

Regulating Utilities for the Future: *Innovation in Practice*

December 1st –2nd, 2025 NM State Capitol– Room 307

Agenda Monday

Time
8.30 AM – 4:00 PM

Time/ Title/ Speakers

Summary of Presentation

8:30 a.m.– 10:00 a.m.

Economic Development and Utilities (1.5G)

Commissioner Nibert, Moderator,
NMPRC
Rob Black, Secretary, NMEDD
Senator Michael Padilla, NM
Senate
Monique Jacobsen, Senior Vice
President, TXNM Energy

- Reliable, resilient, and forward-looking utility services are foundational to thriving communities and competitive economies. This panel explores utilities contribute economic development—supporting business attraction and retention, enabling industrial growth, fostering innovation, and ensuring equitable access to essential infrastructure. Speakers will discuss emerging challenges and opportunities, regulatory frameworks, and partnerships between utilities, governments, and private industry.

10:00 a.m.– 10:15 a.m.

Break

10:15 a.m.– 11:15 a.m.

The Robots Are Not Coming for Your Job (1E)

Erin Lecocq, Moderator,
Appellate Specialist, NMPRC
Dan Driscoll, Partner Director,
Microsoft
Brian Moore, Litigator,
Nachawati Law Group

- How to Use AI as a Tool Within Ethical Standards: This presentation explores the rapidly evolving world of AI — how it works, how to use it confidently, and how to ensure accuracy and ethical integrity in practice. The presentation will demystify the technology behind AI, offering practical strategies to evaluate its outputs and verify their reliability. It will also discuss how attorneys and other professionals can integrate AI tools responsibly and comply with legal ethical rules and broader moral standards.



11:15 a.m.– 12:15 p.m.

**Impacts of the
Big Beautiful Bill
(1.5G)**

McLee Kerolle, Moderator,
Technical Advisor, NMPRC
Rebecca Stair Director, Energy
Conservation and Division
Jim DesJardins, Executive
Director, REA–NM,
Jeremiah Cunningham, Director,
SPS

- This panel examines the impacts of the One Big Beautiful Bill on New Mexico's renewable energy landscape. Panelists will unpack how the legislation reshapes regulatory structures, influences utility planning, and affects the state's clean-energy transition. Discussion will highlight both the opportunities and challenges it presents for utilities, regulators, and consumers—ranging from grid modernization and transmission investment to affordability and equity concerns. Attendees will gain a clear understanding of how this landmark policy is transforming the way New Mexico generates, delivers, and governs its energy future.

12:15 p.m.– 1:15 p.m.

Lunch on Your Own

1:15 p.m.– 2:15 p.m.

**Investing in Our
Future: Balancing
Grid Investments
and Affordability (1G)**

Commissioner Aguilera,
Moderator, PRC
Rep. Kristina Orteza, NM State
Representative (District 42)
Kelly Tomblin, President and CEO,
EPE,
Jeff Dennis, Executive Director,
Electricity Customer Alliance
Michele Beck, Director, Utah
Office of Consumer Services

- A diverse panel will examine the factors that are putting upward pressure on electricity prices across the country and in New Mexico. Panelists will share perspectives on how utilities and regulators should prioritize investments in the grid in a manner that benefits customers and balances affordability.

2:15 p.m.– 2:30 p.m.

Break

2:30 p.m.– 4:00 p.m.

**The Face and Pace
of Innovation (1.5G)**

Commissioner O'Connell,
Moderator, PRC
Sonia Aggarwal, CEO, Energy
Innovation
Sarah Freeman, Principal, RAP

- We need more energy at a moment that everything is more expensive. At the same time we are changing how energy is provided. Reliable, clean, affordable are the standards, how can innovation improve what we have? What is the face and pace of innovation? Join Sonia Aggarwal, CEO of Energy Innovation and Sarah Freeman a Principal at the Regulatory Assistance Project in a conversation about innovation in practice.

4:00 p.m.

End of Day 1

Agenda Tuesday

Time

9:00 AM – 4:30 PM

Time/ Title/ Speakers

Summary of Presentation

9:00 a.m.– 10:00 a.m.

Exploding Demand, Large Loads and Innovative Solutions (1G)

Cholla Khoury, Moderator, Chief of Staff, NMPRC

Daren Zigich, Engineer, NMPRC

Keri Hatley, Co-Chair, NMOGA

Jennifer Bradfute, Partner,
Bradfute Sayer P.C.

Jake Brown, Assistant General
Counsel, Xcel Energy

- Explosive load growth from data centers, electrified transportation, manufacturing, and distributed energy resources is reshaping the power system at every level. Utilities and customers, alike, now face unprecedented challenges in planning, interconnection, and operations—while regulators work to adapt legacy frameworks to a more dynamic and data-driven grid environment. This panel will explore what's happening right now in New Mexico, what large customers are seeing across the country and what we can do here in our home state to rise to the occasion.

