



**Broadband Workshop
The Madren Conference Center at
Clemson University
March 6-8, 2024**

Preliminary Agenda

Proposal and Overview

The focus of the Workshop is on the issues that are specific to utilities deploying broadband infrastructure, and the Workshop would be held in conjunction with the UTC Region 3 meeting in Greenville, SC, where there are many utilities deploying broadband infrastructure in the area and many more utilities that are considering deploying broadband infrastructure. The Workshop would provide information about how utilities can use broadband to support their own operations and/or for utilities to provide commercial services themselves or to lease to third party providers. In this way, the Workshop would fill a gap that exists in the market for broadband conferences, and it would meet UTC members' needs for information specifically about utility broadband. It would also differentiate this event from other broadband conferences that only deal with broadband in general.

The first day would describe the legal/regulatory opportunities/challenges and the state/federal funding opportunities for utility broadband. It would also feature utilities who have successfully applied for broadband funding (including NTIA MMBI and other broadband programs), which would provide other utilities with lessons learned. After lunch, there would be a session that would provide the findings from a UTC report for C-level executives on the benefits of deploying broadband infrastructure for utilities. This would be followed by a session featuring utility broadband use cases; a session on the future of utility broadband generally; and a session on the issues associated with operating and maintaining a utility broadband network.

The second day would start off with an opening keynote followed by a deeper dive into utility broadband business models. This would be followed by a session on the use of broadband for grid modernization. The remainder of the program would address the technical issues for utility broadband, including the technology selection options for transport/in-home access, and utility broadband deployment issues, including pole attachments and cyber/physical security considerations.



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Wednesday, March 6th

3:00 – 6:00 PM Networking Reception in Exhibit Hall

Thursday, March 7, 2024

8:00 – 8:30 AM Welcome and Opening Remarks

**Speaker: Lee Ayers, Mid-Carolina Electric Cooperative and Chair of the Utilities
Broadband Committee**

8:30 – 9:30 AM Legal/Regulatory Issues for Utility Broadband

This session will set the stage for our first half-day of the Workshop, which will focus on the regulatory and policy issues for broadband deployment and services, particularly as they affect utilities. What are the current legal/regulatory issues facing utility broadband, including pole attachments and permitting, and what are the surrounding policy issues involving broadband access, including broadband speeds and digital discrimination? This panel session will feature policymakers, lawyers and industry representatives discussing the ways in which they can work together to promote broadband deployment.

Moderator: Brett Kilbourne, Stevens & Lee, Of Counsel on behalf of UTC

Speakers:

- **Brett Heather Freedson, Member, Lerman Senter**
- **Sean Stokes, Partner, Keller & Heckman**
- **Brianna Woodsby, Senior Director of International Trade, Compliance, and Governance, AFL**
- **Adam Copeland, Deputy Bureau Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau at Federal Communications Commission**

9:30 – 10:00 AM Break

10:00 – 11:00 AM State and Federal Funding Opportunities and Challenges

This session will provide an overview of the various different state and federal funding opportunities for broadband infrastructure deployment. Utilities can position themselves for these opportunities by engaging early with policymakers and with the communities they serve. This session will also explore other funding opportunities for electric infrastructure reliability and security, which may also promote broadband deployment. It will feature representatives from state broadband offices and from federal agencies discussing the various programs and



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their requirements.

Moderator: Brett Kilbourne, Stevens & Lee, Of Counsel on behalf of UTC

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM Strategies and Success Stories for Accessing Broadband Funding

This session will describe the ways that utilities have been able to access various broadband funding programs. It will feature utilities that were awarded funding and look ahead to upcoming broadband funding programs for utilities, including the \$42.45 billion Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) program, the \$1 billion ReConnect Program, and the \$10 billion Capital Projects Fund, as well as the various state broadband funding programs. It will also feature private equity options for utilities to provide supplemental funding. The session will feature trusted experts who have worked with utilities and successfully managed the process. This interactive discussion will provide you with insights on the various different options and the requirements that go along with each program. It will also describe how utilities are uniquely positioned and may have priority preferences for access to funding from these programs.

Moderator: Brett Kilbourne, Stevens & Lee, Of Counsel on behalf of UTC

Speakers:

- **Bill Lowry, Managing Director – Exelon Strategy**
- **Brooke Coleman, Broadband Account Manager, Nokia**
- **Aaron Watanabe, Business Development Account Executive, Broadband, LightRiver**

12:00 – 1:00 PM Lunch

1:00 – 2:00 PM Broadband for C-Level Utility Executives

UTC is developing a report that identifies the benefits for utilities from deploying broadband fiber networks. This session will provide the results of the report and explain for utility executives how fiber can support industry requirements for reliability, security and latency and how it can enable wireless networks and provide creative alternatives for utilities to choose from among their wireless communications technology options. It will also explain how fiber can provide ancillary benefits for economic development, better health care, improved educational opportunities and enhanced quality of life for people living in the communities that utilities serve.

2:00 – 3:00 PM Utility Broadband Use Cases

An increasing number of utilities, including investor-owned utilities (IOUs), electric cooperatives, and public power utilities, are deploying broadband infrastructure and/or providing broadband services. This session will include presentations from different utilities about their broadband deployments, and highlight the challenges and opportunities, as well as the lessons learned. This session will also explore how different types of utilities are developing



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different approaches to deploying broadband, and it will explain their decisions and success factors for their approaches. Then, it will conclude by looking ahead to the future for utility broadband from each of the utility's different perspectives. Find out how your utility can deploy broadband infrastructure by learning from the experience of other utilities during this informative session.

