



**Date:** March 3, 2025  
**To:** Municipal Light Board: Warren Leon (Chair), John Dalton, Brian Foulds, and Bianca Taylor  
**From:** Jason Bulger, CMLP Director  
**Subject:** Agenda for virtual Light Board meeting on **Wed., March 12, 2025, at 7:30 A.M.** (link below)

- 7:30 AM 1. **Call to Order**
- 7:30 AM 2. **Meetings and Minutes** 5 Minutes Chair  
 • Vote to approve the minutes of February 12, 2025.  
 Upcoming Meetings:  
 Apr 9, 2025; May 14, 2025; Jun 11, 2025; Jul 9, 2025; Aug 13, 2025; Sep 10, 2025
- 7:35 AM 3. **Chair’s Update** 5 Minutes Chair Information
- 7:40 AM 4. **Director’s Update** 10 Minutes Director Information
- 7:50 AM 5. **Broadband Update** 5 Minutes BB Mgr. Information
- 7:55 AM 6. **Time of Use Bill Print Updates & Discussion** 10 Minutes Director Info./Discuss.  
Background: We are shifting to a default time-of-use (TOU) rate for all customers as of January 2026. The Board has had ongoing discussions about this and has made several determinations on the organization of TOU bills.  
Purpose: CMLP staff will provide the Board updates on what the software vendor has said we can/cannot do relating to solar net metering as well as make sure the Board has addressed every question, we need answers to so we can get the ball rolling on production of the new bills.
- 8:05 AM 7. **Time of Use Communication Plan & Outreach** 20 Minutes Director Info./Discuss.  
Background: We are shifting to a default time-of-use (TOU) rate for all customers as of January 2026. A robust communication campaign will be used to explain the change to customers and empower them with tools that will allow them to shift their loads if they can and choose to do so.  
Purpose: Staff will review the communication plan and solicit feedback from Board members. The campaign is due to start in June of 2025.
- 8:25 AM 8. **Cost of Service Study Input** 20 Minutes Asst. Director Info./Discussion  
Background: We are shifting to a default time-of-use (TOU) rate for all customers as of January 2026. We will need to hire a cost-of-service study consultant to help us appropriately collect rates to meet the organization’s revenue requirements. These studies are done every number of years or when there are large changes to the method of billing.  
Purpose: Staff will discuss the cost-of-service study process and solicit feedback from Board members for areas where there may be questions or decision points.



- 8:45 AM 9. **Liaison & Public Comments** 5 Minutes Chair Information
- 8:50 AM 10. **Executive Session: Power Supply Contract** 25 Minutes Director Discussion/Vote  
*Requires a motion, second and vote to close the regular session and move into an executive session. The Board will not reconvene in regular session. The motion made must include the specific exemption to be used.*  
*Pursuant to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Open Meeting Law Purpose for Executive Session #10: to discuss trade secrets or confidential, competitively sensitive, or other proprietary information.*  
Background: CMLP was offered a proposed extension to an existing contract. The Light Board does not publicly share contract pricing.  
Purpose: To get the Board’s opinion on whether we should accept the terms of the contract extension.
- 9:15 AM 11. **Adjourn**

Distribution: Select Board (1 copy)

Kerry Lafleur  
Jan Aceti  
Karlen Reed

Carole Hilton  
Laura Scott

Joe Repoff  
Jeff Cosgrove

Eric Simms  
Cameron McKennitt

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83853970051?pwd=akVzemJRQk8vNTJRUnNlOS9NNDFluQT09>

Meeting ID: 838 5397 0051

Passcode: 661712

One tap mobile

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**Link to view recordings of previous Light Board Meetings:**

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1TTzrWEKOOOn0RIJ2MdE2SnNZMWYeoeat>

**Link to view the Director’s Updates (in meeting packets):**

<https://concordma.gov/1106/Municipal-Light-Board>

**Link to view the Broadband Monthly Updates:**

<https://www.concordma.gov/3148/Monthly-Updates>

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Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the Concord Municipal Light Board was held on Wednesday February 12, at 7:30 AM, via a Zoom meeting. Present were Board Members: Warren Leon (Chair), John Dalton, and Brian Foulds. Also in attendance were Jason Bulger, CMLP Director; Carole Hilton, CMLP Customer Service Manager; Joe Repoff, Assistant Director; Laura Scott, Assistant Director of Power Supply and Energy Management; Donna DeGray, Customer Service Supervisor; Ann Breitenwischer, Meter Supervisor; John McGarry, Sr. Meter Technician; Marty Boermeester, Sr. Utility Electrician; Kris Rose, Customer Service Specialist; Rick Roger, Customer Service Specialist; Cuyler DeArruda, Customer Service Specialist; Karin Farrow, CMLP Office Administrator; Kerry Lafleur, Town Manager; Eric Simms, Director of Sustainability; Cameron McKennitt, Select Board liaison to the Light Board; and residents: Pamela Dritt, Andy Puchrik, Jim Terry and Fran Cummings.

Note definitions for acronyms used in these minutes:

- **CMLP:** Concord Municipal Light Plant
- **EV:** Electric Vehicle
- **REC:** Renewable Energy Certificate

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Leon called the meeting to order at 7:30 AM. Meeting recording will be posted to the Minuteman Media YouTube page as soon as it is available.<sup>1</sup>

#### **MEETINGS & MINUTES**

**Mr. Foulds moved to approve the January 8, 2025, Minutes as distributed. Mr. Leon second the motion and with all members present in favor, the motion carried.**

#### **DIRECTORS UPDATE – presented by Director Bulger (Timestamp 1:18)**

- CMLP Pat Stahley from the Underground digging crew and Victor Sencion, a Senior Network Engineer, are leaving us this month. We wish them the best in their new roles.
- Concord reached an EV adoption milestone on January 1, 2025 with plug-in vehicles now account for more than 10% of all vehicles in Town.
- CMLP is negotiating a site license agreement with the school superintendent or School Committee. After a final legal review, it is hoped that we can move forward with the issuance of the RFP for the rooftop solar portion with an add-on option for canopies for the project.
- We are wrapping up the last of the AMI meters installations with approximately 100 meters left to install. The entire light plant team has helped, but special thanks to the metering team.
- Tree trimming has begun and will continue for the next several weeks, spanning half of our service territory (mostly in the eastern and western parts of town). They will not interfere with the 250th.
- Flo has shipped replacement parts for Level 3 Fast Charger at the Rideout, and we hope to have it up and running soon.
- A new EV plane charger at Hanscom was completed and energized, with several CMLP staff members contributing to the project.

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<sup>1</sup> Minuteman Media YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3uTATgOdubo>

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- A Concord resident, who is a professor at both the MIT Sloan School of Management and Tufts University, analyzed the effectiveness of the Google Group notices to customers requesting that they voluntarily reduce their usage during an expected summer peak. He is making himself available to the Light Board for a presentation on his findings.
- We were presented with an option for a blend-and-extend renegotiation for our Seabrook contract where we would pay more upfront for the next few years but save overall with lower pricing in the future.

Mr. Foulds suggested that the Hanscom project be written up and shared with the CMLP customers.

