

# Commercial and Industrial Working Group (CIWG) for the Mass Save Programs: Year 1 (2022-23) Report

## Executive Summary

This report provides a high-level summary on the first year of the Commercial and Industrial Working Group (CIWG). The mission of the group is collaboration among the Program Administrators (PAs), the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) and Commercial and Industrial stakeholders (C&I) towards meeting the energy savings and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction goals of the Mass Save C&I programs.

The group has met 5 times between Aug 2022 and June 2023 to identify opportunities and recommendations for increased participation and savings from the Mass Save C&I program offerings. These opportunities and recommendations are summarized as follows:

- Improve communication between customers, vendors and the PAs before, during and after program engagement.
- Improve the capability of vendors who play a key role in identifying and implementing efficiency projects through Mass Save.
- Streamline and clarify the custom pathway for C&I projects. Custom projects use site-specific energy analysis to address unique, non-prescriptive measures.
  - Conduct a process evaluation of the MA C&I custom measure process.
  - Collect input from customers and vendors to inform a customer-oriented process map for undertaking C&I custom projects.
- Grow the throughput of HVAC measures as these projects have high potential for GHG emissions reductions. Solutions to shorten the implementation timeline and expand prescriptive HVAC measures are being explored.
- Create the roadmaps and technical support needed to guide customers through the key steps to decarbonization and electrification that can include significant overhauls in HVAC and industrial systems to transition away from fossil fuel systems.
- Develop case studies and tours of successful Mass Save projects to educate and spread awareness among customers about the project development process and the performance of non-lighting energy efficiency projects.
- Increase consistency across the Program Administrators on program offerings to make it easier for customers with facilities in multiple PA territories to navigate the program more easily.

Besides driving the actions being undertaken in the current plan period, the topics above will inform the workshops that provide input for the 2025-2027 Energy Efficiency plan.

## Background

The Commercial & Industrial Working Group was brought together in response to stakeholder requests and is part of the 2022-24 Energy Efficiency Plan term sheet. The group is co-led by the PAs and DOER. Members of the group were invited from various Massachusetts C&I customer segments including healthcare, public administration, educational services, and the manufacturing sector.

The group's mission, as laid out in the charter, is to increase engagement and communication between stakeholders and the Program Administrators with the overall goal of increasing participation and savings in the C&I program.

The group's primary objectives are to increase customer understanding of the C&I offerings and to enable collaboration between the PAs, DOER and the working group on program improvements. Initial CIWG meetings included presentations by the PAs on the Mass Save C&I offerings, touching on the considerations underlying their design such as cost-effectiveness and incentives. The group's subsequent work has focused on identifying opportunities and recommendations to improve the program.

## Process

The CIWG has taken the following steps to shape its efforts -

- Established a Working Group Charter which lays out the mission, goal and objectives of the group.
- Developed a customer survey and used the results to inform areas of focus.
- Brainstormed opportunities and recommendations to improve Mass Save C&I programs.
- Detailed PA recommendations on priority topics.

Much of the CIWG's efforts takes place during the quarterly meetings. The meeting process has evolved since the group's inception to include:

- Pre-meeting planning calls, open to interested working group members, to develop meeting materials and agendas
- Materials distributed in advance of meetings with the expectation that participants will be familiar with the material
- Use of round-robin brainstorming to ensure all participants have an equal opportunity to provide input
- Where needed, ranked-voting to identify group priorities
- Solicitation of feedback from members at the conclusion of each meeting on what went well and what could be improved in the working group process for future meetings.
- Stakeholder hours hosted in tandem with each quarterly CIWG meeting to gather broad customer feedback and questions. These sessions are open to the public and have been attended by stakeholders seeking more information about the Mass Save programs.

## Survey

The survey of commercial and industrial utility customers paying an energy efficiency surcharge on their energy bills was conducted in early October of 2022. Survey questions were developed by the working group members. The PAs used their customer outreach platform to distribute the surveys to utility customers with valid email addresses and compiled the results for the CIWG.

Of the almost 10,000 surveys distributed, there were 680 survey respondents of which more than 70% were familiar with the Mass Save programs. Of the customers familiar with the programs over 75% reported being very or somewhat satisfied with the Mass Save program. At the same time, over half of the respondents provided written comments identifying opportunities for program improvements.

