



Eversource and Dartmouth Engineering selected for U.S. Department of Energy SPARK Award to expand grid capacity and deliver customer benefits through grid-enhancing technology

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Selection for award negotiations marks important step forward for initiative that will help increase transmission capacity, improve reliability and reduce customer costs by maximizing existing infrastructure

MANCHESTER, N.H., Sept. 29, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Eversource and Dartmouth Engineering have been selected by the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Electricity (OE) under its [Speed to Power \(SPARK\) program](#) for an innovative initiative designed to improve reliability and keep costs as low as possible for customers. Referred to as the Dynamic Rating Enhancement Advancements and Modernization (DREAM) initiative, the collaboration between Eversource and Dartmouth Engineering will leverage grid-enhancing technologies to increase the capacity of the existing electric grid, enhance system resiliency, and help lower costs for customers.

As developed by Eversource and Professor Junbo Zhao's team at Dartmouth, the DREAM initiative combines leading-edge research with utility expertise to advance practical solutions for the electric grid. By deploying dynamic line rating (DLR) technology across approximately 4,000 miles of Eversource's transmission network in Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Hampshire, the initiative will provide operators with enhanced real-time visibility into system conditions and enable more efficient use of existing infrastructure. It will also leverage thermal field sensing to provide on-the-ground measurements of actual conditions, advanced weather forecasting, digital analytical models and operational integration that supports the decision-making process for remote system operators – ultimately providing more real-time data that reflects actual operating conditions in order to maximize use of the existing transmission system.

Eversource System Operations Center



Inside Eversource's System Operations Center, an electric system operator manages the power grid.



Inside Eversource's System Operations Center

"We greatly appreciate the Department of Energy's investment in innovative solutions that can strengthen the New England electric grid and deliver significant reliability and affordability benefits to our customers," said **Bill Quinlan, President of Transmission at Eversource**. "As demand for electricity continues to grow, the DREAM initiative will help us maximize the capability of our existing transmission system — which importantly will also help keep costs as low as possible for customers. We look forward to continuing our collaboration with DOE and Dartmouth Engineering to demonstrate how advanced, state-of-the-art grid technologies can help meet the region's evolving energy needs with an ever-present focus on affordability for our customers."

"Existing transmission lines can often carry more electricity than conventional ratings allow, but operators need reliable information about when that capacity is available and how to use it safely," said **Junbo Zhao, Todd M. Cook and Elizabeth Donohoe Cook Associate Professor of Engineering at Dartmouth**. "DREAM brings together sensing, forecasting and digital twin analytics to turn that opportunity into practical tools for grid operations. Our partnership with Eversource offers an opportunity to move research into practice across an entire transmission network, helping deliver a more reliable and affordable electric grid for communities throughout New England."

"New England's geography, climate, and growing energy demand make reliable power delivery especially challenging. By pairing Dartmouth's advanced modeling with Eversource's operational knowledge, we can get more out of existing transmission lines and improve energy security for our region. This is a perfect example of how innovation moves from our labs to real-world impact," said **Douglas Van Citters, Dean and Professor, Thayer School of Engineering at Dartmouth**.

By maximizing the capability of its existing transmission system, Eversource anticipates that – under specific conditions – the project could unlock additional transfer capability that may mitigate or delay the need to construct certain new transmission facilities. Such an approach is estimated to cost significantly less than what would be required to build equivalent new transmission infrastructure while also reducing congestion costs on constrained transmission corridors and creating additional value for customers.

The partnership will continue as Eversource and Dartmouth Engineering will work with DOE through the award negotiation process to further develop and demonstrate how dynamic line rating technology can increase transmission capacity, strengthen reliability and support evolving energy demands across the region with an emphasis on affordability for customers. Pending successful negotiations and execution of a final award agreement, the award could represent approximately \$47.7 million in funding for the initiative, which would be expected to begin in 2027. Eversource's DREAM initiative was one of 31 projects selected across 26 states.

[More information on the DOE's SPARK program is available here.](#)

About Eversource

Eversource (NYSE: ES), celebrated as a national leader for its commitment to sustainability and corporate citizenship, is named among America's Most Responsible Companies by [Newsweek](#) for 2026 and recognized as the #1 utility on [USA Today's](#) list of America's Climate Leaders for 2025. Eversource is New Hampshire's largest electric utility, serving nearly 549,000 homes and businesses in 206 cities and towns. Eversource is proud to be recognized as the #1 contributor to United Way in New Hampshire. Eversource harnesses the commitment of more than 10,300 employees across three states to build a single, united company around the mission of safely delivering reliable energy with superior customer service. The #1 Energy Efficiency Provider in the Nation, the company is empowering a clean energy future in the Northeast, with nationally recognized energy efficiency solutions and successful programs to integrate new clean energy resources like a first-in-the-nation networked geothermal pilot project, solar, offshore wind, electric vehicles and battery storage, into the electric system. For more information, please visit [eversource.com](https://www.eversource.com), and follow us on [X](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

About Dartmouth Engineering

Dartmouth's Thayer School of Engineering prepares engineering leaders to address society's most pressing challenges through education, research and innovation centered on human needs. With an academic structure that encourages collaboration across disciplines, the school combines engineering expertise with Dartmouth's liberal arts tradition and a commitment to practical impact. Its undergraduate and graduate programs emphasize hands-on learning, design and entrepreneurship, while faculty and students advance research across energy, health, computing, materials and other fields. Through partnerships with industry, government and communities, Dartmouth Engineering translates discoveries into solutions that improve lives. For more information, visit engineering.dartmouth.edu.

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