

Summer Action Packet 2018

Power Local Green Jobs Campaign

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Introduction

Our actions this summer are “following the money” to highlight the way PECO profits enormously for distant investors while harming our local health, well-being, and future.

This action packet is for you if you are interested in helping to plan an action this summer that highlights PECO’s profits at the expense of ratepayers, and polarizes the public around PECO’s inaction on climate change and inequality.

Our ask to you: plan, organize, and pull off one action this summer, June-September, either PECO-facing or public-facing.

The Larger Story

PECO profits more than \$1 million per day off its customers in the Philadelphia area, the poorest big city in the country, and yet is pushing a rate hike which will harm the most vulnerable of us. PECO wants to pad its shareholders’ pockets while sticking to the same polluting energy.

Climate change-fueled storms and poverty are immediate threats to Philadelphia’s neighborhoods, multiplying the hardship on poor communities and communities of color. Across the region, vulnerable communities are also paving the way, showing that cheaper solar can lower customer bills and create family-sustaining jobs. PECO should follow their lead instead of doubling down on its current short-sighted energy policies.

Action Plans: Public- and PECO-Facing Actions

There are two main types of actions we are asking people to plan this summer: public- and PECO-facing actions. The target for both types of actions is the same -- PECO -- but the tactics are different.

Public-facing actions are about showing up where ratepayers are and asking them to make a choice regarding PECO. Which PECO would they rather see, the present PECO that is focused on fossil fuels and expensive energy, or a PECO of the future, with reliable, affordable green energy that creates jobs? Asking those who are neutral on the issues of our campaign to choose a side, and those who are passively supportive to take action (even if it’s as simple as voting with their feet) will help grow our campaign while making PECO nervous that we are reaching more and more of its customers. They are also useful for potentially bringing new people into the campaign and/or deepening the skills and commitment of people who’ve taken smaller action.

PECO-facing actions are more directly about contending with PECO's space and power directly as opposed to through their customers. These tactical actions interrupt business as usual and cause PECO to address the Power Local Green Jobs campaign. Through action such as a people's search and seizure of documents that should be made public or filling the lobby with balloons carrying a message, we not only tell our story but get in the way of PECO's narrative.

Public-Facing Actions

Goal: To polarize the public (PECO customers). To make it clear that PECO is making a choice to continue to use dirty fossil fuels and value profit over people, rather than to transition to a green energy and green jobs future. To show local communities are leading with solutions.

Target: PECO

Audience: The public and PECO ratepayers

Strategy: Polarization -- Ask passive allies to become active and neutrals to choose a side

Tactics: Show Don't Tell -- visualize two choices and a mechanism for the public to make that choice to support PECO's use of dirty fossil fuels, or support green energy and green jobs and ask members of the public to choose between them.

Roles: Action lead, police liaison, media spokesperson, photographer, social media storyteller

Visuals: There are several ways to ask members of the public to make a choice between the PECO of the present and the PECO of the future. Below are the ideas we've used -- perhaps you'll think of another!

Vote with your feet: ask people to choose between two doors -- one for the PECO of the present and one representing the PECO of the future -- and use the door that represents the PECO they prefer.

Materials: door signs/doors, handouts

Cast a vote: ask people to vote for the PECO they prefer -- the PECO of the present or the future -- with clear jars or plastic bags and ping pong balls or paper.

Materials: jars or plastic bags, slips of paper, ping pong balls, handouts

Language we have used for signs: PECO has a choice: stay in the past or adapt for the future. Which version of PECO do you want to see? PECO of the present: Dirty energy, Unresponsive, Expensive, Unreliable ...by focusing on profit. PECO of the future: Green energy, Good jobs, Affordable, Reliable ...by shifting to local solar.

Locations: PECO-sponsored events, rate payment office, PUC rate increase hearing, anywhere ratepayers congregate.

Note: it can be easy to slip into simply flyering passersby, but the power of this type of action is not in education, **it's in asking ratepayers to make a choice.** Making a choice is a much more powerful, memorable, and campaign-building strategy than asking people to passively receive information. It's OK if people don't choose the side we'd like them to! Some people will decide against our point of view when we're polarizing the public. We're not seeking to convince people, just asking them to make a choice.