**BROADBAND UPDATE** – presented by Dale Hartling (Timestamp 11:02)

- The team is updating its broadband services with a cost-effective initiative to replace outdated XGS-PON equipment, enabling next-generation fiber services of more than 8 Gbps for customers.
- We have upgraded our 5 Gbps service to 10 Gbps with Crown Castle and have added redundant links.
- We have secured a 10 Gbps burstable to 100 Gbps service with additional IP addresses at a lower cost.
- These upgrades will significantly increase their internet handling capacity and provide redundancy through new fiber routes. The net cost will be negligible because we can drop one of our other carriers.
- New 100Gbps switches are being installed to manage the new equipment.
- Additionally, we are implementing identity management for security and separately improving Wi-Fi coverage.
- We are engaged in the Residential Retrofit program trying to bring broadband access to low-income housing in Concord and throughout the state. Future discussions may include extending broadband services to neighboring communities.

Mr. Foulds thought that expansion outside of our territory might be beneficial where we already have infrastructure, like on 2A down to Nagog, but was hesitant to grow into something unwieldy. Mr. Leon asked if the greater bandwidth potential would be utilized in marketing, and Mr. Hartling responded we would.

**CMLP STAFF INTRODUCTION** – presented by Carole Hilton (Timestamp 21:58)

The Customer Service Staff, led by Ms. Hilton is comprised of two divisions, Customer Service, which Donna DeGray supervises, and Metering, which Ann Breitenwischer supervises.

- Metering encompasses and Customer Service, covers billing, collections and customer support for Electric, Broadband, Water, and Sewer.
- Metering Dept:
  - Ms. Breitenwischer (Supervisor) outlined the meter history in her 37 years of service:
    - A route book and pencil to record the meter reads.
    - A touch pad system of recording reads.
    - A Tel data system which stopped working as customers dropped their landlines.
    - An AMI system (EcoOne) to control about 500 ETS and water heaters.
    - 2005 a drive by systems – 4 years install time period as it was done by CMLP staff.
    - 2024 new AMI system almost completed – outside contractor doing much of the work.

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- Mr. McGarry (Sr. Meter Tech) – does the meter reads for electric and water and has been helping the contractor with the new install. 45+ years with Concord.
- Mr. Boormeester (Sr Utility Electrician) among other things is responsible for the change out for the load control devices. 33+ years of service.
- Customer Service:
  - Donna DeGray (Supervisor) has been through a database conversion and seen substantial expansion of the job in her 12 years of service.
  - Kris Rose, Rick Rogers and Cuyler DeArruda the Customers Service Specialists are an integral part of the team.

The Board members asked a few questions about bill complaints. Mr. Leon asked if staff have seen issues with the new meters. Ms. Breitenwischer responded that there have only been three.

**SOLAR PAYMENTS UNDER TOU** presented by Laura Scott (timestamp 37:48)

Mr. Leon framed the conversation by stating there are two ways you can compensate for solar: a flat tariff or a credit based on the time of use rate for capacity/transmission and energy but not distribution. Staff have done research and think the latter method is possible.

- Ms. Scott clarified that the TOU method could theoretically work, but because the Board needs to weigh precision with bill complexity and customer understanding, she has not dismissed the tariff.
- Staff clarified they needed a decision at this meeting to stay on schedule.
- Mr. Foulds explained he is proposing a bidirectional meter rate to make sure that the pass-through costs reflect the cost to deliver a kWh at those times. That way, when someone delivers a kWh to us, we can credit them the same amount. This method applies to not only solar, but any kWh delivered, like that from energy storage.
- Ms. Scott shared an image showing the hourly day ahead prices for power showing a peak in the hour ending 8am and explained that not much solar was produced then. She argued that solar produced in the morning peak bucket would be overcompensating for production.
- Mr. Foulds has no objection to making sure the hours of each TOU bucket are properly aligned with pricing and load. The rates are intended to collect for expenses, and if they are accurate, it's fair to credit power pushed back at that rate.
- Mr. Dalton feels we can resolve this later by being deliberate about identifying the time periods as opposed to accepting a framework that cannot accommodate these differences.
- Mr. Leon wonders how often these vary and if we can come up with time of use periods that only change twice a year, pick time periods for those times of year, and have it be accurate.
  - Ms. Scott says it is technically possible, but it could be ugly because there are multiple peaks and mid peaks.
  - Mr. Foulds explains that we are moving from a very generic flat rate averaged for the whole year to something much more accurate within time periods over a week. It doesn't need to go all the way to real-time pricing.
- Mr. Foulds presented data showing the times of day in warm and cold months when CMLP sees pricing variation along with some analysis showing how his bill might change under this proposed system: it might go up about \$120/yr.
- Mr. Leon is comfortable with Mr. Foulds' proposal with one caveat: that they consider the possibility that for solar output there are more different time blocks than we have for consumption. He wants to

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see if there is solid evidence that it's a significant difference in the value of the solar between different times or periods.

- Mr. Leon proposes we agree to compensate solar customers for their output on a time-of-use basis and take the general model Mr. Foulds proposed. He also thinks we defer the question on whether there should be separate periods for compensation of solar (from those for customer consumption).
- **The Board agreed that a flat tariff is off the table and tried to determine between the pure time-of-use compensation and one that had separate buckets for solar compensation.**
- This new proposed method is thought to be even more complex than the original time of use compensation, but it could be more accurate.
- The Board asked staff if they could try to design the bill print in a particular way that would allow for both options. Staff said they would take that to the vendor to see if it's possible.

**ALTERNATIVES TO NON CARBON EMITTING ENERGY** - presented by Ms. Scott (1:30:09)

As a background, Ms. Scott explained that we have had two of our non-carbon emitting (NCE) energy new solar projects were cancelled in the last two years. Because we don't have as much NCE energy in our portfolio, we are trying to think creatively about other options to procure or develop it.

Options presented included:

1. Financing the construction of a new solar facility outside of our territory
2. Purchasing bundled energy and associated RECs from a reputable vendor
3. Buying energy from the market and buying RECs separately

Contract prices and estimates were shared, and they ranged from \$0.11 - \$0.15 per kWh. The contract that was cancelled was for \$0.06/kWh.

The Board gave its feedback:

- Mr. Foulds thought bringing new projects online sounds great, but the pricing is very high, so they can't be the majority of our portfolio. Out-of-town solar also triggers capacity and RNS costs, whereas in-town solar does not.
- Mr. Dalton appreciated the conversation since the new presidential administration may hamper offshore wind development. A smaller project like this sounds promising and warrants further consideration.
- Mr. Leon expressed that his least favorite option is the bundled power and RECs. He doesn't see much advantage of this rather than buying them separately. He also likes knowing that we have done something that wouldn't have happened without us.
- Mr. Foulds mentioned that it's important to be offsetting the higher contract prices like the ones discussed here with lower cost nuclear to not be burdensome on ratepayers.
- Since we do not need the power until 2029, Mr. Leon proposed waiting to see what we do with our NextEra Seabrook contract before committing resources to further investigating option number 1 above. Other members agreed.

