

MEMORANDUM

TO: Paul Piazza

FROM: Paul A. Cillo & Harlan Lachman; Energy Efficiency Institute, Inc.

DATE: October 24, 2011

RE: Tyler Request for Pilot-Related Billing/Information System Enhancements

This memo is intended to help the Town of Windsor (Windsor) prepare for a conversation with Tyler Technologies (Tyler) about a work order for enhancements to its billing and information system required to implement the Windsor Efficiency PAYS[®] pilot.

EEI recommends as a starting point before any conversation with Tyler that Windsor determine optimum changes to its billing and information system. If Windsor can agree on what data and capabilities it needs and also what data and capabilities would be helpful for staff, it is more likely that the conversation will focus on what Tyler can realistically deliver for what Windsor can afford to pay.

The final version of the Windsor Efficiency PAYS[®] Program Design will detail the information Certified Contractors must supply to the Certification Agent. Each month, this information will be sent both electronically and in hard copy to Windsor. In other words, regardless of the data Windsor would like to integrate into its billing and information system, Windsor will have access to all program data updated monthly (or instantly with a call to the Certification Agent). A copy of a very preliminary draft of the type of data contractors will be required to send to the Certification Agent is attached for illustrative purposes (input is welcome).

However, when customers call with individual questions, Customer Service Staff will probably want to have access to a variety of data on their billing and information screens, including information in addition to the amount of the surcharge. EEI recommends that an enhanced billing system identify any customer occupying a location with a Windsor Efficiency PAYS[®] surcharge with a noticeable “red flag” (e.g., a flashing colored warning). The Customer Service staff should then be able to click on the red flag to go a page with all available program related information for that customer number and/or that account number.

Customer Service staff or Water Efficiency program managers will need to know:

- the bi-monthly payment amount(s) for measures installed at that location, at the time of the call (i.e., some measures such as CFLs are likely to have been paid off);
- the remaining payment term(s) (e.g., for CFLs, Core Measures, Landscaping, etc.). If possible, this amount should be automatically adjusted for missed payments or repairs;
- the current payoff amount to end charges; and
- payments billed, payment amounts made, and payments missed.

EEI thinks Customer Service staff or Water Efficiency program managers will also want to know – if possible:

- the date the Certification Agent reported the work completed and paid the Certified Contractor, and number of each measure installed at that location;
- frequency of use statements and the replaced and new equipment design specifications that were used to estimate savings;

- the estimated monthly savings for measures (individually and totals) in 2012 dollars;
- the percentage of savings to be realized on the water bill (as opposed to PG&E bills);
- program fees, the interest rate associated with the surcharge, and total interest to be paid;
- the name and phone number of the contractor(s) installing measures;
- any amounts associated with repairs of installed measures;
- missed payments from locations with surcharges and the percent of non-payment based on total billings for installed measures at those locations; and
- near the end of the program, the amount of bad debt charged to the Water Agency that was eventually collected from occupants at the location where measures were installed.

If the list is not self-explanatory, we can discuss the reasons why Windsor might want each measure linked to an account and the customer ID to have immediate access to this information.

Windsor should also give consideration to the reports that it wants to generate and whether it wants to generate those reports from the monthly data received from its Certification Agent or from its billing system. A benefit of two sources of information is that they can act as a check on data input. A problem with two sources is the headaches that will result when the report data do not agree. EEI recommends the ability to print the following reports:

- the automatic utility form for new customers at locations with Windsor Efficiency PAYS[®] surcharges. It would be great if generating the report was automated for successor customers with surcharges associated with the location's account number;
- the amount Windsor owes to the Capital provider each month regardless of collections. If possible, this amount should be automatically calculated but not include charges added in fewer than 45 days;
- the amount of surcharges Windsor collected each month and billing cycle;
- the amount of surcharges that Windsor did not collect each month, the percent of non-payment compared to the total surcharges billed to date, and a notice of late payments that should be categorized as bad debt after all collection efforts have failed;
- the number of measures installed, the estimated savings and likely duration of savings; and
- the amount paid to Certified Contractors and the Certification Agent for repairs, etc.

The billing system will need to combine the charges for all of a customer's purchases onto a single line on the customer's bill. Ideally, Windsor will probably want the system to allow staff to electronically input whatever data it wants and have the system calculate the billing cycle that starts 45 days after the date measures were installed and to not include pending surcharges when calculating the above reports.

It is essential to discuss with Tyler whether it will be possible to arrange its billing software to automatically limit billing for customers who purchase drought resistant native landscaping only to the 6 irrigation months when they are likely to realize savings. Even better would be for landscaping surcharges to have a higher percentage of charges (units) during the June, July and August bills when most of the savings will be realized and a lower percentage for the April, May, and September bills. Since landscaping retrofits are best done in other than the summer months, one possibility that Windsor might explore is whether it is possible to have customers, who buy their efficiency package during the summer and who want drought resistant native landscaping installed later in the fall, to stage the start of on-bill charges at the two different times when the measures are installed.

Within limits, we can dictate to Contractors, Certification Agent, and Capital Providers how the electronic information sent to Windsor is formatted. Clearly something like Microsoft Excel workbook would be easier than database software that Contractors and the Certification Agent would have to buy. Tyler should be required to work with Windsor and or EEI on its recommendation for data formatting.

It is important to note that the Sonoma County Water Agency will need savings and likely cost data in order to collect carbon credits. The Sonoma Regional Climate Protection Authority and Bevilaqua-Knight, Inc. will need data for evaluation. The Certification Agent will supply this data while it is under contract. Once installation of measures ceases and the contract with the Certification Agent is terminated and its final report is submitted, Windsor will supply final report data, billing and collection updates, and any repair data.

EEI is available to discuss this memo with you prior to our call to help you decide whether information we recommend should be moved from the “want” to the “need” category and/or other information and reports Windsor thinks might be useful. We can also discuss other ways to track information other than from within Windsor’s billing/information system.