Version 1

October 2025

Codes & Standards Program Closure

Northern Rural Energy Network

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The Northern California Rural Regional Energy Network also known as Northern Rural Energy Network or NREN, was approved on September 26, 2024 in CPUC Decision D.24-09-031, and had an updated business plan approved in September 2025 in Resolution E-5400.

NREN serves the counties of Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, El Dorado, Humboldt, Lake, Lassen, Mariposa, Mendocino, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sierra, Sutter, Tuolumne, and Yuba.

NREN's programs are focused on customers and communities that are rural, Hard-to-Reach (HTR), and underserved.

CPUC Program Closure Checklist

The program administrators (PAs) should use the following process for program closures:

We are here!

1. **Communicate with program implementer:** NREN intended to launch the C&S program with internal staff.
2. **Notify service list:** RCEA sent a notice on behalf of NREN to notify of the closure and this webinar on 09/19/2025.
3. **Host webinar:** PA will **"**host a webinar or workshop that lays out timelines and milestones for the ramping down of an existing program or the ramping up of a new one"
4. **File an advice letter:** The program closure advice letter will be filed, and includes:
   a) a description of program, implementer, region and customer/sector served by program;
   b) justification for closure, including; demonstration of alignment with State GHG emissions reductions goals and EE goals and discussion of impact to ratepayers from program closure.
   c) year program started;
   d) date program was due to sunset;
   e) most recent three program years (inclusive of current year) filed (i.e. forecasted) budget, Total Resource Cost (TRC), and savings, per Total System Benefit (TSB) metric if applicable;
   f) most recent two years (excluding current year) program budget expenditures, claimed TRC and savings, per (TSB) metric if applicable;
   g) a discussion and overview of stakeholder feedback and any changes to transition to closure as a result of input from the webinar to ensure that program implementers are aware of the PA's plan; and
   h) what, if any, plans the PAs has to replace the program.
5. **Staff review and disposition:** Staff disposition of the advice letter would include review of whether the PA followed steps 2-4 and whether its justification for closure is reasonable.
6. **Update program status on CEDARS**: Once the program is approved for closure the PA shall update the program status to "Closed", when all program activity has ceased including paying out rebates to customers, reimbursing the implementers and completing all projects.

Purpose

NREN is requesting the approval of:

- the closure of NREN Northen California Rural Regional Energy Network's (NREN) Codes & Standards Program
- to shift activities to the Workforce, Education & Training program
- as well as the re-segmentation of NREN's Workforce Education & Training program from the Equity segment to the Market Support segment.

The current NREN C&S program activities included providing rural building departments and building professionals with education and technical resources to increase the comprehension and compliance in the California building Energy Efficiency Code (Title 24). The program was not intended to create new educational resources and tools but rather connect rural building departments with current IOU and Statewide program offerings and potentially facilitate in-person training in our more remote region.