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**LIAISON AND PUBLIC COMMENTS (1:49:23)**

- Pamela Dritt: Please don't worry about small short-term cost increases from doing the right thing. CMLP should be building as many clean projects as possible. Set rates for solar to incentivize it.

**Mr. Dalton moved to adjourn. Mr. Foulds provided the second and with a unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 9:24 AM.**

# Concord Municipal Light Plant Updates

March 12, 2025

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## Organization and Industry

- CMLP is closely watching changes on the state and federal level that may have implications on the Light Plant’s operations and projects. These include:
  - The Inflation Reduction Act money that was would help offset a material amount of the solar and battery project at the middle school as well as the large battery. It remains untouched for the moment.
  - Changes in the Mass Save program made by the Governor in response to consumer concerns over high gas and electricity bills ([link here](#)). The [DPU writes](#) “After careful consideration, the Department orders the Program Administrators to reduce the budget for the Three-Year Plans by a total of \$500 million. When approving the use of ratepayer funds, the Department must assess the reasonableness of customer bill impacts, balanced against the long-term benefits that the investments will provide. The Department notes its strong support for the Program Administrators’ decarbonization efforts and the pursuit of the Commonwealth’s climate and equity goals yet is cautious about increasing ratepayer burdens when the benefits of the energy efficiency programs, particularly those focused on decarbonization, may not be evident to customers through lower bills. The Department is further concerned that the Program Administrators are proposing significant budget increases at a time when customers are facing unprecedented challenges due to an extended period of high inflation, and overall concern about high energy costs.”

- CMLP held an all staff meeting and training session on Friday, February 14th. All CMLP Senior Managers provided updates on their departmental activities, and we discussed future plans, goals, and the vision for the future. Thank you to all staff who attended!



- Director Jason Bulger attended a General Manager’s Roundtable at the New England Public Power Association on February 19th. Sixteen GMs were in attendance and discussed a range of topics from energy storage ordinances to attracting and retaining talent.
- CMLP has been involved in the Town’s 250th planning, and the CMLP Director attended a recent MEMA-led tabletop exercise at the Concord Public Safety building. Staff are developing a response plan in the event there is an outage in an area that has an active roadblock or is along the parade route.
- Staff, our consultants, and lobbyists continue to monitor the situation in Washington, D.C. for signs of changes that may impact CMLP. The list is almost too long to mention, but know that we are monitoring. The APPA has a brief summary of actions taken to date: <https://www.publicpower.org/periodical/article/appa-details-trumps-energy-related-executive-orders-and-memorandums>
- The ISO-NE has prepared a filing to address potential Canadian energy tariffs. CMLP keeps only 20% or less of its energy position open to market pricing, and Canadian power makes up just a fraction of the spot market. Anticipated impacts of tariffs, while material across the ISO-NE territory, would not likely cause a need for any rate or PCA adjustments in Concord.

## Energy Management

- Energy Management staff are working with the Climate Action Committee to plan and staff the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Green Homes Tour. Signups are welcome!

Concord Clean Comfort, the Climate Action Committee and Mothers Out Front Concord present:

## Concord Green Home Tours

Saturday, March 15th 1-3:30pm

Times are changing! Think about ditching that old, dirty oil and gas and switching to the future of clean, affordable, and healthy living. We're talking about 21st-century electric heating, cooking, and car travel that'll make you feel good AND help preserve a future for our planet.

Find out what more and more Concord residents are doing to combat climate change, improve air quality, generate clean energy, and move toward a safer, healthier, greener, and more resilient future. This free home tour features several electrified Concord homes, by your neighbors who have done it. Find out how they made the switch and how the experience has been.

Sign up to visit one or more homes during the tour here:  
[bit.ly/GHT-2025](https://bit.ly/GHT-2025)

Or scan the QR code with your mobile phone camera!

- Experience for yourself the comfort of a heat-pump heated home in winter.
- See the latest technology for induction cooking, water heating, EV charging and solar power generation.
- Hear the unfiltered story from another homeowner and ask all your questions.
- Meet a Heating/Cooling Coach from CMLP, who can guide you on your heating, cooling and weatherization needs.
- Talk with one of CMLP's EV Specialists, who can answer your questions about buying, charging and driving an EV.
- Find out about the electrified rebates and incentives offered by Concord Light.

- Heating/Cooling Coach Ethan Herberman conceived of the idea of putting posters in publicly accessible buildings in Concord that are heated solely with heat pumps, to bolster awareness that cold climate heat pumps are capable of keeping buildings comfortably warm throughout frigid New England winters. The posters ask viewers, “Are you warm enough?” And inform viewers that “You will find no fossil fuel heating at this location. Only heat pumps.” A poster was installed at 141 Keyes on February 5th, at Emerson Umbrella on February 11th, in time for a winter camp that brought hundreds of local parents to the building, and at West Concord Union Church at the end of February. The posters will remain in place until mid-March.



- Energy Efficiency & Electrification Specialist Pamela Cady compiled and formatted much of the data required on 521 solar arrays in Concord for ISO-NE’s PP12 Appendix A Data Request, a new reporting requirement. She has also set up processes that will allow us to efficiently file the required quarterly updates with the ISO.

- In collaboration with ENE’s EV Specialist Team, Energy Management staff fielded a survey to assess the familiarity of CMLP’s customers with EVs and with the EV-related rebates and services that CMLP provides. The survey also asked respondents about the benefits they associate with EVs and the concerns they associate with EV ownership. Three hundred ninety-four customers responded to the survey. Several notable outcomes include:
  - 39% of respondents do not own an EV, but are considering one, indicating significant growth potential for EV ownership in Concord
  - Environmental benefits and reduced carbon emissions were the most common benefit that respondents associated with EVs, with 83 – 85% of respondents choosing those benefits. 61% cited rebates and tax credits as a benefit of EVs, and 76% said that financial rebates/incentives were the type of support that would help them most in considering an EV or helped them when they purchased an EV.
  - Charging availability and range limitations were the most commonly cited concerns, at 66% and 72% respectively.
- We will field the survey again in December 2025, to gauge how knowledge and attitudes have changed as result of a year-long series of articles we are publishing in our e-newsletter, addressing benefits, concerns and the EV-related rebates and services available.

## Battery Storage and Solar Project Updates

- CMLP is negotiating a site license agreement with the school superintendent or School Committee. After a final legal review, it is hoped that we can move forward with the issuance of the RFP.
- We have had conversations with our counsel about the bid document as well as the site license.

