Solar Claims Workshop

Renewable Energy Markets Conference 2015
Monday October 19th
Generation and Use of Solar [Renewable] Energy is Growing
Organizations use renewable energy in order to say something [Make a Claim]

“[We are] committed to sustainable energy and lessening our impact on the planet; this public-private collaboration is a model for energy generation and usage, and [our organization] is taking a leading role in finding solutions to address the enormous power needs of modern higher education."

“[The Company] continues to increase the number of solar power systems [hosted on its stores and facilities. By year-end, the company is planning to add new solar power systems to the roofs of nine additional [Company] stores, as well as to the roof of a distribution center.”
What is at Stake: ‘Double Claims’

Double counting or double selling

[P]ublic statements or representations that directly or through implication confer the use of renewable electricity or any of the environmental attributes within the REC (including avoided emissions) to a party who is not the REC owner. The effect of a double claim is that the environmental benefits of that REC are counted twice, once by the legitimate REC owner and once by the other claimant, which can result in environmental benefits that are “double-counted.” (Explanation of Green-e Energy Double Claims Policy, p.2-3).

This is an issue of market integrity; ensuring that all organizations are establishing or promoting a fair, equitable and efficient renewable energy market.
Substantiation of Claims is Required

**FTC Green Guides:** “If a marketer generates renewable electricity but sells renewable energy certificates for all of that electricity, it would be deceptive for the marketer to represent, **directly or by implication**, that it uses renewable energy.” (§ 260.15 (d))

**Letter to Green Mountain Power Corporation:** “[A]ny statement by the company that might lead consumers of that electricity to infer that the energy was produced cleanly risks double counting. Such double counting [...] not only risks deceiving consumers but also **threatens the integrity of the entire REC market.**”

Renewable Energy Certificates serve to substantiate claims
Question/Answer Roundtable

James Critchfield, US EPA (Moderator)

Tom Kimbis, Solar Energy Industries Association

Hampton Newsome, Federal Trade Commission

Robin Quarrier, CRS
Audience Questions

• **Statement:** “Wind Farm 22 will produce enough energy to power approximately 2,000 homes. With the addition of this wind project, we are proud to now meet 20% of peak demand with renewable energy.”

• **Location:** Press release published on utility’s (generator owner) website.

• **Context:** Press release was published in the past 3 years.

**Determination:** Double Claim
Example 2. On-site Carbon Footprint Reduction.

- **Statement**: Anytown, USA has installed solar panels on 5 city buildings. As a result, we are happy to reduce both our electricity costs and our carbon footprint.
- **Location**: On city’s website – press release or general information on solar installations.

**Determination**: Double Claim
Example 3. Third Party Articles.

- **Statement:** After installing a solar system the school is now completely **powered by** clean, green, renewable energy.

- **Context:** Recent article on third party news site, and statement is not a direct quote from a school official – however, the article is **linked to on school’s website ‘read about our solar panels in the news’**

Determination: **Double Claim**
Example 4. Onsite Generation.

• **Statement:** In our quest to be powered by renewable energy, we’re proud to have worked with Solar Installer I to install a solar system on our roof.

• **Context:** On host’s website.

Determination: **Double Claim**
Example 5. Utilities.

- **Statement:** We are proud to *deliver our customers* energy from the following renewable facilities.

- **Context:** ‘Renewable Energy Commitments’ portion of utility website.

**Determination:** Double Claim
Example 5. Utilities.

- **Statement:** Utility 22 has over 100 MW of wind.

- **Context:** ‘Renewable Energy Commitments’ portion of utility website.

- **Accurate power disclosure:** ‘Click here to see what mix is delivered to our customers.’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource Type</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coal</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Gas</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuclear</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other$^1$</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^1$ Other includes electricity not traceable to a specific resource type

**Determination:** ☑
‘Double Claims’ Identified in Green-e Verification

- Affected approximately 1% of RECs submitted annually in 2013 & 2014
- 290,000 MWh replaced (2 year total)
- 90 different transactions (2 year total)