

# USAEE Social Media Guidelines

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USAEE welcomes members to use social media as a platform to network and share information. We are a non-partisan professional association with common intellectual, analytical, and policy interests in the economics of energy, and expect that ALL postings would be read and judged for their content related to those interests.

Personal attacks and derogatory comments are not to be posted; substantive criticism offered constructively and respectfully is welcome. Postings deviating from these standards should be identified to USAEE Headquarters, and may be removed without notice to the poster.

The USAEE's Social Media Guidelines listed below apply to Association members, consultants, and contractors who create, contribute to, or share USAEE-sponsored content on the Association's branded blogs, wikis, social networks, collaboration platforms, and any social media platform whether or not created or sponsored by USAEE.

- 1 **Be transparent.** Your honesty will be noted in the social media environment. If you are writing about USAEE, use your real name, identify who you work for and in what capacity, and be clear about your role. If you have a financial interest in what you are discussing, or other potential or actual conflict of interest, the interest must be disclosed. If the conflict would require disclosure of confidential information, you should not participate in the discussion. In case of questions, please consult with the Vice President of Communications or the Executive Director.
- 2 **Be honest.** Never represent yourself or the Association in a false or misleading way. All statements must be true and not misleading; all claims must be substantiated.
- 3 **Be appropriate.** Post meaningful, respectful comments—in other words, please, no spam or remarks that are off-topic or offensive. You may not post harassing, defamatory, or other inappropriate or illegal content, or content that infringes on the privacy rights, confidential information, or intellectual property rights of third parties. In particular, you should not publish third-party content, including images of third parties, without the consent of such parties, unless a legal exception (such as "fair use") applies.
- 4 **Be aware.** You are responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with the applicable terms and conditions of any Social Media platform you participate in, and any other relevant legal requirements. Please be aware that you may be personally liable for complying with these terms, conditions, and requirements. As with any contract, you may not enter into any Social Media "clickwrap" or other agreement on behalf of USAEE unless you are authorized to do so.
  - **Use common sense and common courtesy.** For example, it's best to ask permission to publish or report on conversations that are meant to be private or internal to USAEE.
  - **Stick to your area of expertise: we encourage you** to provide unique, individual perspectives on non-confidential activities of USAEE. Make sure your comments are in line with the latest USAEE Council decision on the topic.
  - **When disagreeing with others' opinions, keep it appropriate and polite.** If you find yourself in a situation online that looks as if it's becoming antagonistic, do not get overly defensive and do not disengage from the conversation abruptly. As appropriate, ask the Vice President of Communications or the Executive Director for advice.
  - **Be smart about protecting yourself, your privacy, and confidential information.** What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully. ☒
- 5 **Do not comment on pending or threatened litigation, administrative actions, or disputes or investigations** involving the USAEE or its staff (in their professional capacities). ☒

[These guidelines draw from best practices identified by the following organizations:

American Red Cross Online Communications Guidelines, Australian Public Service Commission Interim Protocols for Online Media Participation, BBC Online Services Guidelines, IBM Social Computing Guidelines, NPR News Social Media Guidelines, ThomsonReuters Social Media Guidelines, Smithsonian Institution Web and New Media Strategy, World Bank Group Social Media Guidelines]

**NOTE:** Refer media inquiries to USAEE Vice President of Communications Seth Blumsack ([blumsack@psu.edu](mailto:blumsack@psu.edu)) or Dave Williams, USAEE Executive Director ([usaee@usaee.org](mailto:usaee@usaee.org)).