# Advanced Metering Project Updates

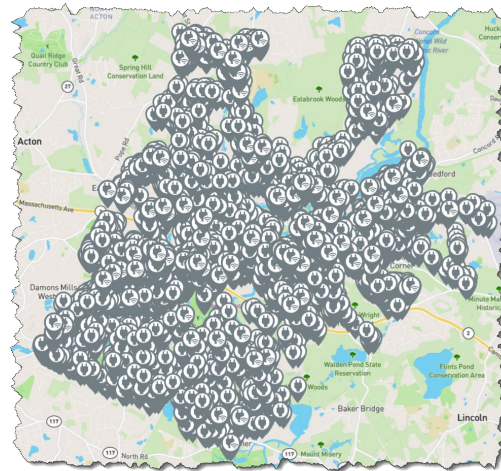
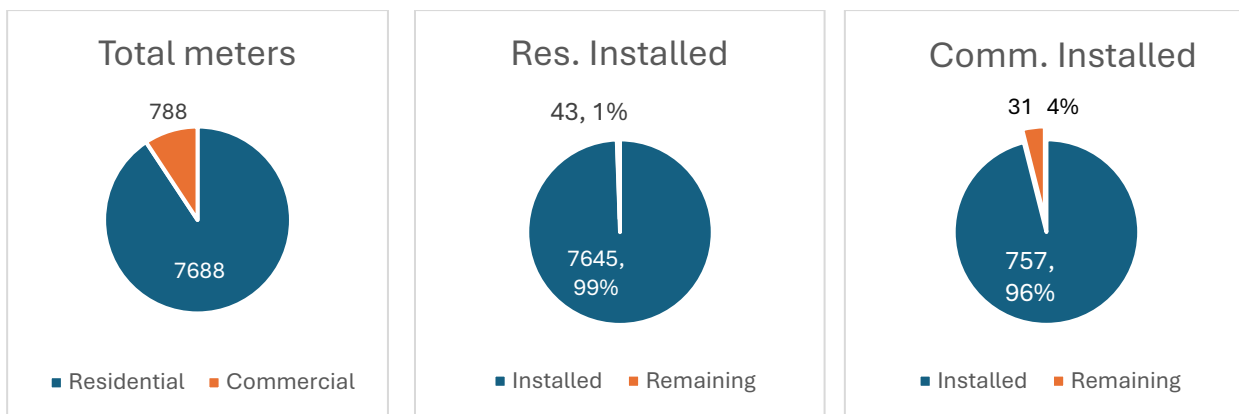


Figure 1: February 2025 Meters

- We are wrapping up the last of the AMI meters installations with approximately 74 meters left to install — 43 residential (of which approximately 16 are opt out) and 31 commercial meters.
- After the recent ice and snowstorm, it became apparent that reading the opt-out meters can present challenges for Metering. Many customers had not cleared a path to their meter, and it was dangerous for the meter technician trying to walk on the icy surface to the meters while avoiding a slip and fall or other injury. Other customers have locked, gated driveways not allowing us access to their meters. In these cases, the customers will receive an estimated bill, but we cannot estimate a bill more than once or for consecutive billing periods per DPU regulations. Customer Service will be sending a letter to opt-out customers reminding them of their responsibility (as described in CMLP’s Terms and Conditions) to keep clear access to their meter and that they need to allow us access to the meter monthly; otherwise CMLP has the right to change their meter to a new AMI meter.



## Engineering and Operations

- Tree trimming will continue for the next several weeks, spanning half of our service territory (mostly in the eastern and western parts of town).
- Staff did a terrific job responding to several issues during a high wind event on March 7th. The largest outage was ~9 customers, but there were many small incidents in a short period of time.
- We have scheduled NEPPA to come in for 3 days in mid-March to provide first aid, CPR, and AED training for all CMLP staff.
- We have completed the procurement of the SCADA system and are looking forward to kickoff meetings with the vendor to better understand timing and next steps.
- In late February our contractor completed an infrared camera survey of our overhead system and some key underground areas. They will compile findings into a report that will let us know if there are any issues resulting in unexpected heat build-up from inadequate insulation, gaps in connection points, or other issues. This was one of the AEGIS recommendations, and we are well on our way to completing it.
- One of the primary HVAC blower motors at CMLP failed and is in the process of being replaced. We have secured an annual contract for maintenance at the properties in our control.
- The ice machine at CMLP is failing and needs to be replaced. We are planning on replacing it with a machine from a current vendor that will result in a monthly payment and will be maintained for optimal operation.
- CMLP had several damaged areas of its roof during the high wind event on March 7th. We will work with our vendor on that.

## Power Supply

- CMLP continues to work on expansion of solar at the landfill along with battery storage. Meetings with vendors continue each month.
- We will discuss a potential option to extend our Seabrook contract with the Light Board after some analysis of the proposal by ENE and CMLP staff.

## Customer Service / Metering

- Rick Rogers, Customer Services Specialist, resigned his position effective Monday, March 3rd, after 2 1/2 years with us. The CSS position was posted on Indeed and Mass Municipal Association job boards on February 21st and will remain open until March 14th. To date, we have received more than 105 applications.

- As a result of the vacancy, the Customer Service team has had to postpone the 3-month project to migrate to Cloud-based iVUE Connect Service for our database usage and other planned projects. Donna De Gray, Customer Service Supervisor, will take on the additional duties of the vacant position including collections and account maintenance for Cycle 22 until the CSS position is filled.
- The DPU Winter Moratorium on disconnecting residential customers' electricity will be lifted on March 15th. The first DQ2 notices going out and the first Cutoff notice for this collections season will be for Cycle 20 (this cycles bills on the 10th of the month) on March 17th with the first potential disconnection of service on April 1st. We expect a high volume of collection activity and possible disconnections for the first few months of the season.
- The CSSs are beginning to provide more customer support for the Broadband Division. Dale Hartling trained the CSSs on how to work with Service Orders in iVUE Connect for customers' Broadband service plan changes. This is the first of several Service Orders that Customer Service will be trained in to assist Broadband with the future and is a milestone planned for several years.
- Customer Service staff completed a rough first draft of Frequently Asked Questions for the Time of Use rate roll out which can be used on CMLP's website and other marketing collateral. Carole Hilton will work with Laura Scott on next level of review and edits.



# TOWN OF CONCORD MUNICIPAL UTILITIES

ELECTRIC | WATER | SEWER | TELECOMMUNICATIONS

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## February 2025 – Broadband Updates

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Concord Broadband is pleased to share the following updates and information from the past month. Please do not hesitate to contact us at [broadband@concordma.gov](mailto:broadband@concordma.gov) should you have any questions, concerns, or feedback.

### Operations

The Broadband team are reviewing resumes for the Network Engineer position. To date we have received 140 applications.

The last few weeks were spent finalizing the specifications for our XGS-PON bid. We hope to have this advertised soon and procured as described in Chapter 164.

The team has spent some of the bad weather days working to improve Wi-Fi in municipal buildings, which helps both employees and the public.

As the advanced metering project is nearing wrap-up, we have been working to allow connectivity to the IP-Link meters installed in some locations. Recently another ISP with the same equipment in use in Concord provided details of how they set up their system, so hopefully we can emulate some of their settings to allow for connectivity.

### Providing more accurate information to customers

When a potential broadband customer reaches out to indicate they would like our service, they fill out a form that begins with them providing their address. If the address is set as “available” in the database, they can fill out the form indicating what level of service they want as if they are signing up. If the address is “unavailable,” they can let us know they are interested when the fiber is installed in their area.

But within the “available” segment, there are a series of variables that might affect the timeliness or cost of their installation. For example, they may live on a busy street that requires a police detail, they may be in an area where the underground fiber passes through the electrical system and requires a line crew to assist, or they may require conduit to be installed from the fiber in the street to their house.

