



Working at the community level empowers local governments to take action against climate change in a way that is specific to their building stock and their population's priorities. Additionally, communities can often incubate and implement innovative ideas more nimbly than state or federal agencies. However, one of the biggest challenges that communities face is the lack of capacity – including expertise and bandwidth – needed to advance energy efficiency and decarbonization in buildings.

While statewide programs present the greatest opportunity for far-reaching impact, community-level initiatives are often able to be more innovative, faster-paced, and engage underserved populations in the process. NEEP deploys a two-pronged approach to assist state and local governments with their climate goals. The first focuses on accelerating the uptake of effective decarbonization policies and programs through regional action and consistency. The second focuses on advancing innovative decarbonization strategies through pilot programs and strategic partnerships.

In 2023, NEEP will drive consistency and collaboration amongst regional stakeholders by fostering leading-edge ideas, identifying and piloting emerging solutions, and disseminating lessons learned from the process. NEEP supports specific, well-defined decarbonization initiatives leading to accelerated market transformation across jurisdictions through topic-specific cohorts, partnerships, technical assistance, and resource development.

NEEP's 2023 Outcomes:

- Four states (Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, Rhode Island) pass or implement building decarbonization strategies.
- Six states, utilities, or program administrators increase support of and direct new resources towards community-level decarbonization initiatives while specifically addressing equity in disadvantaged communities through these programs.
- Fifteen jurisdictions pass or implement innovative decarbonization policies/programs targeting existing or new buildings.

NEEP's 2023 Activities:

NEEP works with partners to determine high priority work throughout the year. In 2023, this includes:

Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration: *NEEP engages key stakeholders to share expertise and lessons learned to help states and communities achieve their decarbonization goals. NEEP will work with full-time local government staff members, volunteers from energy committees, and other local energy champions to accommodate communities at various stages of their clean energy journeys.*

- **Regional Communities Distribution Network:** NEEP provides resources and relevant information to stakeholders working within and in collaboration with communities.
- **NEEP-supported Cohorts:** NEEP convenes topic-specific peer groups that work together to advance specific policies/programs.
- **State-Specific Community Networks:** NEEP supports peer exchange networks in each state comprised of community representatives.

- Working Groups: NEEP convenes several working groups including the MA Zero Energy Schools Working Group, the Maine Workforce Project Advisory Committee, the BEAM Advisory Committee, the Remotely Advisory Committee, and the Building Performance Standards (BPS) Working Group.
- Collaboration: NEEP monitors, communicates, presents, and coordinates with national and regional organizations (e.g., Massachusetts Facilities Administrators Association (MFAA), state specific ZE working groups, NH Local Energy Solutions, MA Green Communities, CT Energy Network, Vermont’s energy labeling working group, USDN, Rocky Mountain Institute Building Accelerators, and others)

Tracking, Analysis, Tools, and Reports: *NEEP tracks state and local programs across the region and develops actionable resources to support trends and best practices for advancing decarbonization programs – such as building energy performance standards, heating electrification initiatives, whole-building programs, and more.*

- White Paper: NEEP researches and reports on the topic of community driven electrification programs.
- Toolkits: NEEP develops and maintains actionable toolkits responsive to the needs of the NEEP-facilitated cohorts.
- Web-based Resources: NEEP develops and maintains several website resources, including the Center for Building Performance Standards, the Communities Commitments Tracker, and Community Action Planning for Energy Efficiency (CAPEE).
- Blog: NEEP produces blogs highlighting best practices and innovations in community leadership advancing decarbonization.

Technical Assistance: *NEEP provides direct, customizable technical assistance to states and communities on topics such as electrification initiatives, rating and disclosure policies, building energy performance standards, and whole-building retrofit solutions.*

- Technical Assistance: NEEP provides decarbonization assistance via research, reports, presentations, and briefings including presentations to state staff, advocates, and community leaders.
- Public Comments: NEEP responds to requests for public comments that provide insight and examples for communities to design successful decarbonization plans and programs.
- Model Language: NEEP responds to requests for policy guidance and model language for decarbonization plans.

Thought Leadership: *NEEP will partner with synergistic organizations to broadcast key themes about statewide and community level decarbonization initiatives.*

- Webinar Series: NEEP hosts a webinar series that will feature community initiatives and best practices.
- Events: NEEP will identify opportunities to promote innovative community programs and champion solutions at events including NEEP-run and industry-hosted summits, workshops, and other convenings.