It's a good idea to have a clipboard with a sign in sheet available to capture contact information from people who seem particularly interested. You may also consider including information about a good next step for people on the flyers, whether that's joining an introductory webinar, tweeting at PECO, or coming to the next general meeting.

PECO-Facing Actions

These actions draw on our boldness and creativity, and they should make PECO uncomfortable. The more power that particular employee has, the more uncomfortable they should feel. We can do this in a number of ways -- by showing up at PECO-sponsored events, or by nonviolently entering spaces PECO thinks it controls. For example, at the start of 2018 some PLGJ supporters entered the PECO lobby to hold signs and hand out flyers as PECO CEO Craig Adams was welcoming employees to work. He quickly hid behind a gate, and we were asked to leave (so we passed out flyers to employees outside). This action demonstrated to PECO employees that we were willing to enter their space and reminded them that their actions at work make a difference for people in our region.

Goal: Put pressure on PECO by interrupting business as usual and making visible how PECO puts profit over people.

Target: PECO, specifically CEO Mike Innocenzo

Audience: PECO employees, media

Strategy: Use bold and creative tactics to directly draw attention to PECO's choice and inaction around powering local green jobs while profiting off of ratepayers.

Tactics: These are up to you! Tactics could include nonviolently entering an area we are asked not to enter, dropping a banner off a PECO property or nearby, filling the lobby with biodegradable helium balloons, creating a canoe flotilla, projecting something, your imagination

is the limit. There are some tactics we will not support, such as property damage and targeting family members of PECO employees. Please ask if you have questions about this.

Roles: While these depend on the tactic being used, almost all actions will include an action lead, a police liaison, a photographer, a media liaison, and a social media storyteller.

Visuals: Use images that are powerful and relate to the logic of the action. Some visuals we know are effective include: solar workers, green hard hats, the sun, inhalers, and storms.

Locations: PECO headquarters, PECO offices, events at which PECO executives are speaking, PUC hearings, etc.

Process For Planning Actions

1. Check your idea with a friend -- is this a terrible idea, or the best idea? What feedback do they have for you to help sharpen the idea?
2. Run the idea by the PECO-Facing Action Coaches! We can connect you to logistical and financial support. We don't have a big budget but there are some funds available. Propose a budget! We can also help with action simplification, clarification, and scheduling.
3. Recruit at least four people to join you in your action!
4. Take action!
5. Debrief and report learnings back to wider EQAT body.

What makes it an EQAT Action?

Clear Plan for Action

EQAT holds trainings ahead of its actions, or, for a simple action, at least a group briefing of how the plan may unfold. On a good day EQAT's planned action reveals an [action logic](#), that is, a drama that shows the message so clearly that words are not necessary for the onlookers and media to understand what the conflict is about. The black students who sat in at lunch counters in the 1960's enacted a drama in which signs were not necessary to explain the injustice. Action planners do not always discover a compelling logic to be enacted, but EQAT reaches for that high standard for its Plan A. That said, EQAT values spontaneity in the moments of encounter. We believe that Spirit is always present, and is sometimes the source of inspired action that enhances the action plan.

The reality is that the job of the opponent is to deflect the impact of the action we have planned, and sometimes has the means to do it. It is wise to create a Plan B in case Plan A cannot be implemented.

Combination of Nonviolent Discipline and Firmness

While EQAT's actions are clearly committed to strategic nonviolence, we are not committed to being "nice." Rejecting passivity, we sometimes escalate moments of confrontation, even while understanding the difficulty we're causing the enforcers (police, security guards, PECO managers) who are carrying out the will of the 1% remote from the scene.

While we encourage boldness and support confrontation, participants in Power Local Green Jobs actions must adopt a dignified attitude towards anyone we encounter. Remain calm, focused, and non-combative. Do not use bad language, verbal or physical violence against patrons, management, staff, or police officers, and do not bring weapons, drugs, alcohol, or illegal substances.

