

SEEA Policy Team Highlights

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Overview

SEEA is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that promotes energy efficiency across the 12-state region of Louisiana, Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Our board consists of utilities, energy service providers, state energy offices and experts from universities. SEEA staff engage in a broad spectrum of activities, including serving as members of Public Service Commission sponsored collaboratives, appearing as public witnesses, organizing and presenting at workshops, filing written comments, providing information to interested parties, counseling state and local officials on best practices and connecting officials and stakeholders to other national and regional expertise. SEEA has a strong track record of developing and implementing successful programs in the Southeast and working with key stakeholders to develop and support energy efficiency policy.



Two DOE State Energy Program Competitive Funding Awards

The U.S. Department of Energy State Energy Program awarded \$725,000 to Mississippi for Advancing Energy Efficiency in Buildings and \$541,089 to Alabama for Stimulating Energy Efficiency Action in States. SEEA partnered with both states on these competitive grant applications, and Mississippi and Alabama were the only Southeastern states awarded funding in their respective categories. With the funding SEEA will receive through its partnership with the Mississippi Development Authority, Energy and Natural Resources Division (MDA) and Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA), the SEEA Policy Team looks forward to continuing to foster meaningful energy efficiency progress and market transformation in Mississippi and Alabama.

In particular, Alabama's Stimulating Energy Efficiency Action award is notable because SEEA has been working with Mississippi as a partner on the same grant category since 2010. Alabama's receipt of the award reinforces the positive impact SEEA has been making in Mississippi, and a desire for comparable advancement in Alabama. SEEA is excited to work in partnership with ADECA on this cooperative agreement geared toward driving utility investment in energy efficiency through an annual electricity savings of one percent.

Utilities of the South Coalition

Georgia Power will host the second Utilities of the South Coalition meeting on July 16, 2012. TVA kicked-off this initiative in February 2012 to create a forum for peer best practice sharing and problem solving among energy efficiency leaders of the Southeastern utilities and distributors. SEEA staff is facilitating these meetings and coordinating this effort. Coalition objectives include:

- Expanded relationships between energy efficiency leaders of the utilities and distributors
- Best practice learning- share what's working and not working
- Discuss leading energy efficiency research and applications to the Southeast
- Identify and collaborate on cross utility and distributor projects

Best Practice Utility Energy Efficiency Program Initiative

SEEA is in the process of creating model recommendations for utility energy efficiency programs. SEEA recognizes that traditional rate making mechanisms create a disincentive to implement energy efficiency and demand side management programs. Thus, SEEA is working to remove barriers and create incentives through Performance Incentives (PI) and Lost Revenue Recovery Mechanisms (LRRM). The primary goals of this initiative are to: (a) determine the relative success of various LRRM and PI programs, (b) establish which traits are responsible for successful programs, and (c) make best practice recommendations on model LRRM and PI programs based on these findings. SEEA is working with a diverse base of stakeholders to create energy efficiency recommendations that are widely supported. The end result will be model LRRM and PI legislation and rulemaking language that align with the goals of a broad spectrum of stakeholders, and are more likely to be adopted.

Georgia Power Demand Side Management Working Group

As part of the Georgia Power Integrated Rate Planning (IRP) process, the Georgia Public Service Commission convenes the Demand Side Management Working Group (DSMWG). Georgia Power, SEEA and other advocacy organizations participate on a quarterly basis. SEEA serves as an active participant in all DSMWG meetings, which are engaged in Georgia Power's 2013 IRP. SEEA assisted the review of the successes and accomplishments of Georgia Power's 2011 energy efficiency programs to promote more robust, expansive programs. SEEA also participated in the 2012 Southern Company Stakeholder Forum on May 3-4, 2012.

Virginia State Corporation Commission

The Virginia State Corporation Commission released a request for comments regarding Dominion Virginia Power's application to implement new Demand Side Management (DSM) programs and to update rate adjustment clauses. SEEA submitted comments in February 2012, in support of energy efficiency and Dominion's more comprehensive DSM programs. On April 30, 2012, the Virginia State Corporation Commission successfully approved four five-year Residential Bundle Programs and two five-year Commercial Bundle Programs.

Mississippi Stimulating Energy Efficiency Action

SEEA continues to serve as the primary support for the Mississippi Development Authority, Energy and Natural Resources Division (MDA) on the DOE State Energy Program cooperative agreement on Stimulating Energy Efficiency Action. The objective of the agreement is for Mississippi to implement policies and programs that drive utility investment in energy efficiency, with an annual electricity savings of one percent.

Governor Bryant will be introducing Mississippi's first State Energy Plan at *The Governor's Energy Summit: Energy and Economic Development in the 21st Century* on October 4, 2012. Stakeholders expect this plan to be an "all of the above" energy strategy, and SEEA will continue to support energy efficiency as an integral part of this effort.

On March 30, 2012, Governor Bryant approved SB 2651, a bill requiring the Mississippi Building Code Council (BCC) to furnish a report to the legislature by December 1, 2012, with recommendations for a statewide mandatory building code. After receiving an invitation from the BCC President, SEEA plans to speak about building energy codes at their upcoming meeting in September. Throughout this process, SEEA will provide policy and technical support for the consideration of the 2009 IECC as the statewide mandatory energy code.

In August 2011, the Mississippi Public Service Commission (PSC) opened an energy efficiency docket. SEEA assisted MDA with the comments they filed on the energy efficiency docket in September 2011. In November 2011, the PSC unanimously voted to conduct an economic impact statement and charged the Mississippi Public Utilities Staff with this responsibility. In March, the Public Utilities Staff contracted with GDS Associates, Inc. to conduct the EIS. The EIS is expected to be completed by summer 2012. Once the EIS is completed, SEEA will continue to serve as consultants, assist with public and written comments, and facilitate the progress of this docket.

South Carolina Energy Code Summit

The Homebuilders Association (HBA) of South Carolina is planning to host a South Carolina Energy Code Summit on September 20, 2012. The SEEA Policy Team is working closely with the President of the HBA of South Carolina to develop materials and serve as a partner for the event. Additionally, SEEA is working with the HBA of South Carolina on the trainings they plan to host before the 2009 IECC goes into effect in South Carolina on January 1, 2013.

Alabama Energy Code Compliance Initiative

With SEEA's recommendation, the U.S. Department of Energy selected Alabama as one of four pilot states to receive specialized energy code compliance and training resources. The materials being developed will help to ensure compliance with Alabama's first statewide mandatory building energy code that was unanimously adopted on March 12, 2012 and will go into effect on October 1, 2012. SEEA, BCAP and Southface are serving as consultants on this initiative. SEEA hosted the first meeting of this project on July 3, 2012.

Energy Code Adoption

SEEA continues to support and advocate for building energy codes across the region. Some of the highlights of SEEA's most recent activities include:

- **Virginia:** technical committee considering 2012 IECC adoption,
- **Arkansas:** tri-county area considering 2009 IECC adoption,
- **Tennessee:** localities, including Chattanooga and Nashville, considering 2012 IECC adoption,
- **Mississippi:** Building Code Council considering their first statewide mandatory building code, and
- **Florida:** Technical Advisory Committee before the Florida Building Commission considering alterations to the 2010 Florida Energy Efficiency and Conservation Code that went into effect on March 15, 2012, and is based on the 2009 IECC.

Energy Code Trainings

To support the implementation of energy codes once adopted, the SEEA Policy team completed an energy codes training gap analysis. Based on the findings of this outreach effort, SEEA will provide a series of energy code trainings in all of the SEEA states. The trainings are in the process of being coordinated and are tailored to the specific needs of each state.