Frequently Asked Question

Resiliency Hub Grant Program

1. Can a city or county apply for the grant? *Yes.*
2. Can the system be added to an existing city/county shelter, heating or cooling center? *Yes.*
3. Can the battery be used to shift the electrical peak of the facility? *Yes, provided the battery remains at least 90% charged immediately prior to a weather (or other) event that could place the electrical grid at risk.*
4. Can the battery be bid into the frequency regulation market? *The Grant does not prevent this, however any such contract would require the battery to be at least 90% charged immediately prior to a weather (or other) event that could place the electrical grid at risk. In addition, the solar plus battery system must operate under an existing utility tariff.*
5. Must the solar array be roof mounted or can it be ground mounted? *The array can be roof mounted, ground mounted, or a combination of the two.*
6. Can the solar array also be a community solar array? *Yes, but this would require additional metering and breakers, therefore increasing the cost of the system.*
7. Can the system be designed and built to include systems and capabilities beyond those required for the resiliency hub? *Yes, however the grant amount will only be based on the system size required to meet the requirements of the resiliency hub.*
8. What is the difference between a shelter and a resiliency hub? *A shelter expects to provide emergency housing (and sometimes food) for an extended period of time, normally during a weather induced emergency. As such, they tend to be structurally sound buildings. They also tend to have shower facilities. Shelters are part of a state/county/city's emergency management plan. Planning is in place to provide resources (food, water, police, medical, etc.) to a shelter. Unless otherwise designated by the state/county/city, Resiliency Hubs are not shelters. They need not be capable of overnight sleeping, need not have showers, need not have kitchen facilities, etc. The building need not be capable of withstanding a major natural disaster. A resiliency hub provides a local respite within the neighborhood, a place to warm up or cool down, to recharge a cell phone or a computer, a place to protect temperature sensitive medical supplies, a place for people who are extraordinarily temperature sensitive to survive until the grid is back up.*
9. Can a religious institution host a resiliency hub? *Yes, but the center must be open to all in the neighborhood, regardless of religion. Expressions of faith cannot be demanded for entry to the facility.*
10. What types of facilities may host a resiliency hub? *There are no restrictions concerning the type of facility that may host a resiliency hub. Facilities most likely to be considered would include: elementary/middle/high schools, social halls from religious institutions, community centers, senior citizen centers, common rooms of a public housing high-rise, etc.*
11. How long must power be available? *The system must have at least a 50% chance of providing power during a 3-day electric grid outage. The calculation shall be made by an NREL approved model, such as SolarResilient or reOPT Lite, or equivalent.*

12. Can a fossil fuel engine be included in the system design? *Yes, but grant funding may not be used to pay for the fossil fuel engine or system. All projects MUST have solar modules as the primary energy source. The grant may not be used for batteries only.*
13. If a facility already has a solar array, may the grant be used to purchase the batteries and to support the remaining integration needed to convert the solar array into the resiliency hub? *The grant money is restricted to being used on renewable energy systems. As such, it may not be used on the batteries, but it may be used to replace the existing inverter with a grid forming inverter. Call MEA to discuss any proposed case.*
14. If a building has an existing natural gas generator providing emergency loads, may it be proposed as a site for a grant? *A building with an existing natural gas generator already has the capability to serve as a resiliency hub for at least 3 days. It would not be a good use of state funds to provide a redundant capability. In the absence of further factors that would indicate a need for a backup capability, this facility would probably be rejected from consideration for a solar plus battery resiliency hub system.*
15. Must the facility have potable water and rest rooms available for use? *Yes.*
16. Must I work with the city/county to develop a project? *No, however counties have asked to be involved in the initial siting of resiliency hubs and they hold specialized data on the county. There is great value in working cooperatively with the county.*
17. Must I work with the electric utility company? *The Smart Electric Power Alliance (SEPA) recommends involving the utility company as early in the process as is feasible. Issues of synchronization between the islanded system and the grid are best addressed to the utility.*
18. Must I have a maintenance contract for the system? *Best practices would necessitate that the system receive periodic maintenance. In most cases, a maintenance contract would be appropriate.*
19. Are public housing units eligible locations under AOI 1? *Yes, if they constitute a high density of low and moderate income residents.*
20. Are senior centers eligible under AOI 1? *Yes, if they constitute a high density of low and moderate income residents.*
21. If a facility already has an emergency diesel generator (or equivalent) and on-site fuel supply for 3 or more days, is it an eligible site? *No. This would be a waste of state funding to provide a resiliency hub where one already existed. However, if the on-hand fuel supply was only for a day or so, the facility would be a good candidate for a resiliency hub as the solar plus battery system would allow the diesel generator to be used for backup/emergency use only, greatly extending the time when the fuel supply would be expected to last.*