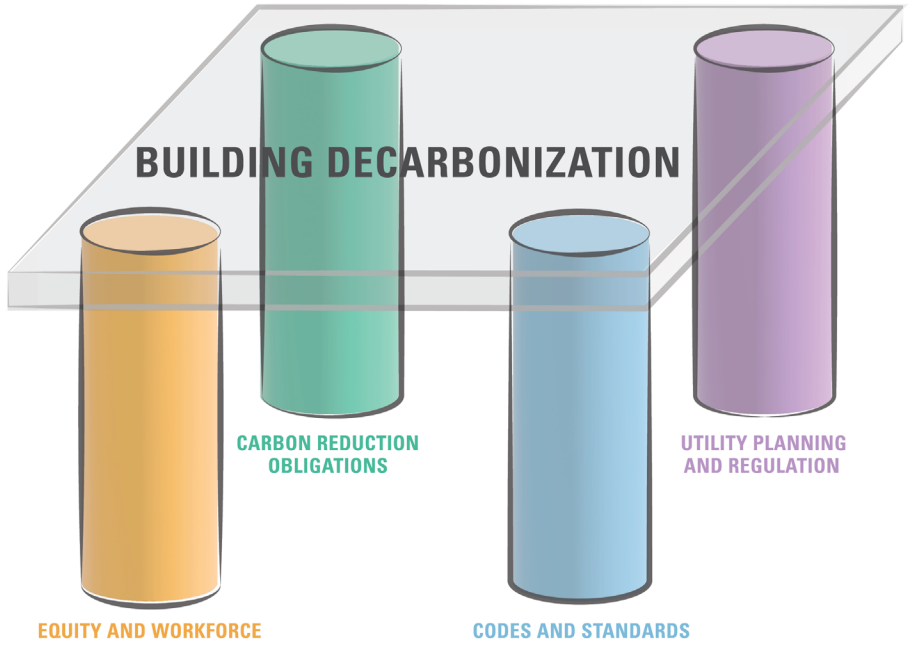
Regional Roundup

MAINE

NEEP's 2024 Regional Roundup provides a snapshot of Maine's current policies and progress towards greater energy efficiency and building decarbonization.

Policies and performance are organized across the four categories from NEEP's 2024 report, *Decarbonizing Buildings: How States can Set the Table for Success*. The categories, or "legs of the table," include Utility Planning and Regulation, Codes and Standards, Carbon Reduction Obligations, and Equity and Workforce.



- Efficiency Maine Trust (EMT), established in 2009, is an independent, quasi state agency established to plan and implement energy efficiency programs in Maine.
- In 2023, Maine passed The Beneficial Electrification Policy Act, which allows EMT to apply electricity ratepayer funds to fuel-switching measures when cost-effective and directs the Trust to develop beneficial electrification plans as part of the three-year planning process. Prior to the passage of this bill, EMT used RGGI funds to invest in fuel-switching measures.
- Maine is also one of the leaders in heat pump installations, due in part to EMT highly effective programs and statewide heat pump targets. In 2019, An Act to Transform Maine's Heat Pump Market established the goals of installing 100,000 heat pumps in Maine by 2025. EMT met this goal two years ahead of schedule and now aims for the higher goal of an additional 175,000 by 2027 pursuant to a new goal set by the governor in 2024.
- In addition to efforst in energy efficiency programs, Maine passed legislation in 2023 directing EMT to establish a home energy scoring system, which will estimate the energy use of the home and identify energy solutions to improve the building's efficiency. The state, through EMT, also has robust energy efficiency workforce development initiatives including the Qualified Partners List for the commercial and industrial sector and the Residential Registered Vendors for the residential sector.

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UTILITY PLANNING AND REGULATION

UTILITY PLANNING AND REGULATION

Utility Planning and Regulation identifies mandates and frameworks to ensure that utility investment, rates, and programs align with building decarbonization goals. This section includes a *Climate-Forward Energy Efficiency By-the-Numbers* table, which shows performance data for 2021 and current program goals for the state, an overview of policies the state has adopted to implement climate-forward energy efficiency programs, and any planning and regulation the state is pursuing to decarbonize the grid.

