



# NORTHEAST ENERGY EFFICIENCY PARTNERSHIPS 2026 PROGRAM PORTFOLIO & 2030 STRATEGIC VISION

## OUR MISSION AND VISION

Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships (NEEP) is a non-partisan, non-profit organization founded in 1996 –proudly marking 30 years leading regional collaboration in energy efficiency so the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic region can lower energy bills, reduce air and carbon pollution, create jobs, and improve energy and climate resilience.

We serve Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and West Virginia - working alongside partners in state and local government, utilities, businesses, and communities to advance a cleaner, more affordable, and more resilient regional energy future.

These trusted partnerships, combined with our research and policy analysis, move the region toward this future – one where the region’s homes, buildings, businesses, and communities are transformed into efficient, affordable, low-carbon, resilient places to live, work, and play. Our work helps the Northeast remain a national leader in energy efficiency innovation, setting models that inspire progress nationwide.

## OUR VALUES

Our core values reflect who we are, guide how we work, and shape the culture we cultivate with our partners and communities.

### **Collaboration**

We believe authentic partnerships are essential to developing and implementing shared solutions. By convening diverse organizations and individuals, listening deeply, and building strong coalitions, we foster innovative problem-solving and amplify regional impact.

### **Integrity**

We are committed to realistic and practical solutions. Our work is grounded in analysis, transparent methods, and trusted research that supports policymakers, practitioners, and communities across the region.

### **Community**

People are at the center of everything we do. We value shared learning, respect, and inclusion, recognizing that communities thrive when connected and united in purpose. We prioritize solutions that uplift those historically left behind.

### **Innovation**

We embrace creativity and curiosity to address complex challenges. By exploring new technologies, policies, and program models—and by centering long-term thinking and diverse perspectives—we help spark ideas that drive market and community transformation.

To help the region meet its energy, climate, and affordability goals, NEEP has established four strategic pillars that guide our work through 2030. These pillars reflect the essential components of a thriving, equitable, affordable, and low-carbon energy system:



Energy efficiency is prioritized as a core strategy for energy affordability, energy planning, and economy-wide emissions reductions, with a focus on reducing energy burden.



Regional markets shift to efficient, electric technologies for buildings, with an emphasis on co-promotion with energy efficiency and equitable adoption in underserved communities.



Homes and buildings become flexible grid resources, enabled by policies and programs that support load flexibility when and where it is needed.



A highly qualified, diverse workforce supports the region's energy efficiency and heat pump market transformation and reflects the communities it serves.



The technologies and strategies needed to create efficient, affordable, low-carbon homes and businesses already exist. The challenge—and our focus—is scaling them rapidly and equitably. Across all four pillars, NEEP advances a more sustainable regional economy through:

## 1 Strong Policies and Regulations

We support the development and implementation of advanced building codes, appliance efficiency and emissions standards, energy efficiency resource standards aligned with GHG emission reductions, buildings and industrial energy efficiency programs, electrification targets for utilities and state agencies, building performance standards (BPS), clean heat standards, and energy equity requirements for program administrators.

## 2 Market Transformation

We promote strategies for energy efficiency and electric space and water heating, including innovative program models that drive consumer demand, midstream approaches that drive contractor and distributor participation, and workforce development that prioritizes a diverse and experienced workforce.

## 3 Community Solutions

We help communities with replicable models for low-carbon retrofits, multifamily affordable housing improvements, cohorts for building benchmarking, electrification, and BPS, and workforce development – ensuring solutions are grounded in local needs and priorities.

Across the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic, NEEP pursues these policies, regulations, market transformation strategies, and community-led solutions through the following approaches:

### **Technical Assistance and Research-Informed Advocacy**

NEEP provides one-on-one technical assistance to state and local partners and works through cohort models, in which NEEP convenes and supports groups that are linked by geography or topic/interest. Both models are needed to drive change more rapidly. Regional consistency can transform the market and accelerate progress. At the same time, state and local conditions vary and much support needs to be customized to the unique policy environment.

