



NARUC

National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners

TASK FORCE ON EVOLVING GAS INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) will provide a forum for the development of state-led roadmaps to enhance natural gas distribution infrastructure planning.

HOW COULD ROADMAPS BENEFIT PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSIONS AND ENERGY CUSTOMERS?

The energy system is changing. As policymakers and customers in many states push for mid-century energy system decarbonization, state utility regulators are charged with the difficult task of ensuring the safety, affordability, and reliability of utility-owned energy infrastructure at all times. New fuels and technologies such as hydrogen, renewable natural gas, and electrification are being developed and tested in numerous jurisdictions, with differing opinions among policymakers, utilities, and stakeholders about the extent to which these approaches can or should be broadly deployed.

Advice and experience from state peers and federal experts can assist regulators in making well-informed decisions in the public interest. Utility regulators are in urgent need of impartial, accurate information on the costs, benefits, and trajectories of various customer-facing technologies and strategies to facilitate meaningful stakeholder engagement, all while minimizing cost burdens on customers.

To meet this need, NARUC is convening a Task Force on Evolving Gas Infrastructure Planning to connect utility regulators with expertise, resources, and platforms to share information and develop their own refined visions for infrastructure planning processes that will help in navigating the shifting state and federal policy landscape over the coming decades.



WHY ARE ENHANCEMENTS TO INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING NEEDED?

The rapid pace of technological and policy changes in the natural gas sector presents complicated questions for state utility commissions. Presented with proposals for routine safety-related infrastructure upgrades, expansions to serve new customers, and more complex, longer-term system changes, utility regulators must make decisions today that will have practical effects on customer bills, infrastructure investments, and the likelihood of achieving various policy goals.

WHAT IS THE TASK FORCE'S OBJECTIVE?

The Task Force will not develop or promote a solution to these complex challenges; it will facilitate the development of state planning roadmaps that highlight questions and information needs that commissions anticipate will lead to better informed decision making in their states.

WHO IS SUPPORTING THIS EFFORT?

NARUC Center for Partnerships and Innovation staff will support the Task Force. The DOE Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management, Office of Policy, and Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy are supporting this effort with dedicated funding and connections to experts.

TASK FORCE OVERVIEW AND TIMELINE

IN BRIEF:

- The Task Force will convene four in-person and virtual workshops over two years, starting in November 2023
- Space and travel assistance is available for commissioners from approximately 10 to 15 states
- Participants will be guided through an educational, creative, and collaborative process to develop and share strategies for decision making
- Participants will receive input from experts at DOE, National Labs, and invited stakeholders to fill data gaps
- Participants will contribute to roadmaps to enhance their state's planning processes at the initiative's conclusion
- The series will be professionally facilitated and supported by technical experts
- Opportunities for input from stakeholders and regulated entities will be provided

EXPECTED TIMELINE:

- **July 2023:** NARUC President Michael Caron announces the Task Force
- **August 2023:** Interested commissioners submit expressions of interest to NARUC
- **September – October 2023:** Task Force support staff hold introductory virtual meetings with participants
- **November 2023:** Task Force members convene for an in-person workshop at the NARUC Annual Meeting
- **January – July 2024:** Task Force members participate in virtual, monthly expert learning and discussion meetings
- **Fall 2024 & Early 2025:** Task Force members convene for two in-person workshops, focused on developing roadmaps and resources
- **Spring 2025:** Task Force members participate in one virtual workshop to finalize materials
- **July 2025:** Task Force members release roadmap resources at the NARUC Summer Policy Summit

For more information or to submit an expression of interest, contact:

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