10:00 a.m.– 10:15 a.m.

Break

10:15 a.m.– 11:15 a.m.

Non-Traditional Rate Recovery Mechanisms (1G)

Christopher Dunn, Moderator,
Public Utilities Economist, NMPRC

Jake Van Reen, Owner, Van Reen
Accounting

James A Schichtl, Vice President,
Customer and Regulatory
Solutions

Judith Amer, Attorney, NMPRC

Marisel Nanasi, Executive Director,
New Energy Economy

- The regulated utility industry has long relied on traditional cost-recovery methods to recover utility costs from customers through rates. However, as the energy landscape evolves – driven by decarbonization goals, technological change, and shifting customer expectations – new and innovative regulatory approaches are emerging. These non-traditional mechanisms seek to better align utility incentives with policy objectives, reduce regulatory lag, encourage efficiency and innovation, and protect customers from volatility. This panel will explore the virtues and challenges of approaches such as revenue decoupling, performance-based ratemaking, and other alternative rate recovery mechanisms. Panelists will discuss how these frameworks could be applied in New Mexico and what lessons can be learned from observations of these approaches in other jurisdictions.



11:15 a.m.– 12:15 p.m.

**The Value of
Diverse Perspective
in Regulation (1EIJ)**

Jocelyn Barrett, Moderator,
Hearing Examiner, NMPRC
Laurie Williams, Senior Vice
President, Integrated Planning and
Transmission Development
Joseph Sanchez, CEO, Jemez
Mountain Electric Cooperative
Edison Jimenez, Economist,
NMPRC
Ranime Oueis, Attorney, NMPRC

- This panel will explore the importance of diversity in the field of public utilities regulation, highlighting how a broad range of perspectives leads to more effective regulatory outcomes. Panelists will discuss how diverse experiences shape their approach to consumer protection, rate design, infrastructure planning, and stakeholder engagement, ensuring that decisions reflect the needs of all communities served by the PRC and public utilities. The presentation will also touch on barriers to diversity in the profession, strategies for recruiting and retaining a more inclusive workforce, and the ways in which we can all foster a regulatory culture that values equity and innovation.

12:15 p.m.– 1:15 p.m.

Lunch on Your Own

1:15 p.m.– 2:15 p.m.

**From Grid to
Great (1G)**

Gideon Elliot, Moderator, Attorney,
NMPRC
Agata Malek, OTAP Director,
NMPRC
Miguel Perez, Economist, NMPRC
Clair Everett, DOE Energy
Innovator Fellow, NMPRC

- This panel delves into the state of New Mexico's electric grid today and the vision for where it needs to be in the coming decades. Panelists will explore the practical realities of transitioning to a cleaner, more resilient, and more interconnected grid—examining whether the state's ambitious energy and decarbonization goals are achievable on their current timelines. Topics will include grid reliability, transmission capacity, renewable integration, and the regulatory and technological innovations needed to bridge the gap between aspiration and implementation. Attendees will leave with a grounded perspective on how New Mexico can realistically build the grid of its future.



2:15 p.m.– 3:15 p.m.

Small Water Utilities in New Mexico: Origins, Ecology, and Conservation of a Diminutive but Terribly Vital Species of Utility (1G)

John Bogatko, Moderator, Legal Director, NMPRC
Rebecca Roose, Senior Infrastructure Advisor, Office of the Governor
Jennifer Horton, Executive Director, Dona Ana Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association
Jeff Wechsler, Partner, Spencer Fane, LLP

- There is no doubt that small water utilities are essential to the life and continued existence of many New Mexico communities. That said, small water utilities occupy a somewhat fragile niche in New Mexico’s landscape due to, among other things, their capital intensive nature that is often–times coupled to modest or static revenue streams and limited customer bases, suboptimal access to capital markets, resource constraints such as strained or depleting water tables, and legacy issues stemming from and associated with their genesis, operations, maintenance, and continuation in a difficult environment. The species’ future in New Mexico is not assured, but public discussion of the characteristics, vagaries, and existential challenges faced by small water utilities is at least (hopefully) a step towards informing the formulation of effective policy and approaches towards the propagation and continued existence of these small but indispensable facets of life in the Land of Enchantment.

3:15 p.m.– 3:30 p.m.

Break

3:30 p.m.– 4:30 p.m.

Benefits and Drawbacks of In Person, Remote, and Hybrid Administrative Hearings (1E)

John Kreienkamp, Moderator, Legal Deputy Director, NMPRC
Commissioner O’Connell, NMPRC
Cholla Khoury, Chief of Staff, NMPRC
Kelly Gould, Partner, The Gould Law Firm

- This panel will explore the comparative advantages and disadvantages of in person, remote, and hybrid administrative hearings. Topics will include legal and operational considerations, as well as accessibility for the general public.

4:30 p.m.

End of Seminar
