housing*
PANELISTS: **Betsey Andrews Parker,** *Community Action Partnership of Strafford County* and **Katrin Kasper,** *Clean Energy NH.*

AFTERNOON SESSIONS

2:30P - 3:45P

Merrimack Room

EVS AFTER THE TAX CREDIT

The consumer EV tax credits were the first casualty of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), and US manufacturers have massively pulled back from their big EV bets. But even so, EVs and PHEVs are now more than 25% of global new auto sales, and the writing is on the wall that ICE vehicles are being severely challenged for global supremacy. With gas prices near $4/gallon, consumer pressure towards EV adoption will only rise as affordable models eventually begin to find their way onto the market. This panel asks: how can we plan now for the charging infrastructure we know we will need? How can we build that infrastructure and encourage adoption in time of fiscal austerity and affordability politics? How can we make sure that EVs drive down electric rates and encourage electrification instead of doing the opposite.

MODERATOR: **Tom Palma**, *Unitil*
PANELISTS: **Tim Bouldry-Salinasmiranda**, *NH Department of Environmental Services*; **Sarah Brock**, *Clean Energy NH;* **Jessyca Keeler**, *Ski NH;* and **Jack Wade**; *NH Department of Environmental Services*.

Piscataquog Room

WHAT STILL PENCILS: HOW TO FINANCE LOCAL PROJECTS

With federal clean energy incentives sharply curtailed and many grant programs frozen or cancelled, the question facing New Hampshire communities has shifted from how to stack federal dollars to what still makes financial sense. Yet rising electricity rates and volatile heating oil prices mean the cost of doing nothing keeps climbing, and some projects may pencil better now than before. This panel brings together finance, development, and program experts to run the numbers honestly on the tools still available to municipalities, businesses, nonprofits, and community groups. Participants will leave with practical ways to build projects that hold up as prices, rates, and policy continue to shift.

MODERATOR: **Gabe Chelius,** *Clean Energy NH*
PANELISTS: **Steve Lieber,** *Affinity LED*; **Matt O'Keefe**, *Unitil*; **Rob Sullivan**, *Siemens*; and **Eli Terry,** *PACE Equity*.

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