Media and Storytelling

Battle of the Story

As you plan your action, use this Battle of the Story guide to think through the details of what's at stake and how PECO is trying to direct public attention. The Battle of the Story is a tool we use to intervene in our target's narrative and insert our own version of the story. Below is an abridged version of the Battle of the Story. You can see an full version, including how we believe PECO sees its narrative, [here](#). This can help you hone your action plan for most impact.

Conflict

There is a crisis in climate and jobs! PECO's energy choices have created and profited from the crisis. PECO is holding back the city, and ignoring civic and moral leaders. Clean energy is literally life vs death, prosperity vs poverty.

Characters

Those impacted: Area residents, job seekers, Black and Brown communities, and youth.

Heroes: Churches, schools, EQAT, POWER and our allies, individuals who take risky action for what's right.

Messengers: Clergy, youth, elders, folks who struggle to pay bills, and job seekers.

Villains: PECO Executives

Imagery

Solar workers, green hard hat, the sun (rising), asthma, inhalers, storms, hurricanes, floods, and taking action.

External Media

One of our best opportunities for media coverage is when we're taking action in a larger story that reporters are likely to already be talking about (such as the rate increase hearings), or when the actions are especially dramatic or high stakes.

For actions with local interest in the counties, we want to be doing reporter outreach preferably two weeks ahead of time. In Philadelphia, we can do our first outreach one week ahead.

There might be other avenues for telling the story. Do you know of local newsletters, blogs, or neighborhood interest sites? Letters to the editor are great practice at being direct and concise!

At the beginning of action planning, talk to Greg about getting media coverage.

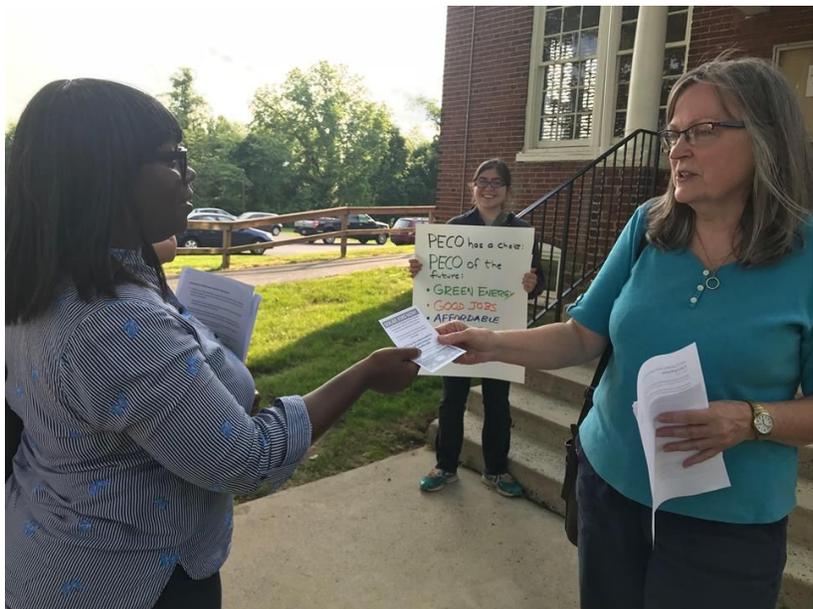
Social Media

Social media is a must. This is one of the primary ways neutral folks and passive allies will encounter our campaign.

We primarily use facebook, because that's where our active supporters are. We want to make posts on our FB page, but then have them generate discussion and reactions.

Find a photographer to take photos. One tip for exciting photos is to try and catch the verb of the action + the message, both in one frame. Are people talking to each other? Handing out flyers? Re-writing a PECO billboard? Whatever it is, show the action as it unfolds, and even better if you can catch a sign that says what we stand for in the same frame.

You can boost our social media reach by asking people who are at the action to look at our facebook page after the action and respond to the posts with their own comments and experiences. Or post to your personal social media page! Talk to Ryan or Greg about posting to social media.



Internal campaign learning

We think the best learning comes through action, but only if we take time to reflect. Telling stories also builds a sense of working together and being part of a movement.

