EESI Beneficial Electrification overview Michael Cross reminisces 3/12/2024

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#### **A big project you took on as EESI’s OBF project manager is the Beneficial Electrification Toolkit. How did that come to fruition, and how does it benefit utilities today?**

Utilities need a one-stop shop to learn all about beneficial electrification, its different forms, and what they can do to go about helping their customers or members realize the potential savings of electrification. The [toolkit](https://www.betoolkit.org/) <https://www.betoolkit.org/> was the brainchild of Keith Dennis of the [Beneficial Electrification League](https://be-league.org/) <https://be-league.org/>

 When Keith and I were at a conference together in late 2019, he pitched the idea to me, and I said that it sounded like something that EESI would like to work on.

We set up interviews with rural electric cooperative leaders from around the country to ask them what they would need in a resource. We thought we were going to receive clear guidance on what co-ops needed, but we actually got very different answers back from everyone. Around this time, the pandemic hit.

But we continued the work on the toolkit. It grew and evolved as we were planning it—going from an offline form to a public, accessible website.

It has been a labor of love, and I’m happy with what we’ve published to date. But it’s still not done. We have a really great team working on it, and we have been able to put it in front of utilities that are putting it to use. We are hoping to get it into the hands of many more utilities to help programs around the country spring up.

Beneficial electrification is the application of electricity to end-uses where doing so will satisfy at least one of the following conditions, without adversely affecting the others:

* Saves money: More energy-efficient appliances waste less electricity, saving money on utility bills.
* Benefits the environment: Wasting less electricity, driving an electric vehicle, and using clean energy reduces carbon emissions.
* Improves quality of life: New, smarter technology can provide better living experiences at home and on the road.
* Fosters grid resilience

Why [Now is the Time](https://www.betoolkit.org/intro/whynow) for Beneficial Electrification

* Rapid growth in low-cost, zero-emissions power combined with rapidly falling battery and storage costs
* Volatility in fossil fuel prices and availability (especially propane and heating oil)
* Growing awareness that electrification can save customers money, spur rural economic development, and improve the utility’s financial health while also helping customers
* Increased efficiency and performance of electric-powered appliances and vehicles
* Greater need for electricity load management
* Expectation of meeting emission reduction goals (whether set by the utility or policymakers)