

**Equity Advisory Group –  
Equity Lens Session**

Meeting Date: June 22, 2022  
 Time: 4:30pm – 6:00pm  
 Location: Zoom Meeting

**Attendees:**

<b>Facilitator:</b>	<b>EAG Members:</b>
Amber Lenhart	Dave Tietz
<b>Avista:</b>	Connie Kliewer
Tamara Bradley	Jupiter McGee
Renee Coelho	DeAnna Knope
Ana Matthews	KJ January
	<b>Guests:</b>
	Molly Brewer – Washington Commission Staff
	Alex Tellez – Washington Commission Staff

**Agenda**

- |      |   |                |
|------|---|----------------|
| I.   | Welcome & Introductions                               | Amber Lenhart  |
|      | – Overview of Meeting: Rules and Intent               | Amber Lenhart  |
| II.  | EAG Member Spotlight                                  | Amber Lenhart  |
| III. | Announcement of upcoming Public Participation Meeting | Tamara Bradley |
| IV.  | Power Outage Preparedness                             | Ana Matthews   |
| V.   | Your Support Team and Next Meeting                    | Amber Lenhart  |

**Facilitator**

**Meeting Notes**

**Agenda Item 1**

Introductions and Meeting Rules and Intent

**Agenda Item 2**

EAG Member Spotlight

**Agenda Item 3**

Tamara announcement – CEIP was approved by WUTC  
 Member indicated a high five for passing of the plan  
 Energy availability- reduction of outages and amount of time customer is out – example of the Customer Benefit Indicators prioritized. Announced Public Participation Plan

Meeting – approval process – renewable targets – actions that will start the implementation phase. Contact information for the meeting will be in the chat.

#### Agenda Item 4

Power Outage Preparedness Survey review – how do we respond and pay special attention to the vulnerable customer population when there is an outage. Do they do things to prepare – are they self-reliant – what resources do they utilize?

Identified customers who are part of a caseload with CARES or have extreme extenuating circumstances – extra set of eyes.

#### **What do you do to get ready for an outage?**

*Member* – I would think having some back up power would be more common with homeowners than renters

*Member* – More prepared living in the rural area; installed a portable back-up generator that included a safety switch. Feels most homeowners are prepared in their community– new homes built by the Housing Authority includes the safety switch capability.

#### **Do you have any thoughts for those who Rent what they may be able to do to prepare for an outage?**

*Member* – batteries, flashlights, heating stove without the fan, enough perishable food

*Member* – with my grandparents more prepared than parents in the suburbs – using a woodstove instead of electricity

*Amber* - found a little foldable solar panel that can charge a cell phone. We keep that along with flashlights, candles, and extra food in a "bug out bag".

*Member* – gas prices with a gas generator – oh my!

*Member* - medication wouldn't last long with an outage

#### **Do you know what 211 is?**

Only one of the EAG indicated they knew what it was; many indicated No they did not know.

#### **Public transportation use**

*Member* – does not have public transportation in the Mead area

#### **Rural Community Interview– do their replies ring true – anything else we may have missed?**

*Member* - I find a lot of this tracks with my experiences, my grandparents certainly wouldn't use services and had little access to phone or internet

## ■ Recommendations

- Messaging should be “*what to do to be self-reliant*” in the event of an outage is practical
  - Educate on what to do during an outage is more useful than offering options to leave home for somewhere safer
- Offer multiple options, with positioning to extend self-reliance, and not evoke a sense of needing help
  - Seen as positive when positioned as not needing reliance on government, utilities, or community
- Sharing information as an easier “first engagement” (outage information being a good example), especially for people less prone to ask for help
- If sending anything, should be tools or tips
- Word of Mouth

## Power Dependent Interview Financially Constrained Interview

# Outage Survey: Key Findings

- **Outage Experience Among Survey Participants**
  - Over six in ten customers recall a specific outage experience
  - 15% report never experiencing an outage
- **Outages have impact**
  - Lack of heating or cooling is the most common issue faced when power goes out, followed by food loss and inability to run appliances
  - 7% of those experiencing an outage say they don't face any issues
- **Room to increase preparedness**
  - Half of those experiencing an outage say they felt prepared
  - There is evidence that a past outage may drive future preparation—35% of those who experienced an outage say they are better prepared now (4% say they are less prepared)
  - “*Not knowing what to do*” is the top reason customers give for not feeling prepared
- **There is evidence that Avista communications may help customers prepare**
  - Roughly 70% have made some kind of preparation effort (purchasing flashlights being most common)
  - Among the 30% who have made no preparations, there is a significantly higher proportion of those who do NOT recall receiving outage prep information from Avista
  - Conversely, a significantly higher proportion of those recalling Avista outreach say they felt prepared for their last outage (63% vs. 44%)
  - Just under seven in ten say they have a backup plan or a place to stay if an outage were to occur; this proportion is again significantly higher among customers who recall receiving outage prep information from Avista (77% vs. 61%)
  - Avista outage notifications are generally the most commonly used resource and have higher awareness than other options and are generally viewed as helpful

- Suggestions

- Information

- About the outage length, size, cause may be helpful in determining if other actions are needed, such as getting a cooler for food, or storing things outside if it is cool
    - Outage Preparation
    - What to do during an outage

**Any thoughts you have about what we might consider as we assemble an outage plan?**

*Member* – I appreciate the 2-1-1 information

*Ana* – can be great in some areas – opportunity for improvement in others

*Member* – people living in rural areas to be private; no trespassing; most that you talk to are not mean but there is a trust issue in some areas; some will converse; if you find a friend of the family they trust – especially those that need help – you can reach them to offer the needed assistance. Difficult puzzle to piece together – word of mouth – person that could help you help them

*Ana* – make sure that those who are caring for family members outside the traditional scope are someone to connect with as well.

**Wrap Up**

Reminder of upcoming meetings on July 20<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Public participation meeting tomorrow, June 23<sup>rd</sup> – 5-6pm

visit [www.myavista.com/ceta](http://www.myavista.com/ceta) for the link or call in: (audio only)

+1 509-931-1514,894441367#

United States, Spokane

Phone Conference ID: 894 441 367#