For customers who expect that they will be able to sign up and have an installation in the next few days, this can be a frustrating experience from the moment they see the word “available.”

#### Upcoming Maintenance

There are no maintenance windows currently scheduled.

Concord Broadband typically schedules maintenance windows from 1-4am on Saturday or Sunday to minimize the impact to customers.

Learn more on our maintenance page here:

<https://concordma.gov/3144/Broadband-Maintenance>

To solve this problem, staff have spent an enormous amount of time reviewing locations around town to add additional attributes to those address locations. These flags will be able to paint a more accurate picture and give additional guidance at the time the form is filled out.

We also hope to have more regular communication with customers so that if there are any delays in installation, they are aware of them and can make decisions on how to get their internet service.

These new changes should debut in the next few months. We will highlight the differences in a future Broadband update.

## Federal Broadband Policy Shifts: What It Means for Our Community

Recent changes to federal broadband funding policies may impact how and when high-speed internet reaches underserved areas – including those in our service territory. Our team is closely monitoring these developments to ensure we maximize opportunities for broadband expansion while maintaining reliable, high-quality service for all customers.

### What's Changing?

The U.S. Department of Commerce's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program, which allocated \$42.45 billion for broadband infrastructure, is shifting toward a more "technology-neutral" approach. Initially, fiber-optic networks were the priority, but recent changes may allow satellite internet providers to compete for federal funding. This adjustment is aimed at speeding up deployment, particularly in rural areas where fiber construction can be more complex.

### How Could This Affect Our Community?

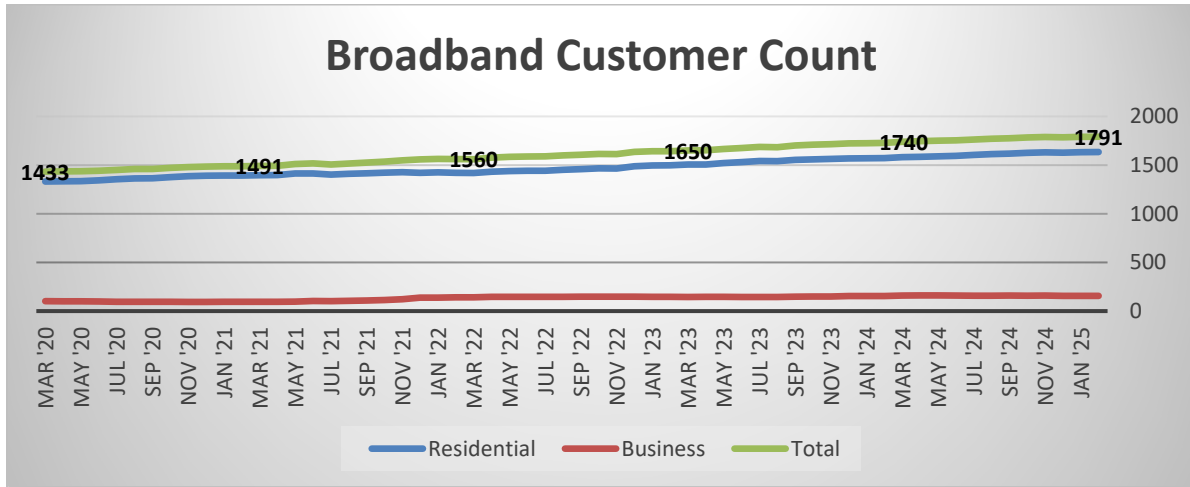
While satellite internet can provide quicker installation, fiber-optic networks remain the gold standard for reliability, speed, and long-term cost-effectiveness. Expanding eligibility for satellite services could lead to increased competition for federal funds and potentially impact the rollout of fiber-based broadband projects in some regions. Additionally, state broadband offices may need to adjust their plans, which could result in delays.

### Our Commitment to Broadband Expansion

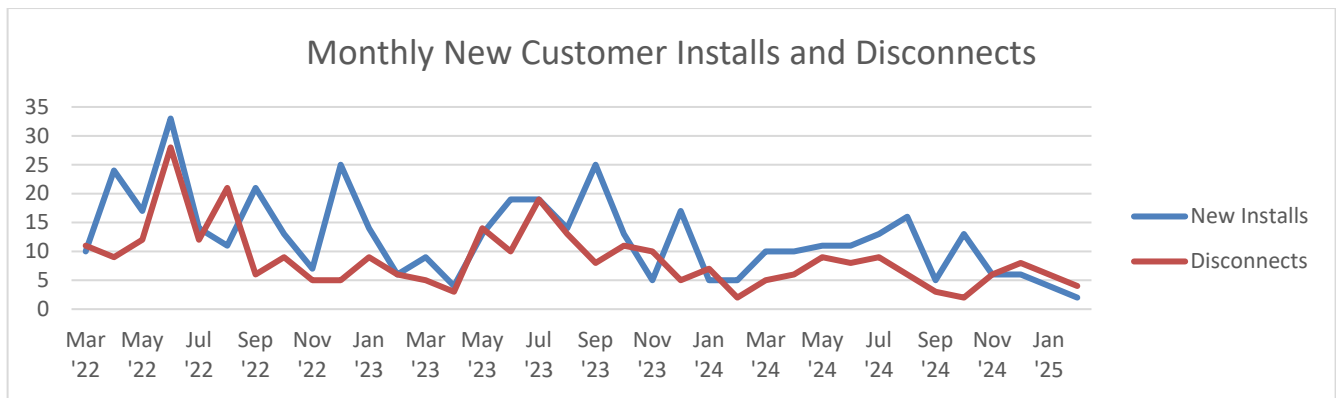
Despite these federal shifts, our focus remains on bringing fast, affordable, and dependable internet to all potential customers in our service area. We are actively engaging with state and federal agencies to advocate for solutions that prioritize quality and long-term sustainability.

We'll continue to monitor and adapt to these changes, keeping you informed every step of the way. Stay tuned for updates in future months!