Speakers:

- **Bob Hance, General Manager, Midwest Energy & Communications**
- **George Stegall, VP Corporate Development, Point Broadband**

3:00 – 3:30 PM Break

3:30 – 4:30 PM Operating and Maintaining a Utility Broadband Network

Beyond deployment, utilities need to maintain their broadband networks, which also entails unique issues, including critical infrastructure security concerns. Access to critical infrastructure must be carefully controlled, and utilities follow NERC CIP and other requirements concerning access to critical assets by third parties. In addition to these security concerns, there are also engineering and safety requirements that must be considered, particularly during emergency restoration, when electric services and broadband services may be affected. Even in non-emergencies, utilities face other maintenance issues, including rodents and gunshots that may damage broadband infrastructure. This session will examine these maintenance issues for utilities, both for those who have already deployed broadband infrastructure and those considering doing so.

Speaker:

- **Mitch Simcoe, Director of Solution Marketing, Ciena**

4:30 – 5:30 pm Outlook for the Future of Utility Broadband

This session will take a look ahead at the future for utility broadband, including the types of utility applications driving additional bandwidth demands as well as new technologies that can help meet those demands. It will also examine the business drivers and industry trends that are also driving utility broadband, including the need to monitor and control distributed energy resources (DER) and the ability to secure utility infrastructure against cyber and physical security threats from increasingly sophisticated attacks. This session will give you the answers you need to navigate the technical and economic challenges that face utility broadband going forward.

Speaker:

- **Mark Boxer, Applications Engineering Manager, OFS**

5:30 – 7:30 pm Networking Reception

UTC welcomes you to network with your utility peers, technology partners, and business



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consultants during this sponsored reception. Don't miss this opportunity to enjoy the unique utility broadband networking experience that UTC provides.

Friday, March 8, 2024

7:00 – 8:00 AM Breakfast

8:00 – 8:30 AM Keynote Speaker: Jonathan Chambers, Conexon

8:30 – 9:30 AM Business Models for Utility Broadband

This session will take a deeper dive into the different business models that utilities are currently implementing, and it will explore new business models that utilities may want to pursue in the future. Some utilities are partnering with service providers to offer broadband services. Others are leasing fiber optic capacity on a wholesale basis. Some are interconnecting with other utilities to form regional networks. Still others are offering broadband services either through a separate subsidiary or directly to their customers. Looking forward, there are new business models with transactions involving infrastructure and shared services. This session will provide you with all the different options and the tradeoffs of each, so you can find the right one for your utility.

Speakers:

- **Carl Meyerhoefer, SVP, Business Development, Conexon**
- **Josh Leonard, Broadband Business Lead Networks, Integration & Automation / Transmission & Distribution, Burns & McDonnell**

9:30 – 10:00 AM Break

10:00 – 11:00 AM Utility Broadband and Grid Modernization

What makes utility broadband unique is that it is as much or more about grid modernization as it is about providing broadband Internet access and other commercial communications services. Yet, the critical utility applications enabled by broadband are often overlooked. This session will describe how utilities are using broadband for advanced digital monitoring systems (ADMS) and distributed energy resource systems (DERS) management. These applications are increasingly important to ensure sufficient supply of power is available during critical events when demand is high.

Speakers:

- **Lee Ayers, VP of Engineering, Mid-Carolina Electric Cooperative and Chair of the Utilities Broadband Committee**
- **Nwabueze (“Eze”) Phil-Ebosie, Director of Engineering, Commonwealth Edison Company**



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11:00 AM – 12:00 PM Technology Selection for Utility Broadband

Broadband can mean different things for different reasons. There are broadband technologies for transport and there are broadband technologies for in-home applications. There are even broadband technologies for unique use cases, including precision agriculture and advertising billboards, just to name a few examples. Each is important in their own way but dramatically different from each other. This session will describe the different technologies for transport, in-home and other use cases and explain how different technologies may complement or potentially conflict with each other.

Speaker:

- **Adam Harrison Applications Engineering Manager -- Energy Market, AFL**

12:00 – 1:00 PM Engineering and Deployment Issues for Utility Broadband Infrastructure

As utilities deploy broadband infrastructure, they must consider and implement engineering practices and encounter practical obstacles. This session will describe how utilities are deploying broadband infrastructure as a practical matter, including some of the unique issues involved with deploying broadband in the electric space on a pole or in underground conduit. These deployments are in inherently dangerous environments, and they raise important safety, reliability and security issues. Hear from experts in deploying utility broadband infrastructure and learn how to successfully deploy broadband at your utility.

Speakers:

- **Ron Bilodeau, Sr. Solutions Consultant, Osmose**
- **Ron Beck, Business Development Strategist, Burns & McDonnell**
- **John Werner, Senior Director Business Development, NWS**

1:00 – 1:15 Closing Remarks and Look Ahead

This session will provide the key takeaways from the Utility Broadband Workshop.

Speakers:

**Brett Kilbourne, Stevens & Lee, Of Counsel on behalf of UTC
Lee Ayers, VP of Engineering, Mid-Carolina Electric Cooperative and
Chair of the Utilities Broadband Committee**