

VALLEY CLEAN ENERGY ALLIANCE

Staff Report - Item 6

TO: Community Advisory Committee

FROM: Mitch Sears, Interim General Manager
Jim Parks, Director of Customer Care and Marketing
Tessa Tobar, Senior Intern

SUBJECT: Program Update

DATE: December 5, 2019

RECOMMENDATION

Information item. No action requested.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

Staff, in conjunction with the Rates and Services Task group, are in the process of developing a plan to guide VCE's local programs over the next several years. The purpose of this staff report is to provide the CAC with an update on program development progress and outline several early action opportunities. The 5-year program plan will outline GHG reducing, customer-facing, electrification programs.

Early Action Opportunities

Electric Transportation Program. Last month staff gave a presentation to the CAC on the development of a new electric transportation program for Valley Clean Energy. The starting point of the program is to procure and install a software package from ChooseEV. The software provides information on electric vehicles, costs, charging station locations, available incentives, FAQs and other resources to help customers make a purchase decision. Staff continues to work with the Rates and Services Task Group to get the software installed and to map out ideas to drive traffic to the website.

The software package is within the current fiscal year budget for programs.

Building Electrification - Induction Cooktop Demonstrations. Staff are researching programs from other CCA's related to the demonstration of modern electric appliances. One which shows low-cost early opportunity is the demonstration of induction cook tops. Sonoma Clean Power has experienced great success since launching their Induction Cooktop Check Out Program in January of 2018. Low cost, minimal staff time, and high customer satisfaction has resulted in 44% of program participants switching to induction cooking. VCE is looking to emulate SCP's program. VCE Induction cook top demonstrations at local events such as Farmer's Markets will help educate and incentivize VCE customers to go all-electric as one of the early initiatives in the 5 year program plan.

Additional Program Opportunities

In 2018, VCE achieved 48% renewable and 85% carbon free energy. The carbon free energy portion of VCE's power portfolio came from a combination of short-term renewable contracts and large hydro resources in the Pacific Northwest. VCE recently received notice from our hydro provider that they will not be able to fully meet their 2019 commitments to VCE. This means we are unlikely to meet our 2019 carbon reduction objectives.

Rather than attempting to locate new carbon free resources on short notice (very unlikely and cost prohibitive), or accepting an undesirable bundled power mix, VCE is exploring options to replace the 2019 carbon savings that would have otherwise resulted if the full amount of contracted large hydro had been delivered. If we can develop programs that provide carbon benefits that approximate the procurement of hydro resources, e.g., electrification initiatives and/or PV procurement, it could be a win-win for VCE and the community – providing local benefits while achieving similar GHG savings over the lifetime of the program and/or local renewable generation project. Staff is currently investigating options and will be seeking input from the CAC.