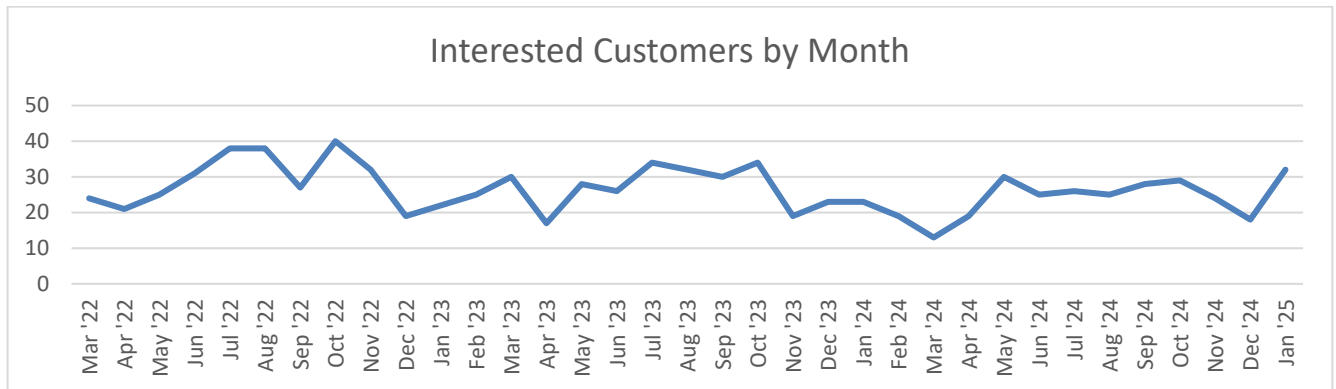
## Monthly Metrics and Business Data



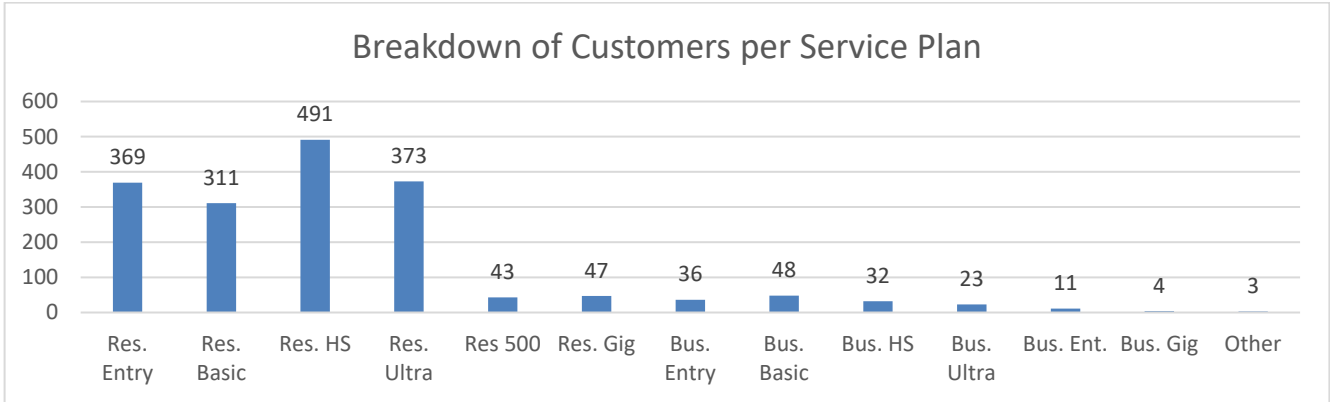
(Customer count: March 2020 – February 2025)



(The number of new installations and disconnects completed each month.)

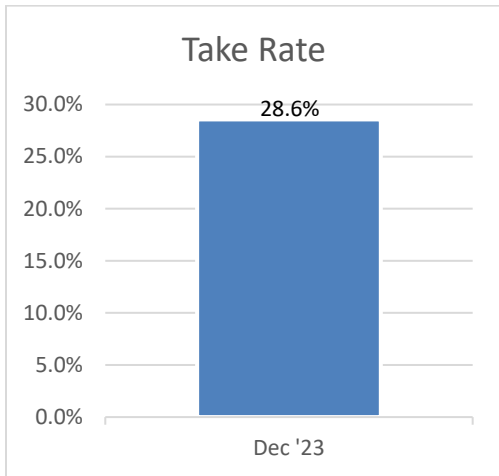
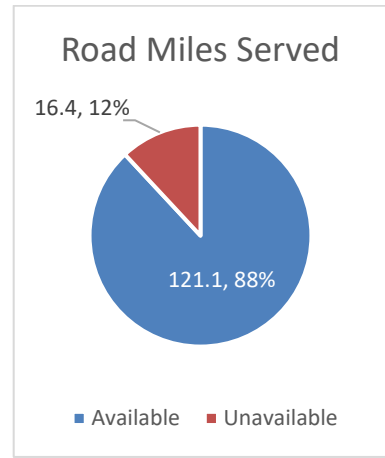
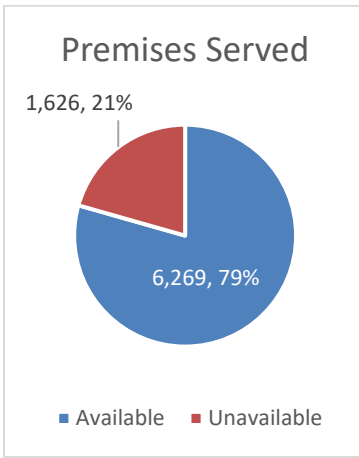
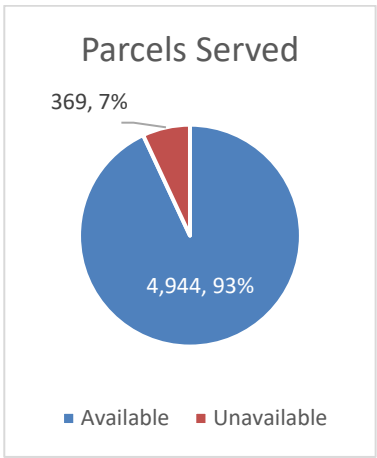


(This is the number of individuals who submit the Broadband interest form, whether they are in the current service area or not.)



*(This is the number of each customer on our different service plans as of 2/28/2025.)*

### Other Metrics



*(As of 2/15/2025)*

## Appendix

### Fiber Broadband Completion Task Force's Report Goals

Goal	Type	Priority	Responsible Party	Additional Info.
<b>Policies (p.39)</b>				
• Universal Access	Policy	Highest	Select Board/Town Meeting	
• Expansion outside current territory	Policy	Low	Select Board/Town Meeting	Conversations happening
• Support Economic Vitality, Sustainability, Equity & Inclusion	Policy	High	Select Board/Light Board/TM Economic Development	Rate subsidy planned
• Affordable Housing	Policy	Medium	Select Board/Housing Groups	Rate subsidy planned; working on Concord Housing Authority properties
• Public Safety	Policy	Medium	Select Board/Town Manager	
• Education	Policy	Medium	Select Board/School Dept.	
• Government Access (PEG)	Policy	Medium	Select Board/PAAC	
<b>Recommended metrics for tracking (p.41)</b>				
• Parcels served	Metric	Medium	Town Staff/Light Board	Complete; will report quarterly
• Premises served	Metric	Medium	Town Staff/Light Board	Complete; will report quarterly
• Road miles served	Metric	Medium	Town Staff/Light Board	Complete; will report quarterly
• Subscribers	Metric	High	Town Staff/Light Board	Complete; will report monthly
• Take rate	Metric	Medium	Town Staff/Light Board	Complete; will report quarterly
• Churn	Metric	High	Town Staff/Light Board	Complete; included in monthly report
• Installations	Metric	Highest	Town Staff/Light Board	Complete; will report monthly
<b>Governance (p.39)</b>				
• Track progress against completion	Metric	Highest	Light Board/Town Staff	Working on this
• Rate of return policy	Policy	High	Light Board/Town Staff	Working on this
• Financial goals with regular reporting	Policy	High	Light Board/FinCom	Working on this
• Retained earnings and reserve policy	Policy	High	Light Board/FinCom	Working on this