Climate-Forward Energy Efficiency by the Numbers		
	Maine	**Regional Average**
Savings as a Percent of Retail Sales in 2021*	Electric: 1.22% Gas: 0.36%	Electric: 1.13% Natural Gas: .43%
Low Income Spending Per Qualified Resident in 2021†	$45.70	$36.00
Current Program Goals	2025 Electric Savings: 8,436 MWh 2025 Heating Oil and Other Fuels Savings Goal†: 1,347,619 MMBtu GHG Reduction Goal†: 105.9 MTCO2e	

* Data from 2022 ACEEE State Scorecard.
† Data from Efficiency Maine Triennial Plan V: Budget and Performance Metrics.

Climate-Forward Energy Efficiency

Energy Efficiency Program Administrator	Maine's energy efficiency portfolio is implemented statewide by Efficiency Maine Trust (EMT), the independent, quasi-state agency established to plan and implement energy efficiency programs. Programs are implemented in a three-year cycle. As of fall 2024, EMT is currently implementing the Triennial Plan V for 2023-2025;. EMT has drafted and received Board approval for Triennial VI for 2026-2028. As of fall 2024, the 2026 – 2028 Plan is currently filed with the Public Utilities Commission pending approval.
Program Goals	Efficiency Performance Goals for FY2025 include: • Lifetime Benefits: $852 million • Summer Peak Demand Savings: 35.20 MW • Greenhouse Gas Reduction: 105.90 million tons of CO_2e • Electric Savings: 8,436 MWh • Heating Oil and Other: 1,347,619 MMBtu
Benefit Cost Analysis	*Base Test: Jurisdiction Specific Test* Non-Energy Impacts: Social cost of carbon and avoided fuel and water costs.
Utility Performance Incentives	No current policies in place.

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Climate-Forward Energy Efficiency

Fuel Switching Policies	• With the passage of An Act To Transform Maine's Heat Pump Market To Advance Economic Security and Climate Objectives in 2019, the state started counting fuel-switching savings from unregulated fuels in 2020. This act also directs EMT to use its forward capacity market revenues to supplement its heat pump incentive programs. • The Beneficial Electrification Policy Act (2023) allows EMT to apply electricity ratepayer funds to fuel-switching measures (e.g., from oil or gas to electricity) where those measures are cost-effective. • In 2023, EMT initiated a new requirement for heat pumps to cover at least 80% of a home's heating load for eligibility to receive new rebates, a requirement intended to encourage adoption of "whole house" heat pump systems.
Statewide Qualified Contractor Network	• EMT maintains a list of Qualified Partners who hold professional licenses and work in the commercial and industrial sector. They include electricians, HVAC technicians and manufacturers, weatherization technicians, plumbers, energy auditors and managers, architects, and engineers. Partners on the list gain access to training, technical assistance, added exposure and marketing support, and networking opportunities, and can display Certificates of Qualification. • EMT also maintains a list of Residential Registered Vendors who have met program requirements for heat pump training and work in the residential sector. Training includes both classroom instruction and hands-on exercises on installation, commissioning, service, rebates, loans, and inspections. As a result of Maine's 2019 legislation establishing a heat pump target for the state, EMT developed a course curriculum for registered trainers that supports heat pump installers and an online Heat Pump Basics Training Center required for all heat pump installers in the state.

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Climate-Forward Energy Efficiency

Centering Equity in Climate-Forward Efficiency Programs	• EMT has an internal equity working group and a Low-Income Advisory Group that helps staff consider income-related equity issues in its program designs and implementation. • EMT must spend at least 10% of funds or $2.6 million, whichever is greater, to low-income residential consumers and small business consumers, respectively. • As part of its annual reports, EMT tracks and reports the number of low- and moderate-income participants in underserved communities.