### **Analysis, Tools, Research**

NEEP conducts independent analysis and develops actionable toolkits, web-based resources, online policy and program trackers, case studies, and reports to support and advance regional initiatives that drive innovative and integrated energy efficient and electrification solutions. NEEP focuses on developing resources driven by partner priorities, as well as impactful dissemination of these resources – getting them into the hands of the organizations that need them, when they need them – so that they can take action.

### **Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration**

NEEP has a track record of developing cross-sector, cross-jurisdiction partnerships to develop, advance, accelerate, and integrate solutions to decarbonize the building sector. NEEP holds virtual events and in-person convenings that bring together energy practitioners, state and local policymakers, utility experts, industry leaders, consumer and community representatives, and problem solvers. NEEP designs its events to inspire attendees by highlighting tangible, actionable solutions in interactive sessions to continue to advance energy efficiency.

### **Thought Leadership**

NEEP helps influence the narrative around energy efficiency and decarbonization by positioning itself as a consistent, reliable expert source of information and resources, and by championing leadership across the region. This leadership position, paired with our regional knowledge, provides us with a unique position as regional thought leaders.

### **Communications**

As a regional and national leader, NEEP is well positioned to pursue strategic outreach through various communication channels. NEEP can utilize a range of pathways to disseminate key messages and amplify its work, including research publications, policy briefs, speaking engagements, social media and press releases, and NEEP newsletters that deliver insights to our diverse audience.



# PROGRAM PRIORITIES 2026

NEEP advances energy efficiency across four core programs: Public Policy and Programs, Building Energy Codes and Standards, Community Solutions, and Technology Market Transformation. In 2026, NEEP's program areas will engage regional leaders in focusing on affordable solutions to help households and businesses lower energy bills through energy efficiency. Here, we provide an overview of each program area.

## Public Policy and Programs

A successful and affordable energy efficiency transition for homes, businesses, and communities in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic requires a suite of complementary policies to meet ambitious goals and ensure that no one is left behind. NEEP will support our states' climate and affordability goals by prioritizing energy efficiency as a least-cost resource and ensuring equal or increased growth and investment in low-income and disadvantaged communities. States play an important role in catalyzing a just transition to energy-efficient buildings and a flexible, reliable grid through utility regulation, environmental regulations, legislation, and new efficient electrification policies. NEEP will work with state energy offices, environmental agencies, public utility commissions, and non-profit organizations across the region to disseminate best-practice programs and policies that advance energy efficiency, electrification, affordable rate design, and grid flexibility.

## Building Energy Codes and Standards

Building energy codes, building benchmarking & performance standards, and appliance standards ensure that buildings and homes meet and exceed minimum energy efficiency performance, are low-carbon emitters, and enable advanced technologies like electrification from the outset of a building's lifecycle before costly retrofits would be needed. NEEP facilitates collaboratives and updates stakeholders and communities about adoption and implementation debates and progress. NEEP provides technical assistance and educational resources on the benefits and cost savings of electric-readiness, electrification, and zero energy codes.

## Community Solutions

Community-level initiatives engage underserved populations and offer innovative, locally tailored solutions. However, communities lack sufficient capacity – including expertise and bandwidth – to advance energy efficiency and decarbonization in homes and businesses. NEEP deploys a two-pronged approach to assist local governments and communities with their climate goals. First, we go broad by providing multiple communities with just-in-time, relevant information so that they can implement their own strategies. Second, we go deep by supporting a few strategically selected communities in implementing significant pilot activities and then documenting and sharing lessons learned through case studies and exemplars. In each instance, NEEP seeks to ensure that community members have opportunities to participate equitably in the process by advancing procedural, distributive, and structural equity.

## Technology Market Transformation

NEEP accelerates market adoption of high-efficiency technologies and practices, including residential and commercial heat pumps for space and water heating. NEEP leads multi-sector stakeholder collaboration, develops strategies, tools, and resources for policy makers, program administrators, utilities, contractors, advocates, and industry. In the residential sector, we strive for high-efficiency heat pumps to reach 65% of equipment sales by 2030. The region faces numerous challenges in achieving this goal, including upfront and operational cost premiums, insufficient contractor awareness and training, and program design that lacks important components of market transformation such as midstream and upstream intervention in the HVAC market. NEEP also examines and promotes opportunities for energy efficiency among large energy users, including industrial customers and data centers.



