

Q4 CNGC CAG Meeting

10/14/2026

Safety Moment – led by Caleb Reimer – 00:00

- Caleb welcomed attendees and reviewed the meeting agenda.
- Safety discussion focused on safe driving during shorter daylight hours and seasonal weather changes.
- Key reminders included proper use of high and low beams, reducing speed in poor conditions, maintaining clean windows, taking breaks on longer drives, and increasing following distance during adverse weather.

Review of Prior Quarter Action Items – 00:02

Action Items: None

Decisions Made: None

Noted Discussion:

- All prior action items were reported as completed.
- The low-income payment report was distributed and filed.
- Cascade is nearing completion of its new four-year EM&V contract with Qualus.
- Work on the 2027 Conservation Potential Assessment (CPA) has begun and is progressing as planned.

Commercial & Industrial Program Update – led by Brian Farnsworth – 00:10

Action Items: None

Decisions Made: None

Noted Discussion:

- Through Q3 2026, the program achieved approximately 272,000 therms and issued about \$930,000 in incentives across 164 natural gas savings measures.
- The program exceeded its annual goal, reaching approximately 105% of target through Q3 and projecting roughly 120% achievement by year-end.
- Custom measures represented the largest share of savings, including custom insulation, heat recovery, and greenhouse-related projects.
- Other significant measure categories included boilers, water heaters, and ozone laundry projects.

- Marketing efforts included newspaper advertising, case studies, media outreach, conference participation, email campaigns, and planned billboard installations in the Kitsap Peninsula region.
- Active pipeline projects include Longview School District retro-commissioning, multiple Safeway refrigeration projects, and additional greenhouse heat curtain installations.
- Discussion included outlook for 2027, with several large projects already under development and one potential project estimated at approximately 175,000 therms.

Residential Program Update – led by Jesse LeGault – 00:53

Action Items: None

Decisions Made: None

Noted Discussion:

- Through Q3 2026, residential programs achieved approximately 793,000 therms saved, significantly exceeding annual goals.
- Incentive payments reached approximately \$16 million through September.
- Measure count increased 13% year-over-year, while incentive spending increased 41% compared to the same period in 2025.
- Attic insulation continued to be the primary savings driver, generating more than 500,000 therms of savings.
- Additional leading measures included furnaces and floor insulation.
- Cascade reported exceeding 120% of its planned residential budget while maintaining strong cost-effectiveness.
- Discussion addressed whether savings growth was driven by increased incentive levels. Cascade noted that incentives are generally standardized, although additional bonuses remain available for comprehensive whole-home weatherization projects.
- Recent prequalification changes for attic insulation eligibility continue to be monitored for potential impacts on participation and savings.

Low-Income Weatherization Program Update – led by Noemi Ortiz – 01:23

Action Items: None

Decisions Made: None

Noted Discussion:

- During Q3, 11 projects were completed, installing 48 measures with approximately \$315,000 paid.
- Average project cost was approximately \$28,000, higher than historical averages due to larger and more comprehensive projects.
- Average measures installed per project exceeded four.
- Project activity is expected to slow during colder months because of weather-related installation challenges.
- Agency performance varied significantly, with some agencies continuing strong participation while others remain behind forecasted completion levels.
- Discussion focused on contractor availability and equipment costs as key drivers of project cost variation across agencies.
- Additional outreach and barrier assessments will be conducted with lower-performing agencies.
- The third-party pilot weatherization program completed three projects during the quarter with 17 measures installed.
- New contractor onboarding efforts are underway to expand service into western Washington and Oregon.
- Customer recruitment processes have expanded to include LIHEAP-verified customers and fixed-income households while maintaining income verification requirements.
- Customers found eligible for weatherization are referred to other available assistance programs when appropriate.

Home Energy Reports (HER) Behavioral Pilot Update – led by Caleb Reimer and Brillion
– 02:29

Action Items: None

Decisions Made: None

Noted Discussion:

- Brillion provided an update on the second phase of Cascade's Home Energy Reports pilot program.
- The pilot expanded from approximately 10,000 customers in Phase 1 to nearly 35,000 customers in Phase 2.
- The sixth and final customer report is scheduled for delivery in early November.
- More than 250,000 customer reports will have been distributed by program completion.
- Open rates currently average approximately 35–40%, with click-through rates remaining above 10%.
- Program design shifted toward higher-consumption customers based on recommendations from Phase 1 evaluation findings.
- Preliminary indicators suggest positive engagement and potential energy reductions, although no official savings results are available until third-party evaluation is completed.
- Brillion noted that lower-consumption customers may once again be demonstrating stronger performance than high-consumption households.
- Stakeholders discussed broader policy questions concerning persistence of behavioral savings, future treatment of HER savings in conservation planning, and possible use of deemed savings methodologies.
- Formal third-party evaluation is expected during Q1 2027.
- Qualus indicated the primary evaluation method will be a billing-based regression analysis, while additional qualitative research may be considered if supporting data becomes available.
- Discussion focused on whether future HER funding should come from conservation, pilot, or outreach budgets and how savings should be treated within future CPA filings.

Conservation Potential Assessment & EM&V Updates – led by Jodie Albert – 03:18

Action Items: None

Decisions Made: None

Noted Discussion:

- Contracting for the 2027 CPA has been completed and analysis is underway.
- Current work focuses on alternative scenario modeling and integration with the Integrated Resource Plan.
- Additional emphasis is being placed on equity and low-income customer analysis within the upcoming CPA.
- ICF is expected to provide a progress presentation during the next advisory group meeting.
- The CPA draft is planned for April 2027 with final filing in May.
- Planned evaluations include commercial, residential, process, residential envelope, and low-income weatherization studies, along with budget for ad hoc analyses.

Low-Income Weatherization EM&V Results – presented by Qualus – 03:28

Action Items: None

Decisions Made: None

Noted Discussion:

- Qualus presented results from the low-income weatherization evaluation covering 2017–2025 participation.
- Approximately 1,900 measures were evaluated across Washington and Oregon.
- Realization rates were approximately 90% overall, 84% in Oregon, and 90% in Washington.
- Lower realization rates were primarily driven by furnace and duct-sealing measures due to calculation assumptions and limited baseline data availability.
- Attic insulation and air infiltration measures produced realization rates above 120%.
- Demographic analysis indicated participating households generally had lower income levels, lower formal education attainment, and higher proportions of Hispanic and Spanish-speaking residents.
- Findings suggest the program is effectively reaching intended low-income populations.
- Recommendations included collecting additional installation and testing data to improve future evaluation accuracy.

- Qualus reviewed the upcoming 2027–2030 evaluation cycle and confirmed continued collaboration with Cascade.

Wrap-Up & Next Meeting – led by Caleb Reimer – 04:01

Action Items: None

Decisions Made: None

Noted Discussion:

- This meeting concluded the 2026 Conservation Advisory Group meeting schedule.
- Future 2027 meeting invitations will be distributed following a schedule similar to prior years.
- Participants were encouraged to share feedback, recommendations, and potential new advisory group members.
- Caleb thanked attendees for their participation and continued support of Cascade’s conservation programs.