Long-Term Planning

Utility Clean Heat and Building Decarbonization Programs	• No current policies in place. • The Beneficial Electrification Policy Act (2023) mandated EMT to develop a three year beneficial electrification plan and established a definition for beneficial electrification for the state. It defines beneficial electrification as electrification of a technology or process that results in reduction in the use of a fossil fuels.
Long-Term Utility Planning	No current policies in place.

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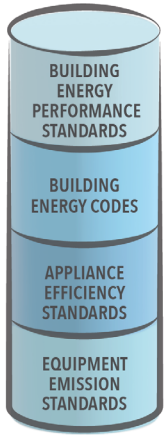
CODES AND STANDARDS



CODES AND STANDARDS

Codes and standards establish a clear timetable for improving the energy performance of new and existing buildings, appliances, and equipment, spurring changes in technologies and building practices. The Regional Roundup provides additional information on policies in this area that operate at the city level to highlight how communities are taking the lead. Programs such as benchmarking and home energy labeling programs are also included, even when just voluntary, as they can be a precursor for BPS or mandatory home energy score programs.

Building Energy Codes	The current Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code (MUBEC) based on the 2015 IECC can be accessed here. As of fall 2024, Maine is actively discussing the adoption of 2021 IECC. On July 31, 2024, the Department of Public Safety, Bureau of Building Codes and Standards (BBCS), published Proposed Rule Numbers 2024-P224 – 2024P230. As of fall 2024, Chapter 6 of the newly proposed MUBEC includes the base and stretch energy codes based on the 2021 IECC with amendments.
Stretch Energy Codes	In 2020, Maine's Technical Building Codes and Standards Board adopted the 2021 IECC as stretch code under its power to adopt, amend, and maintain the MUBEC pursuant to Title 10 M.R.S. §9722. The municipalities of Portland, South Portland, and Freeport have adopted the stretch code.
Building Performance Standards	No current policies in place.
Benchmarking	• Maine does not have a statewide benchmarking policy. • The city of Portland has a municipal ordinance requiring single-tenant buildings of 20,000 sq ft or more to report energy and water use data. Multi-tenant buildings of the same size are required to report once utilities are able to provide usage information in a convenient electronic format. Reporting is anticipated to start in 2025.

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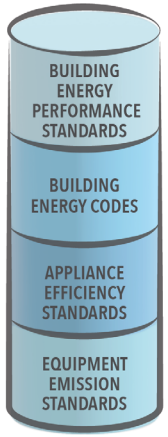
CODES AND STANDARDS



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Home Energy Labeling	• Maine's mandatory residential energy efficiency disclosure statement statute requires landlords to provide the amount and cost of energy consumption to prospective tenants upon request. • Maine passed legislation in 2023 directing EMT to establish a home energy scoring system, which can be required by counties or municipalities at the time of sale or for a home to be eligible for energy efficiency rebates and incentives.
Appliance Efficiency Standards	Maine passed the Act to Establish Appliance Energy and Water Standards in 2021. For more information on what appliances are covered, see NEEP's Federal and State Appliance Standards Tracker.
Equipment Emission Standards	No current policies in place.

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CARBON REDUCTION OBLIGATIONS

CARBON REDUCTION OBLIGATIONS

Carbon reduction obligations set performance requirements for obligated parties, such as energy providers, to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions or install clean heating systems. This section also includes any policies that articulate statewide climate goals and involvement in a regional cap and invest program because both programs are aligned with the policies under carbon reduction obligations and can be a part of a future clean heat standard or statewide cap and invest.