The topics most prevalent in the survey responses are as follows:

- Communication
- PA and vendor follow-up
- Contractor oversight
- Program complexity

Survey results were shared with the C&I Working Group via email then discussed among working group membership at the October 2022 meeting. Survey results have informed C&I Working Group topics for discussion, contributed to the recommendations developed by the CIWG, and provided insight about the challenges customers face when engaging with Mass Save programs.

## Stakeholder Hour

There have been four virtual Stakeholder Hours since August 2022<sup>1</sup>. These sessions solicited participation via open invitations to commercial and industrial customers and vendors via social media. Examples of social media posts advertising stakeholder hours are shown in Figures 1 and 2 below.



Figure 1 March 2023 Stakeholder Hour Outreach

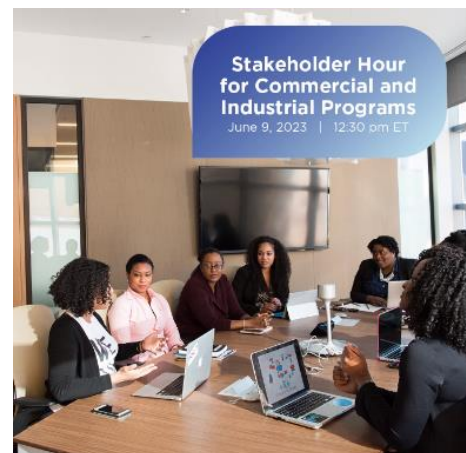


Figure 2 June 2023 Stakeholder Hour Outreach

<sup>1</sup> Stakeholder hours were held October 2022, December 2022, March 2023 and June 2023.

Stakeholders were invited to ask questions or provide feedback to Program Administrators when registering for session participation. Each stakeholder question provided was reviewed and answered by the Program Administrators in preparation for the session. The questions were organized by general themes and compiled in Power Point to share with the stakeholder hour attendees. Following each response provided, there was opportunity for the participants to ask follow-up questions.

At the outset of each stakeholder hour, held on Zoom, guidance for participation was followed by a brief explanation of who the Program Administrators are and what the Mass Save program entails. An example of the Program Administrator slide is shown in Figures 3 below.



*Figure 3 Information About the Program Administrators*

The themes of the first and third sessions were open to any questions about the Mass Save program, while the second session focused on contractors working with the Mass Save program. The most recent stakeholder hour devoted a half hour to answering general questions on the Mass Save C&I program, while the latter half hour focused on the ConnectedSolutions and Active Demand Response offerings.

Most questions addressed in these sessions involved sharing information about how to participate in the Mass Save program (both as a vendor and as a customer) or understanding what equipment is eligible for Mass Save program participation. Additional questions focused on how to participate in the three-year planning process and future changes to the Mass Save program offerings.

In the four sessions over the past year, the stakeholder hours have had a total of 229 registrants, 142 participants, and answered over 75 questions from commercial and industrial customers. The questions and associated responses will be shared on the DOER website.

### Outcomes

The CIWG continues to identify opportunities to enhance PA offerings, develop recommended actions and work with the PAs to support implementation of the agreed upon changes. The following table summarizes the work to date with a more detailed description below.

Areas of Opportunity	High Level Recommendations	CIWG Driven Actions
Custom Project Processes	Simplify and clarify the process	Draft process outline with PA timelines, focus groups, evaluation process study
Communications	Clarify and improve pathways for communications with customers	Website contact review and improvements
Electrification	Develop electrification roadmaps and enhance support for long-term projects	Enhanced “Electrification and Decarbonization” Mass Save website in development
HVAC Measures	Increase prescriptive offerings, provide standard measure lists and requirements by system type, and create a fast-track process for qualified customers	Reviewing potential to increase prescriptive offerings and consider a trial approach to fast-track the implementation of custom HVAC projects.
Process Measures	Address barriers associated with shut-downs and increase decarbonization and electrification awareness	
Vendor Capability	Incentivize vendors for comprehensiveness, increase vendor knowledge and capacity, require assessments to cover all end uses, improve familiarity with custom measures and ensure TAs are knowledgeable about customer end uses.	
Program Consistency	Establish consistent offerings	
Education	Develop case studies, videos and hold tours for out-of-the-box projects and projects that could be widely replicated.	Identify unique and challenging projects and develop case studies that describe the process. Ensure customers are directed to use case studies as a point of reference for projects (via web, sales and vendor contacts)).

