

2026 Education & Outreach Committee Agenda



Providing consumers and the industry with relevant, reliable information on important energy topics, the Smart Energy Consumer Collaborative's Education & Outreach Agenda highlights the key projects that will improve consumer understanding and engagement in 2026.



Connecting with Today's Consumers

Following the themes of our *2026 State of the Consumer* report, this playbook-style resource will showcase successful utility examples to help better connect and engage with today's energy consumers. From impactful time-of-use rate migrations to energy efficiency and peak-use reduction outreach campaigns as well as interesting ways to meet customers where they are now, this playbook will provide utilities with clear direction on how to better communicate with consumers on today's energy topics and concerns.



The Time and The Place of Energy Campaign – Part 1

These direct-to-consumer resources will continue to expand our collection of time-of-use rate materials as well as bring focus on many of the fixed charges a consumer may see on their energy bill. In addition to how rates can differ based on the time of day, these materials will also inform consumers about transmission and distribution fees to fixed service and recovery fees. This campaign will help consumers to better understand all the efforts required to deliver safe and reliable power. These social-first campaign materials will be designed to help utilities better inform consumers today on these common energy questions and concerns.



The Time and The Place of Energy Campaign – Part 2

Building off our social media assets, we will continue our direct-to-consumer campaign effort with additional resources to help showcase the impact of transmission projects and how utilities are working on providing a more resilient and reliable grid. From infographics to short video animations, this campaign will help electricity providers better explain some of the challenges and opportunities from updating our grid, including how these efforts impact today's energy prices.



Smart Energy Innovation: Plugging Into Consumer Needs

SECC research shows many consumers are interested and willing to engage with their energy providers through new smart home technologies and AI opportunities. This paper will feature successful utility examples of how energy providers are using the latest technologies to help consumers better manage their energy costs through innovative demand response efforts, leveraging new tools for a more comfortable home, as well as how AI is helping to create a more informed energy consumer.

2026 Research Committee Agenda

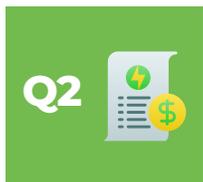


Providing the energy industry with the latest information in customer engagement and smart energy, the Smart Energy Consumer Collaborative's Research Agenda highlights the key topics that will be explored in 2026.



2026 State of the Consumer Report

Drawing on SECC's consumer research projects from 2025, including the Customer Insights Spotlight Series and Smart Energy Snapshot Surveys, this annual report presents the major themes on today's utility-customer relationship and discusses ways that the energy industry can increasingly move toward customer-centricity.



Exploring Energy Affordability: Barriers and Opportunities

This research aims to examine the dynamics of energy affordability in various socio-economic contexts, uncovering how energy prices affect households. The study will focus on understanding affordability metrics by defining and analyzing the metrics that best represent energy affordability across different demographics and geographic areas. We will also investigate the barriers faced by vulnerable populations in accessing affordable energy, including economic, infrastructural and policy-related constraints. Some key questions to be included: Do consumers know if their energy costs are going up, and if so, why? Do they feel like they have agency when it comes to energy bill management?



Analyzing Rate Choices: Implications for Consumer Behavior

This research project will investigate the various electricity rate structures available to consumers and how these choices affect consumer behavior, energy consumption and overall satisfaction. With the increasing complexity of electricity markets and the push for sustainable energy usage, understanding electricity rate options is crucial for both consumers and policymakers. We will analyze how different rate structures and enabling devices will impact consumer energy consumption patterns, with a focus on peak-demand reduction and energy conservation behaviors.



Pathways for Home Electrification: Exploring Consumer Adoption

This study will explore viable pathways for residential electrification, identify technological and economic barriers and propose strategies that facilitate a just and widespread transition. We will also explore if the loss of federal incentives has impacted consumers' decision-making process. As part of this project, we will assess the current technologies enabling household electrification (e.g., heat pumps, induction stoves, electric water heaters, home batteries and EV integration). Then, we will identify how behavioral, social and economic factors influence consumer adoption of these electrified systems.

Would you like to provide insight and experience on one of these projects?

SECC is always looking to connect with our membership, and our committees are a great way for everyone to get involved to guide these efforts. Open to all members on a voluntary basis, SECC Committees meet once a month for about an hour to discuss and review materials before they are released. Please contact our staff if you are interested in learning more about any of these projects or getting involved in our committees.