Goal	Type	Priority	Responsible Party	Additional Info.
<b>Strategic Planning Goals (p.43)</b>				
• Marketing and growth	Metric	High	Light Board/Town Staff	Working on this
• Business return	Policy	High	Light Board/Town Staff	Working on this
<b>Budgeting Process for Fiber Expansion (p.41)</b>				
• Expand to fill existing opportunities	Planning	High	Light Board/Town Staff	
• External funding sources	Research	Medium	Light Board/Town Staff	Working on this
• ARPA Relief Funds Allocation, incl. Lost Revenue	Finance	Highest	Select Board/Town Manager	Complete
• Review/Confirm Internal Loan Findings	Finance	Highest	Financial Audit Comm/Staff	Complete
• Review and Rescind PILOF to MMN	Finance	High	Select Board/Town Manager	Complete
<b>Capital Planning Process (p.42)</b>				
• Review/Revise Debt financing schedule	Policy	Highest	Light Board/Town Staff	In progress; due to positive financial situation, anticipating being able to repay faster.
• Quantifying cost of expansion	Planning	Medium	Town Staff	Working on this
• How to fund expansion	Planning	Medium	Light Board/Town Staff	Working on this
• Revise/refine methods for computing ROI	Planning	Medium	Light Board/Town Staff	Working on this
<b>Construction and Logistics (p.42)</b>				
• Vibratory plow – direct buried fiber cables	Operations	Medium	Town Staff	Working on this
• Revise/Refine Communication conduit construction standards and guidance	Policy	Medium	Town Staff	Working on this
• Integrate Fiber construction with the Roads Program – focus on Streets without fiber that already have underground electric	Planning	High	Town Staff	Working on this

# **DRAFT - Time-of-Use Communication Plan**

## **Concord Municipal Light Plant**

### **1. Executive Summary**

This communication plan outlines the strategies for effectively educating residential customers about the upcoming rollout of an opt-out Time-of-Use (TOU) electrical rate for the Concord Municipal Light Plant (CMLP). The plan emphasizes proactive and transparent communication to ensure customer understanding, address concerns, and facilitate informed decision-making.

### **2. Target Audience**

- All residential electricity customers of CMLP.
- Specific focus on:
  - The reason why we are doing this
  - How the rate works
  - How to read bills
  - Helping customers know what drives usage at various times of the day and ways to shift when they use energy to take advantage of off-peak hours
  - Tools to help shift load
  - The environmental benefits from accommodating more renewable energy into the grid, avoiding/delaying the need for more power plants, and avoiding the dirty generation that is called upon during a peak.
- Make sure to communicate to commercial customers that these new rates will not apply to them.

### **3. Communication Objectives**

- Showing customers how to see their new hourly load data (what they see, what it means and how it will impact them once the new rate begins.)
- Increase awareness of the upcoming TOU rate change.
- Clearly explain the TOU rate structure, including peak, off-peak, and shoulder periods.
- Educate customers on the potential benefits and drawbacks of the TOU rate.
- Provide information on how customers can shift load to save money.
- Address potential customer concerns and answer frequently asked questions (FAQs).
- Encourage customer engagement and feedback.

#### 4. Key Messages

- **“Empower Your Energy Use: Understand and Choose When You Use.”**
- Emphasize the greater transparency, environmental benefits and **possible** savings
- “Time-of-Use rates offer potential cost savings by encouraging energy consumption during the costliest off-peak hours.”
- Practical tips and advice on how to shift load to save money
- “We’re here to help you understand your options and make the best choice for your energy needs.”
- “Learn more about TOU rates and how they can impact your energy bills.”

#### 5. Communication Channels

- **Website:**
  - Dedicated TOU rate webpage with detailed information, FAQs, and a rate calculator.
  - Online bill-pay portal with TOU rate information and opt-out options.
  - Interactive tools and resources, such as webinars and educational videos.
- **Direct Mail:**
  - Informational postcards and brochures mailed to all residential customers.
  - Personalized mailers to high-consumption customers and those with known EV ownership.
  - Letter to EV Miles participants to let them know that the program is ending and transitioning to TOU rates.
- **Email:**
  - Targeted email campaigns to opted-in customers with relevant information and reminders.
- **Social Media:**
  - Informative posts, engaging graphics, and targeted ads on relevant platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram).
- **Customer Service:**
  - Customer service phone line and email address for TOU rate inquiries.
  - Well-trained customer service representatives to answer questions and provide guidance.
- **Public Outreach:**
  - Presentations at community events and local meetings, including Town Meeting
  - Participation in local energy fairs and exhibitions, if applicable.
  - Collaboration with local media outlets (Minuteman Media Network, The Concord Bridge, etc.) for news articles and public service announcements.

## 6. Communication Timeline

- **Phase 1: Pre-Rollout (6 months)**
  - Launch website resources and social media campaign.
  - Distribute initial informational mailers to all customers in their bills.
  - Conduct customer surveys to gauge awareness and gather feedback.
  - Host informational webinars and workshops.
- **Phase 2: Rollout (3 months)**
  - Intensify communication efforts through targeted mailers, email campaigns, and social media.
  - Increase customer service support.
  - Monitor customer inquiries and address concerns promptly.
- **Phase 3: Post-Rollout (Ongoing)**
  - Continue to provide ongoing support and resources to customers.
  - Analyze customer usage data and identify areas for improvement.
  - Regularly review and update communication materials based on customer feedback.

## 7. Evaluation & Measurement

- Track website traffic and engagement on TOU rate pages.
- Monitor social media reach and engagement.
- Analyze customer service call volume and inquiries.
- Collect customer feedback through surveys and online reviews.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of communication channels in reaching target audiences.
- Regularly review and adjust the communication plan based on data and feedback.

## 8. Budget & Resources

- Allocate budget for:
  - Printing and mailing costs.
  - Website development and maintenance.
  - Social media advertising.
  - Customer service resources.
  - Event and outreach activities.
- Identify and secure necessary resources, such as personnel, technology, and vendor support.

## **9. Key Personnel**

- Customer Service Manager and Supervisor
- Customer Service Representatives
- Marketing and Communications Consultants
- Power supply and Engineering teams
- IT Support

## **10. Contingency Plan**

- Develop a plan to address potential communication challenges, such as technical issues, negative customer feedback, and unforeseen events.
- Ensure flexibility and adaptability in the communication plan to address changing circumstances.