Opportunities have emerged through facilitated discussions during working group meetings and from the synthesis of customer survey feedback. The following overarching areas of opportunity and recommendations are currently under consideration and active advancement by the CIWG and PAs:

1. *Improve the process for custom, non-lighting projects.* Recommendations include clarifying the process and presenting it from the customer perspective, streamlining and simplifying the process, shortening turn-around times, and improving communication and transparency for active projects.
2. *Improve communications.* Recommendations include providing a clear pathway for customers to get questions answered, establishing a state-wide customer service center with the ability to connect customers with the right personnel (PA, vendor, etc.), creating a concierge service for participants, and clarifying points of contact for complex customers addressing multiple sites with different owners (such as DCAMM).
3. *Enhance customer support for electrification.* Recommendations include establishing a single PA point of contact to support customers in long-term master planning and implementation over time, establish teams that will work with customers over years to advance their transitions to electric building infrastructure, provide a guide for calculating savings (particularly the order of calculation for efficiency and electrification measures), address cost barriers that are preventing contractors from pursuing electrification and carbon reductions with customers.
4. *Increase access to, and uptake of, HVAC measures.* Recommendations include developing more prescriptive HVAC measures for common system upgrades, reduce the variability and uncertainty in the development of custom measures by providing typical measure lists and requirements for system-level improvements to inform project scopes, and develop a fast-track for qualified customers and vendors to enable simultaneous development of program required documentation and project implementation with true-up at completion.
5. *Increase access to and uptake of industrial process measures.* Recommendations include addressing barriers associated with process shutdowns and increasing customer awareness of the range of process measures.
6. *Enhance vendor capability and capacity to address multiple end-uses<sup>2</sup>, provide deep savings and develop custom projects.* Recommendations include providing vendors with financial incentives that reward development of more comprehensive projects, increasing vendor awareness of the breadth of potential solutions including newer technologies, requiring energy assessments to cover all end uses in a facility, improving vendor capacity to undertake custom projects where needed, ensuring Technical Assistance provider skills match site needs.
7. *Improve consistency of offerings and approaches across PAs.* Recommendations include increasing the consistency of approved TA vendors between PAs and improving the consistency of project delivery across PAs (particularly for dual fuel projects and for customers whose facilities are in multiple PA territories).
8. *Increase resources available to customers that reflect their opportunities and needs.* Recommendations include educate customers and vendors on the custom process, provide case studies that include clear descriptions of Mass Save program processes, hold tours and produce videos to demonstrate successful outside-the-box efficiency and decarbonization projects and

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<sup>2</sup> End-uses refer to the different types of systems that use buildings such as HVAC, lighting, refrigeration, industrial process, etc.

increase awareness of new technologies and increase familiarity with the process for developing and implementing projects.

Based on this work, the CIWG and PAs are undertaking a variety of actions to improve offerings and increase customer engagement in non-lighting measures. These include:

1. Continued work to develop a clear, customer oriented custom project process flow document. An initial document was prepared by the Program Administrators that captures the steps, contacts, and timelines for a project going through this pathway.
2. Scoping customer focus group(s) to enhance understanding of the custom project process from a customer perspective.
3. Supporting a process evaluation of the C&I Custom Project Process in progress and slated for completion early 2024.
4. Reviewing and improving website contact links.
5. Continuing work to increase prescriptive HVAC offerings, Eversource trial of fast-track process.
6. Identifying projects for case study development
7. Improving the electrification and decarbonization resources available on the Mass Save website planned update mid-August 2023.
8. The "Trade Partners" webpages has been updated for easier access to resources like training opportunities, trade organizations, etc. (<https://www.masssave.com/en/trade-partners>)

The CIWG and PAs track the opportunities, recommendations and actions in a spreadsheet and continue to refine and expand input to the programs with a focus on increasing participation and adoption of complex measures.

## Conclusion

The CIWG will continue quarterly meetings and stakeholder hours for the remainder of the coming 2022-24 plan term. The group will also continue to provide recommendations for Mass Save program improvements and track Program Administrator progress on corresponding enhancements to their offerings and delivery.