

### **Electricity Company Managers' Decisionmaking on the Environment**

*Maya Fischhoff, Environmental Science and Policy Program, Michigan State University*

Interviews with 70 middle managers at two utility companies reveal deep ethical commitments to the environment, paralleled by a belief that environmental action is detrimental to companies' financial interests, as well as difficult and time consuming. Managers were frustrated by the uncertainty of the policy process and the perceived duplicity of environmental groups. They looked for information and guidance to each other and to industry trade groups. In an often confusing landscape, they focused on environmental actions required by law; while they saw these as important, beyond-compliance actions such as climate change were much less heeded.

### **The Power of Networks: Interorganizational Influences on Corporations' Energy Efficiency Decisions**

*Rachael Shwom, Department of Sociology and Environmental Science and Policy Program, Michigan State University*

While many researchers of business environmental decision-making focus on the internal factors that influence business decisions, other business researchers have turned their attention to the broader environment that the business is embedded within. The other organizations that a business interacts with, whether other businesses, environmental groups, or government agencies, potentially influence business decision-making on climate issues by the provision of resources (information, social legitimacy, etc.) and opportunities to act. In this presentation, I will provide an introduction to the theoretical understanding of the importance of interorganizational relationships. I will then present national level data on business participation in events that seek to define and promote energy-efficient residential household appliances and the interorganizational networks that are a consequence of this participation followed by a discussion of the potential role these interorganizational networks may play in determining business support of energy-efficiency policies and their relation to climate change.

### **Influences on Service Station Owners' Willingness to Provide Alternative Fuels: Information and Motivation**

*Richard Grogan, Department of Communications and Environmental Science and Policy Program, Michigan State University*

Alternative fuels are often touted as a way to reduce auto emissions, which are a contributor of greenhouse gasses, in addition to more local air pollutants in the Great Lakes region. However, there are still relatively few service stations in the US that offer alternative fuels compared to the number offering petroleum-based gasoline; approximately 3.3%\*. For alternative fuels to expand their reach, and have the desired effect on emission reduction, a large proportion of Americans must be able to access them, and one of the few ways to access them currently is through service stations.

Service stations as businesses take multiple forms – from large corporations (such as Meijer) to smaller independently owned stations. This range of size and form has created a similarly variable range of reactions to the growing interest in alternative fuels – specifically with regard to how or whether service station owners decide to install an alternative fuel dispenser. Through a communication lens, this research examines information availability to service station owners, and factors related to owners' decisions about alternative fuels.