In 2026, the region is facing rising energy prices and rising energy demand. Our annual portfolio responds to this heightened attention on energy affordability, while continuing to support state progress on climate and equity goals.

### Strengthen state energy efficiency policy for energy affordability

NEEP will assist states in delivering energy efficiency as an energy affordability solution. This includes modernizing rate design, aligning efficiency as a low-cost energy and capacity resource, and ensuring low-income and disadvantaged communities receive increased access and investment. The work spans technical assistance, research, advocacy support, and convenings that guide states from policy to practice.

**Technical assistance and advocacy:** Provide targeted assistance on energy efficiency and rate design to states that are at critical junctures in their policymaking process. We will provide resources, comments and technical advice to states, regulatory agencies, and nonprofits to advance equitable access to energy efficiency benefits, alignment of energy efficiency programs with affordability and climate policies, and steady investments in cost-effective efficiency, electrification, and demand flexibility programs.

**Convenings of State Energy officials:** Convene representatives from the State Energy Offices regularly to address emerging issues and collaboratively develop solutions to implement affordable efficiency, electrification, and grid demand policies. This forum also allows states to share best practices in program implementation and discuss policies and programs on the state and federal level with one another.

**Research and collaboration on rate design:** In 2025, NEEP convened a research-focused working group and published *Modern Rate Design in the Northeast: Unlocking Efficiency, Affordability, and Electrification*. In 2026, we will convene a similar working group to inform a second paper on rate design for adoption of heat pumps and focus on implementation of modern residential electric rate design. The working group will primarily be state energy offices with utilities, rate design experts, non-profits and consumer advocacy organizations joining to provide insight and subject matter expertise. In 2026, NEEP hopes to see four states adopt rate design changes that align with energy efficiency, electrification, demand flexibility, and improved affordability for low-income customers.

**Evolution of energy efficiency resource standards to remain focused on least-cost, demand-side resources:** Provide thought leadership and support for the evolution of energy efficiency programs to incorporate beneficial electrification when it is targeted to households that will save money and/or as a demand response strategy. We will support implementation through guidance on measuring success beyond energy savings and setting goals based on equity and climate outcomes.

## Advance modern and affordable building codes, appliance standards, and performance policies

NEEP will support state and local governments in promoting buildings that meet high-efficiency, high-performance, electric-ready, and low-carbon expectations. NEEP will support adoption and implementation of the 2024 IECC, stretch and zero-energy codes, benchmarking and building performance standards, and both efficiency- and emissions-based appliance standards. In 2026, our work will focus on how codes and standards deliver improved energy affordability and high-quality construction.

### Standards implementation

Maintain and expand the NEEP State Appliance Standards Database (SASD) to assist states with implementing and enforcing appliance standards for water and energy efficiency. NEEP will partner with manufacturers to build regional consistency around appliance standards to accelerate market transformation. NEEP co-convenes a working group with the Appliance Standards Awareness Project (ASAP) to facilitate discussion on appliance standards with State Energy Offices. We will also explore adding products with emissions-based appliance standards into SASD.

### Collaboratives on base and stretch codes

Facilitate state code collaboratives in Maine, Massachusetts, and New Jersey to provide technical support and address barriers to adoption and implementation of stronger base and stretch/zero/electrification codes. NEEP will facilitate a working group to support seven states in adopting 2024 IECC and optional appendices. Continue to facilitate the Mid-Atlantic Energy Code Coalition for states and local governments to support regional alignment in energy codes. Convene and facilitate the Franklin County Energy Code Collaborative to connect and assist communities in Massachusetts interested in adopting the Specialized Code.

### Technical assistance on codes and affordability

Develop and disseminate research, case studies, briefs, guidance and provide technical assistance for states with a focus on how codes help make homes and buildings more affordable. This includes topics that advance efficient and electric-ready building codes, building standards, and appliance standards, such as meeting stretch or "above base" codes, electric ready codes, and next generation embodied carbon and resiliency codes, in addition to a series of Massachusetts case studies. NEEP aims to assist states or jurisdictions to adopt and/or implement 2024 IECC with appendices or strengthening amendments and will support states or jurisdictions for above-base codes. The team aims to support regional progress in compliance and enforcement rates of new codes and see the growth of a well-qualified and diverse code official workforce.

