

"SMARTpower: Climate Change, the Smart Grid, and the Future of Electric Utilities"

Dr. Peter Fox-Penner
Book talk and signing

Wednesday, April 14, 2010

Lecture: 3:00 PM

Room E51-325, Tang Center

Book signing and reception to follow

Massachusetts Institute of Technology
25 Ames Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Presentation overview

Dr. Peter Fox-Penner will provide attendees with an overview of the rapidly changing landscape of the utility industry and how current challenges will shape its transformation. The potential for a national policy to address the impact of climate change is pressuring utilities to shift their focus to the development and acquisition of new sources of renewable energy and low-carbon power. Meanwhile, a technical revolution known as the Smart Grid is underway in the electric power sector, providing dramatic new opportunities for customers to control their power usage and for utilities to change the way they operate. In addition, interest in renewable energy infrastructure has exploded and the electric industry is planning significant expansion of transmission lines and the creation of a national transmission superhighway.

These unprecedented developments will prompt utilities to undergo the largest and most significant changes in their history, transforming them from regulated commodity energy firms to low-carbon network operators. Dr. Fox-Penner will discuss how and why the utility industry must adapt to the climate imperative by examining the industry's technology, cost characteristics, and ability to function as a sustainable business, as well as the practical and political dimensions of making these dramatic changes. He will describe how an energy efficiency-focused business model and new regulatory structures can create sustainability in an industry that is facing the biggest challenges in its history.



Dr. Peter Fox-Penner is a consulting executive and internationally recognized authority on energy and electric power industry issues. He is a principal and chairman emeritus of The Brattle Group, a leading international economic consulting firm. He is also on the advisory boards of GridPoint and Enviance, and is a frequent speaker and author on energy issues.

In his consulting practice, he advises energy companies, government agencies, and their counsels on energy regulatory and market policy issues. Although his work has spanned most areas within the energy field, his current primary focus is on electric industry competition and structure, global climate change, and energy efficiency policies.

Dr. Fox-Penner's background includes co-founding Environment2004, the Environmental Alliance, and Patriot's Energy Pledge; service as a senior official in the US Department of Energy and the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy; and staff positions in the Illinois Governor's office. He has a Ph.D. in economics from the business school at the University of Chicago and M.S. and B.S. degrees in engineering from the University of Illinois.