Climate Goals	Maine's 38 MRSA §576-A (2019) sets mandatory greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets for the state of 45% reduction by 2030 and 80% reduction by 2050 from 1990 levels. The state must achieve carbon neutrality by 2045.
Clean Heat Standard	No current policies in place.
Regional Cap-and-Invest	Maine participates in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. The state invests most of its proceeds in energy efficiency and beneficial electrification programs overseen by EMT, including fuel-switching programs; the remainder of the proceeds goes to administration.
State Cap-and-Invest	No current policies in place.
Centering Equity in Carbon Reduction Obligations	The Equity Subcommittee of the Maine Climate Council supports ongoing planning and implementation of the state's climate strategies to ensure shared benefits across diverse populations in Maine. Following two years of deliberation (2021-2023), the Equity Subcommittee adopted its final recommendations for submission to the Maine Climate Council in March 2023.

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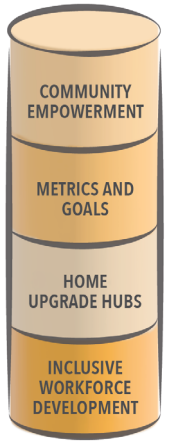
EQUITY AND WORKFORCE



EQUITY AND WORKFORCE

Equity and workforce investments address housing and workforce inequities by empowering historically marginalized communities and ensuring that the energy transition is just and inclusive. This section includes policies that prioritize community empowerment through defining environmental justice communities and/or convening community members to have meaningful input on climate and energy policies in the state. It also highlights any statewide goals or metrics that mandate programs to deliver a certain level of benefits to communities. Finally, it provides a snapshot of the inclusive workforce programs and policies within each state.

Statewide Equity Initiatives

Community Empowerment	• The Equity Subcommittee of the Maine Climate Council supports ongoing planning and implementation of the state's climate strategies to ensure shared benefits across diverse populations in Maine. Following two years of deliberation (2021-2023), the Equity Subcommittee adopted its final recommendations for submission to the Maine Climate Council in March 2023. • EMT has an internal equity working group, a Low-Income Advisory Group, and an EV Advisory Group which help staff consider income-related equity issues in its program designs and implementation.
Metrics and Goals	• For the Electric Efficiency and Conservation Fund, EMT must spend at least 10% of funds or $2.6 million, whichever is greater, to low-income residential consumers and small business consumers, respectively. • EMT tracks and reports the number of low- and moderate-income participants in economically disadvantaged communities.
Home Upgrade Hubs	No policies in place.

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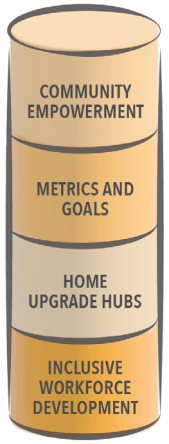
EQUITY AND WORKFORCE



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Inclusive Workforce Development

Inclusive Workforce Development	The Maine Governor's Energy Office runs the Clean Energy Partnership, which offers clean energy workforce development and training programs to support Governor Mills' goal of more than doubling the clean energy and energy efficiency workforce from 2020 to 2030. Since 2022, ME GEO has awarded nearly $5 million in federal funds via the CEP for various projects. Equity-focused projects include the Maine Math & Science Alliance, which focuses on rural high school students, and an expansion to PassivhausMAINE, which will expand its low-cost training program while prioritizing rural communities and underrepresented populations.

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MAINE'S BUILDING DECARBONIZATION TABLE

UTILITY PLANNING AND REGULATION

Efficiency Maine Trust

Beneficial Electrification Policy Act

EQUITY AND WORKFORCE

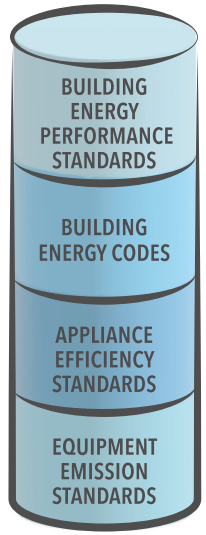
Equity Working Groups and Subcommittee

CARBON REDUCTION OBLIGATIONS

Climate Goals

RGGI

CODES AND STANDARDS



MUBEC

Appliance Standards