## 11. Action Items

Month	Action item	Impact	Preparation
March	Discuss communication plan	Get feedback and input to improve the plan	Draft communication plan Send in bill print requirements
May	Update Light Board on communication plan	Ensure we are on track to meet all milestones	Review accomplishments, update the plan, and prepare materials
June	Time-of-Use webpage launch	Provide a central source of information	Create content, FAQs, rate comparison charts, and savings tips
July	Time-of-Use explainer video	Simplifies TOU concepts for customer	Script, record, and edit a short, clear video for multiple platforms
July	Email campaign launch	Inform customers about upcoming TOU rates	Create segmented email lists and schedule informative emails
August	Webinars and workshops	Allow customers to ask questions and get direct guidance	Schedule events, create presentations, and train staff
August	Customer service and call center staff training	Ensures customer service can answer TOU-related questions	Develop training materials and conduct internal workshops
August	Social media campaign launch	Educate customers through engaging posts	Develop a content calendar with graphics, videos, and tips
September	Bill inserts with TOU examples	Gives customers real-world bill comparisons	Design inserts with sample bills and key savings strategies
September	Home energy audit promotions	Helps customers find ways to shift their usage	Leverage existing relationship to provide access to these audits
October	Pilot program for early adopters	Allows testing and real-world feedback	Recruit participants, track usage, and refine messaging

<b>Month</b>	<b>Action item</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Preparation</b>
November	Targeted outreach to high-usage customers	Ensures those most affected understand options	Identify customers with high peak-hour usage and offer guidance
November	Online bill calculator launch	Help customers estimate their bills under TOU	Develop an online calculator that allows different usage scenarios
November	Other tools and programs launching	Load or demand management programs as well as resources that can help shift the peak	Prepare contracts and procure the services for customers
December	Press releases & media engagement	Broadens community awareness through news outlets	Prepare press materials and coordinate interviews with local media
Jan (2026)	Live Time-of-Use rates!	Connect cost of energy with prices charged, save money through cost avoidance, and help the environment	

# Time of Use Communication Plan Review

Concord Municipal Light Board Meeting - March 12, 2025

# Purpose

- Time-of-Use's success will be relative to how well-educated Concord residents are about it
- Educated residents:
  - Are more likely to be able to save money on their bills
  - Will have a bigger impact on collective savings
  - Are more likely to perceive this as a positive change
  - Are less likely to lodge complaints

# Objectives



Make sure residents know this is happening



## **Explain**

Clearly explain why this change is begin made



## **Empower**

Empower them to learn what they can do to impact their bills

# Tools

Side-by-side bill examples (but not sample bills to all customers)

Bill calculators

Load management programs

Choose a season: **Summer** ▾  
Summer dates: Apr 16 - Oct 15  
Summer peak period: 3-6 PM M-F

Select your average summer kWh/month:  
2000

*Check the boxes below to see how using certain high-wattage appliances during the peak time-of-use period above will affect your monthly bill. You can also adjust the "baseline" kW usage based on your home's baseline average load during peak periods.*

APPLIANCE	LOAD (kW)
<input type="checkbox"/> Air Conditioning	2.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Dishwasher	2.40
<input type="checkbox"/> Dryer	2.75
<input type="checkbox"/> Electric Oven	1.75
<input type="checkbox"/> Electric Range	1.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Electric Water Heater	4.50
<input type="checkbox"/> Hair Dryer	0.38
<input type="checkbox"/> Heat Pump	2.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Microwave	0.38
<input type="checkbox"/> Pool Pump (1.5HP)	0.60
<input type="checkbox"/> Space Heater	0.75
<input type="checkbox"/> Strip Heater	5.50
<input type="checkbox"/> Washing Machine	0.60
<input type="checkbox"/> Welder	4.20
<input type="checkbox"/> Window AC Unit	0.50
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Baseline (specify kW)	<b>0.50</b>
<b>TOTAL PEAK KW</b>	<b>0.5</b>

**Your Estimated TOU Savings**

**Standard residential plan:**

base charge	\$22.80
usage charge	\$199.60
<b>total monthly cost</b>	<b>\$222.40</b>

**Time of Use plan:**

base charge	\$30.00
usage charge	\$87.80
peak demand charge	\$5.92
<b>total monthly cost</b>	<b>\$123.72</b>

**Time of Use savings: \$98.68**

**How your savings stack up:**

Plan	Base	Usage	Peak	Total
Standard	\$22.80	\$199.60	\$0.00	\$222.40
TOU	\$30.00	\$87.80	\$5.92	\$123.72

# Communication Methods

Bill inserts

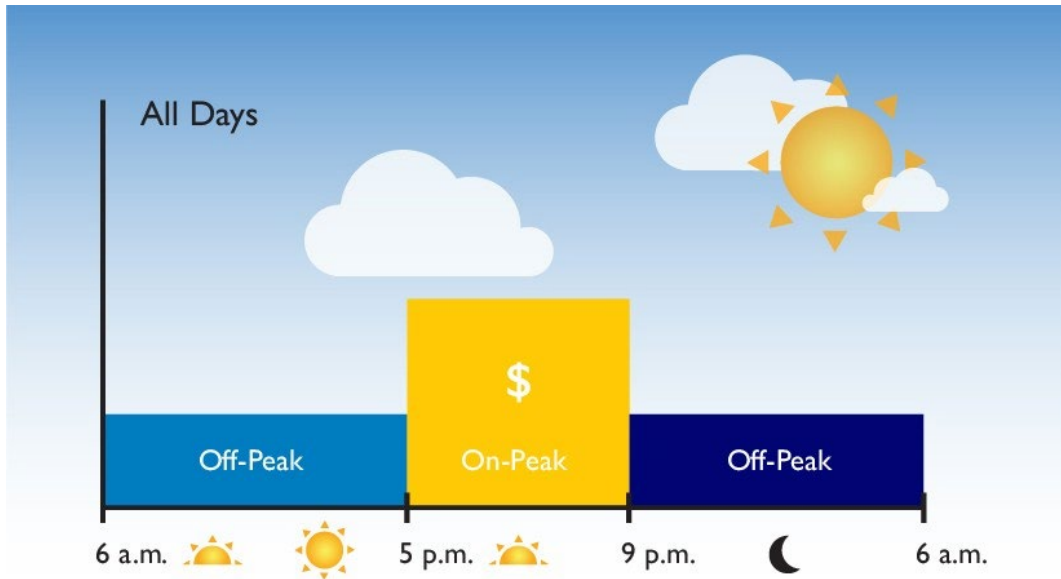
Social media

Workshops & webinars

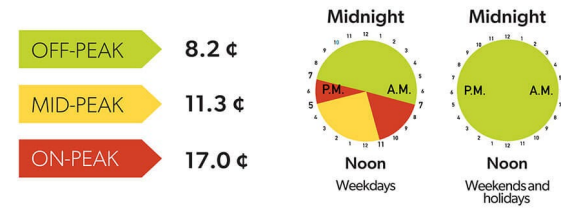
Email campaigns

Website

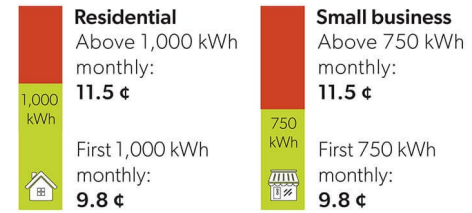
Word of mouth



**Winter Time-of-Use (TOU) prices per kilowatt hour:**



**Winter Tiered prices per kilowatt hour:**



**WHEN IS ON PEAK & OFF PEAK FOR ELECTRICITY**



**UNDERSTAND YOUR TIME-OF-USE PLAN**

control your energy costs by switching your usage to off-peak hours



# Workshops & Webinars

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- Allow people to ask questions
- Find out if the information being pushed out is adequate
- Make sure we reach those who are not seeing our electronic communications



# Challenges

- Timing: starting too early/late
- Convey accurate information while the process is in progress
- Difficulty in behavioral change
- Lack of engagement
- Resistance to change
- Confusing with a lot of information