

Greening America's Workforce

Ralph Izzo, chairman, president and CEO of PSEG, was the keynote speaker at the Second Annual National LAMPAC (Labor and Management Public Affairs Committee) meeting in Washington, D.C., last week. The meeting brought together electric utility executives and IBEW leaders to discuss common issues. Izzo's remarks focused on the need to put people to work. This is an excerpt of his remarks:

Nothing is more fundamental to a healthy society than people having good jobs. Turning the economy around involves creating new, productive work opportunities. Energy can be a pathway to recovery and a sustainable, green economy providing more good jobs.

The federal stimulus bill has been signed into law. Now the issue is getting to work ... hiring and training people, putting shovels in the ground, putting solar panels on rooftops, modernizing the grid and making many other sustainable investments to power our way out of the economic downturn.

While working to speed the investment, we need to prepare the future workforce to do traditional energy jobs and new green jobs.

Many people are asking, what exactly is a green job?

Vice President Biden provided as good a definition as any. Green jobs, he wrote, "provide products and services that use renewable energy resources, reduce pollution, conserve energy and natural resources."

Green jobs include weatherizing homes, installing solar panels on utility poles or planning

and laying the necessary groundwork for a wind farm. They involve new technology such as an energy storage system that helps a wind farm produce more clean energy at peak times rather than only when the wind blows.

In our view, nuclear jobs qualify, too, since nuclear is our nation's largest source by far of carbon-free energy and a great job generator.

We are starting to create new green jobs. So far, we have hired 10 new green workers for an energy-efficiency initiative in urban areas. Seven of them received the necessary skills through a government-sponsored job-training program that we support in the city of Trenton. Now they are going door to door in urban neighborhoods, helping weatherize the homes of low-income families and earning union wages.

There could be many more people like them employed by our company or by others if we get the green light for new investments we have proposed.

Working together, we can create many more success stories that put food on the table for working families and build a brighter, greener future ... with jobs and a growing economy producing still more jobs, a healthier climate and improved energy security for our nation.

What's your view? Please let us know at Opinion@PSEG.com



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PSEG

We make things work for you.