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CONTACT

Todd Olinsky-Paul
Clean Energy Group
Clean Energy States Alliance
todd@cleanegroup.org
802-223-2554 x207

Sean Hamilton
General Manager
Sterling Municipal Light Department
shamilton@energysterling.com
978-422-8267

Town of Sterling, MA Breaks Ground on a Resilient Energy Storage Project

The 2MW/ 3.9MWh storage project will power critical facilities during outages and provide economic benefits to the town of Sterling, Massachusetts

Montpelier, VT – Yesterday, stakeholders from across Massachusetts and New England joined the Sterling Municipal Light Department to celebrate the groundbreaking of the first utility-scale energy storage facility in Massachusetts. The 2-megawatt, 3.9 megawatt-hour battery storage system, to be installed at Sterling's Chocksett Road Substation, will be able to "island" from the grid during a power outage and, with the support of existing solar generation, provide up to 12 days of backup power to the town's police station and dispatch center, a critical facility providing first responder services.

Image caption, left to right: Sean Hamilton (Sterling Municipal Light Department), Dan Borneo (Sandia National Laboratories), Scott Reynolds (Reynolds Engineering), Dr. Imre Gyuk (U.S. Department of Energy-Office of Electricity), Todd Olinsky-Paul (Clean Energy States Alliance), Judith Judson (Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources), and Doug Alderton (NEC Energy Solutions).

In addition to the resilient power benefits, the town will also save on energy costs over the project's lifespan due to the grid services the batteries will provide. Site construction will start in the fall of 2016, and the project is expected to be fully operational by the end of 2016. This 2-megawatt project effectively doubles the installed battery storage capacity in Massachusetts.

"Energy storage plays a crucial role as the Commonwealth continues to transition to a more renewable, sustainable energy future, and I commend Sterling for their embrace of this innovative resource," said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton. "The storage

technology being adopted by Sterling will not only reduce costs and emissions for ratepayers locally but will provide critical increased resiliency for the regional electric grid."

“Energy storage can be a game-changer in integrating more clean, renewable resources into our grid, in managing peak demand and improving the efficiency of our grid, and in managing storms and adding resiliency to our grid," said Judith Judson, Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources. "These applications have the benefit of moving our grid forward and meeting our mission of a clean, affordable, resilient future."

“DOE is most pleased to help make this very significant project a reality,” said Dr. Imre Gyuk, Energy Storage Program Manager, U.S. Department of Energy Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability (DOE-OE). “We hope that Sterling will become an example for other projects in Massachusetts and indeed the entire U.S.”

"The lessons learned from this project will be valuable in determining the economics of energy storage in various applications, in addition to helping understand the system metrics that are most important in determining system reliability and safety,” said Dan Borneo, principal program/ project lead at Sandia National Laboratories.

“Energy storage is the next step for our industry,” said Sean Hamilton, General Manager at the Sterling Municipal Light Department. “We’ve been doing one thing for a hundred years, it’s time to do something different.”

“This project demonstrates the many benefits of energy storage technology, including the provision of resilient power to the town’s police station, plus it demonstrates the economic case for energy storage," said Todd Olinsky-Paul, Project Director at the Clean Energy States Alliance. "It is laying the groundwork for future energy storage projects, and once that economic case is understood, we will see many other communities in New England follow in the footsteps of Sterling."

The project is being led by Sterling Municipal Light Department, with batteries supplied by NEC Energy Solutions, a locally based company with headquarters in Westborough, MA. Project funding included a $1.46M grant from the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources, under the leadership of Commissioner Judith Judson, with additional financial and technical assistance from the DOE-OE under the direction of Dr. Imre Gyuk, and Sandia National Laboratories under the leadership of Dan Borneo. Additional technical support was provided by CESA through its Energy Storage Technology Advancement Partnership (ESTAP), and by Clean Energy Group’s Resilient Power Project through a generous grant from Barr Foundation.

Additional information about this project is available at: http://www.cleanegroup.org/wp-content/uploads/Sterling-Overview.pdf.

ESTAP will host a webinar on the Sterling energy storage project on Tuesday, October 25, 2016. Guest speakers will review the project implementation process, the battery storage technology, the project’s economic analysis, timeline, and more. There will also be ample time for questions and answers. For more information on this free webinar and to register, visit http://cesa.org/webinars/sterling/.

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Photos from the groundbreaking ceremony are available to members of the media upon request.

About the Clean Energy States Alliance
The Clean Energy States Alliance (CESA) is a national, nonprofit coalition of public agencies and organizations working together to advance clean energy. CESA members—mostly state agencies—include many of the most innovative, successful, and influential public funders of clean energy initiatives in the country. CESA's Energy Storage Technology Advancement Partnership (ESTAP), funded by U.S. DOE-OE and Sandia National Laboratories, is a federal-state funding and information sharing project that aims to accelerate the deployment of electrical energy storage technologies in the U.S. Learn more at www.cesa.org.

About Clean Energy Group
Clean Energy Group is a leading national, nonprofit advocacy organization working on innovative technology, finance, and policy programs in the areas of clean energy and climate change. Clean Energy Group, in partnership with Meridian Institute, founded the Resilient Power Project to help states and municipalities with program and policy information, analysis, financial tools, technical assistance, and best practices to speed the deployment of clean, resilient power systems in their communities. For more information, visit www.cleanegroup.org and www.resilient-power.org.