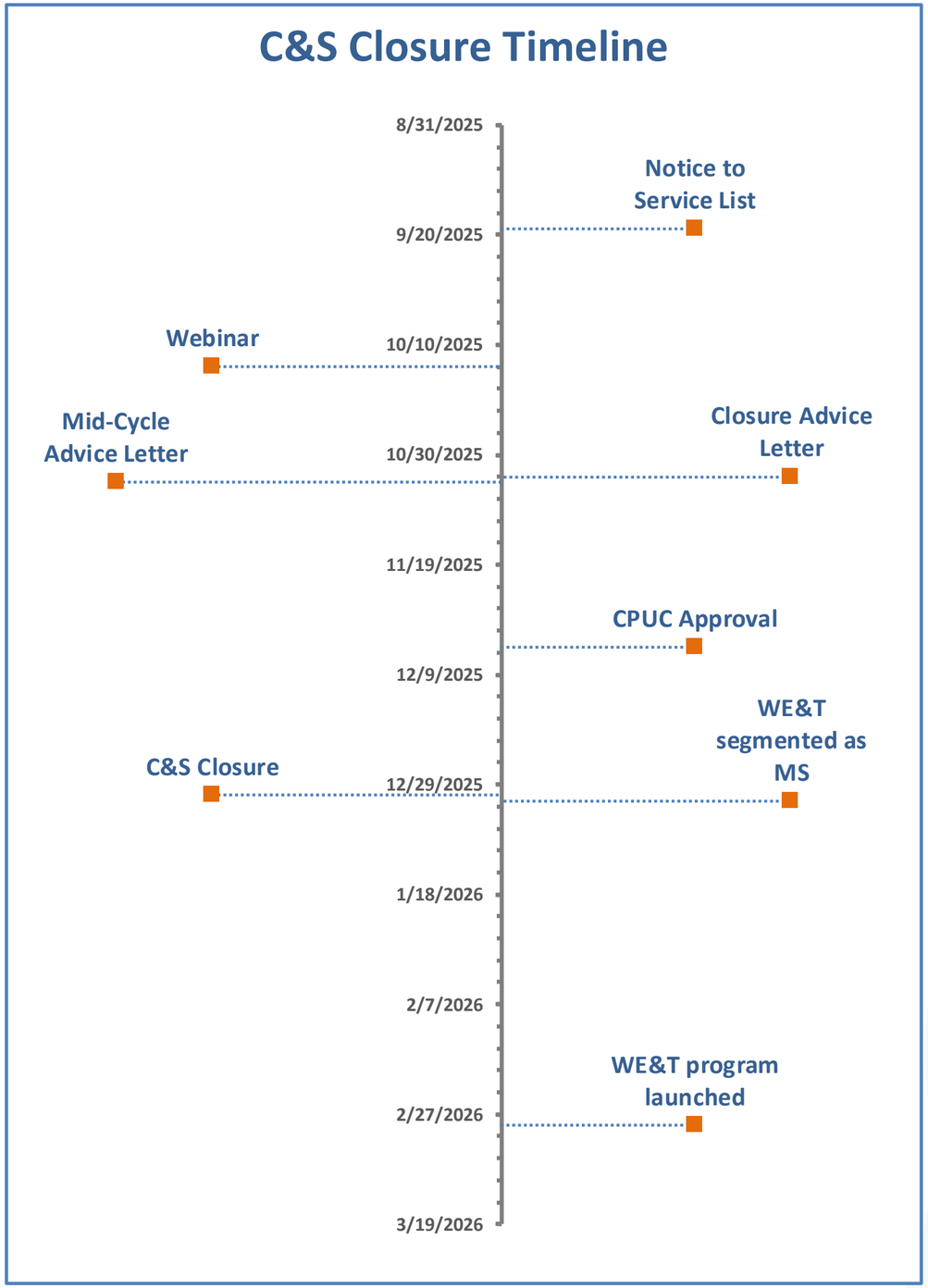
But why?

NREN's Workforce, Education and Training (WE&T) program includes a primary element focused on facilitating training for current building professionals. To achieve implementation efficiencies, the C&S activities could be effectively implemented as an element of the WE&T program.

NREN's C&S program is different from IOU C&S programs as it does not claim energy savings or advocate for high standards. Although focused on codes & standards training, the description of the program fits with the WE&T program's description of "upskilling existing workers."

The planned activities of the C&S and WE&T program also fit the description of the Market Support segment programs as defined by the Commission in D.21-05-031 because they are designed to engage with the market actors in the community rather than directly with customers. The program will continue to work in and benefit equity communities, however, only a single program segment may be assigned at a given time and therefore NREN recommends WE&T, including the C&S activities, be categorized as Market Support.

Timeline



Development activities for the C&S program will continue with the NREN WE&T staff. The C&S program will be officially closed in CEDARS at the end of 2026. The C&S budget will be shifted to the WE&T program as described in NREN's Mid-Cycle Advice Letter to be filed in November 4, 2025.

Also starting in 2026, the WE&T program will be categorized under the Market Support Segment and NREN will also add a new program in CEDARS for Market Support Portfolio Support.

Questions and Feedback

Additional questions and feedback after this webinar can be sent to:

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