



NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 1, 2019

Virginia Energy Efficiency Council Announces 2019 Board of Directors
New members elected from Google, U.S. Green Building Council

RICHMOND, Va. – [Virginia Energy Efficiency Council](#) has announced its notable 2019 board of directors, including new members from Google and the U.S. Green Building Council.

VAEEC – a 501c3 organization headquartered in Richmond – identifies barriers to and opportunities for energy efficiency advancement in the state, while developing a strong, fact-based and balanced industry voice before local, state and national policymakers and regulators. The board of directors will guide the organization to serve as a platform for stakeholder engagement, while assessing and supporting policies that advance energy efficiency in Virginia.

“Our organization is committed to ensuring that energy efficiency is a key part of Virginia’s economy and clean energy future,” said Chelsea Harnish, executive director of VAEEC. “We’re thrilled to have a board with many new and returning members who will help achieve that goal.”

Rick Counihan, head of energy regulatory and governmental affairs for Google, is one of those new members.

“I want to help Virginia become a state that has significant energy efficiency programs,” Counihan said, “which help Virginians save money and reduce impact on the environment.”

New and returning members to the board are listed below:

New Members

- **Rick Counihan** is the head of energy regulatory and governmental affairs for Google, the maker of the Nest Learning Thermostat. He has more than 25 years of experience in the energy and utility fields.

- **Elizabeth Beardsley** is senior policy counsel at the U.S. Green Building Council. Her portfolio includes federal, state and local green building law and policy issues.
- **KC Bleile** is the executive director of Viridiant. She joined Viridiant as its first employee and helped pioneer the first state-side green building program in Virginia.
- **Bill Eger** is the energy manager for the city of Alexandria, leading the city's office of energy management team that oversees energy efficiency, clean energy and other sustainability initiatives.
- **Stephen Evanko** is the managing director of energy and sustainability for Dominion Due Diligence Group. He has worked in the sustainability industry for the past 14 years.

Returning Members

- **Mark Jackson** is the vice president of energy solutions with Community Housing Partners. In addition to his work there, he co-founded and serves as the chief operating officer of Weatherizers Without Borders, an international nongovernmental organization that develops weatherization programs.
- **Thomas Nicholas** is facilities engineer with the city of Virginia Beach's public works department, where he oversees the facilities design and construction divisions, among others.
- **Susan Larsen** is the director of business policy at Columbia Gas of Virginia, where she is responsible for government and regulatory affairs and energy efficiency programs.

"The VAEEC will benefit greatly from the breadth and depth of experience in energy efficiency that our newly elected board members bring to the leadership of the organization," said David Koogler, board chair. "It's a dynamic time for energy efficiency in the Commonwealth, and we are fortunate to have a team of industry leaders serving on our board."

#

Founded in 2012, VAEEC is a 501c3 organization, headquartered in Richmond, that provides a platform for stakeholder engagement while assessing and supporting programs and policies that advance energy efficiency in Virginia. We engage our members to identify barriers to and opportunities for energy efficiency advancement, and to develop a strong, fact-based, and balanced industry voice before local, state, and national policymakers and regulators. Our diverse group of over 100 members includes Fortune 500 companies, nonprofits, local governments, state agencies, and more. The VAEEC's goal is to ensure that energy efficiency is recognized as an integral part of Virginia's economy and clean energy future.