Please identify someone to write something after the action debrief. This should be a story, a learning, or a strategic insight. Be concise, around 200 words or a few paragraphs. Please send it to EQAT Discuss (and let Ryan or Greg know if you'd like to be added), and we may also post it on the blog on our website.

This could take one of a few forms: it could be something personal or individual -- what does this story show us about individuals taking action? People responding to our campaign? It could be on the group level -- what did you learn about organizing? What can we see about cultural norms and patterns? Or it could be about the whole campaign -- did we confirm or learn something about PECO? What made a certain tactic powerful at that time and place?

Resource People and Contact Information

Staff

Ryan Leitner, campaign organizer, ryan@eqat.org, 925-818-2272

Greg Holt, communications manager, greg@eqat.org

Summer Actions Core Team

Dana Robinson, summer actions core team convener, dana@researchinaction.com

Addendum 1: Action Planning Checklist

- Reach out to 5-10 friends who might be interested in the action.
- Meet with or call friends one-on-one to talk about the action and the roles you need to fill.
- Meet with the group of people who have agreed to take on a role to finalize the action plan.
- Recruit for your action through newsletters, flyers, in-person announcements, phone calls, and emails.
- Make a list of local media outlets (newspapers, blogs, tv), and reach out to the media team (greg@eqat.org).
- Prepare materials (signs, flyers to hand out, etc.).

Helpful materials

- [Flyers](#)
- [Sign in sheet](#) (we strongly encourage this), clipboard, pen
- Megaphone, if needed
- Signs, banners
- Cameras, or charged cell phones with cameras
- You can use these [talking points](#) to support conversations with curious people

Addendum 2: Roles for Actions

- **Action lead:** keeps track of the whole, explains to participants the plan and expectations, clarifies roles that others are taking, fills in for any unassigned roles that strongly need playing (for example media spokesperson if television shows up). The action lead starts and ends the action, makes timely action decisions (e.g. when to leave after ordered out when participants are not risking arrest, when to implement Plan B, etc)
- **Police/security liaison:** acts as a buffer between the police and/or building security guards and the action lead and other participants in the action. De-escalation is an important skill for this, for example reassuring the security/police officer that what they are observing is the plan. The police/security liaison's job is conflict management, not dialogue with building personnel. If, for example, PECO staff seeks to escalate conflict, that is when the liaison role might step in to help with de-escalation. On the other hand, police and security guards often try to assert power by making arbitrary demands, and the liaison must hold their ground and seek to clarify what is legally required without escalating the situation.
- **Media spokesperson:** meets with any media that show up. This person should also contact the EQAT Media team beforehand (Greg Holt, greg@eqat.org).

Other key tasks (can be mixed with the above roles)

- **Social media storyteller,** posts any news on Facebook *and shares photos and description with EQAT staff and media contact (Greg Holt, greg@eqat.org)*
- **Debrief facilitator:** best for someone other than the Action lead.

Addendum 3: How to Lead an Action Training

Goals

- Group cohesion
- Understanding the action, preparing logistically and spiritually

Training Session

1. **Welcome everyone to the training.** Ask everyone to turn to someone next to them and say one reason they're here today. This allows participants to connect with someone and feel more comfortable in the space.
2. Depending on the group, **explain a little bit about the Power Local Green Jobs campaign** and its goals for forcing PECO to expand its commitment to solar, specifically by purchasing from solar rooftops in underserved areas.
3. **Go over the basics of the action:** what will happen when, what is Plan A and Plan B. Use big paper or a dry-erase board to write up the basic progression of the action.
4. **Go over the action roles** and introduce the people who will be fulfilling those roles.
5. **Remind everyone that the action is more powerful when everyone follows the same plan**, and that this is a nonviolent action. If they start to feel ungrounded, remind them to look to the spiritual anchor or action lead for support.
6. **Lead a live role-play of the action.** Select a couple people to play the part of a PECO manager, security officer, police, etc. Everyone else should play the part they will do in the real action. Afterward, ask everyone how it felt to do the action.
7. **Ask if everyone understands the plan**, and if there are questions that need to be answered before the action.
8. **Tell everyone when and where there will be a debrief after the action**, which is a vital part of the action.
9. **Do the action! Have fun! Be powerful!**