### Building Benchmarking and Performance Standards

Support jurisdictions in adopting or implementing benchmarking and BPS policies. Equitable policy design to ensure access for under-resourced buildings.

### Accelerate market transformation for heat pumps and high-efficiency technologies

NEEP focuses on shifting the region's technology markets toward energy-efficient and efficient electric equipment, especially heat pumps. In 2026, priorities include maintaining the cold-climate ASHP product list and supporting market transformation through approaches that complement financial incentives, including contractor training and installer networks, and advancing upstream and midstream strategies. We will also prioritize opportunities for more efficiency through large energy users.

**Working groups to support regional best practices:** Continue the Residential Heating Electrification Working Group, and Commercial/Multifamily Heating Electrification Working group to engage a diverse group of stakeholders that advance long-term regional market transformation strategies to speed the market introduction and adoption of high-performance heat pumps for space and water heating.

**Cold Climate ASHP (ccASHP) Product List:** Engage on emerging tech "cold-climate" specification development (including window heat pumps) and continue to develop NEEP's Cold Climate ASHP Product List. This nationally recognized resource assists heat pump market actors in identifying ASHPs suitable for cold climate applications. The list currently includes specifications for heat pumps, packaged terminal heat pumps, and variable refrigerant flow systems. The team is launching a new partnership with Air-Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Institute (AHRI), which will support the enhanced collection of heat pump performance data for NEEP's ccASHP Product list.

**Provide regional and national technical leadership on high-efficiency technologies:** Serve as the regional lead for national market transformation projects, including heat pump water heating, building envelope, and heat pump space heating.

**Large Energy Users:** Support the growth of energy efficiency and demand flexibility among large energy users including large multifamily, commercial, campuses, data centers and industrial customers through state and utility programs. The team will conduct a landscape analysis and market assessment on Large Energy Users, including data centers, in 2026.

**Heating Electrification Workshop:** Host NEEP's hallmark Heating Electrification Workshop (HEW) in the Fall of 2026. The annual event brings together a diverse set of stakeholders, and underscores the critical roles in market transformation, while convening and connecting NEEP partners.

**AC to Heat Pump Strategy:** Publish an analysis on the opportunity for customers with central air conditioners to switch to two-way ACs (heat pumps) at the time of replacement. NEEP will also convene an implementation cohort. The report will include strategies and actions steps that scale the heat pump market by swapping one-way ACs with Heat Pumps.

## Build local capacity for community-driven energy efficiency and decarbonization

NEEP supports communities as they implement energy efficiency and electrification solutions, particularly those serving low- and moderate-income residents. In 2026, priorities include partnerships with municipal leaders, multifamily retrofit strategies, community-based energy coaching and pilots, and resources that help local governments and community partners design and deliver equitable programs. This work ensures that state-level policies translate into real benefits for households and neighborhoods.

**Increased municipal leadership:** Increase the number of municipalities advancing innovative outreach and education programs, including energy coaching that leverages NEEP's Municipal Energy Coach program implementation toolkit developed in 2025. Support municipal knowledge and capacity-building for energy efficiency programs that serve customers living in low- and moderate-income rental housing by engaging in working groups and publishing resources.

**Multifamily retrofit case studies and research:** Publish NEEP's Multifamily Retrofit Case Study Database to provide regional stakeholders with example projects and data analysis to guide multifamily retrofit program design, implementation, and project delivery. Publish a Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) white paper that identifies barriers, analyzes how energy efficiency programs can successfully serve unsubsidized affordable multifamily housing, and highlights best practices. The research will combine quantitative program data with qualitative insights from multifamily program administrators to inform future strategies for programs that improve affordability, comfort, and health for low- and moderate-income renters.

**Thermal Energy Networks (TENs) Working Group:** Promote geothermal heating and cooling through working group facilitation, stakeholder engagement, and technical assistance that informs policy and regulatory development, streamlines public-private partnerships, assesses affordability and increases the number of shovel-ready projects. The working group will convene utilities, state energy offices, experts, and CBOs to address topics prioritized by working group members, including program design, implementation feasibility, workforce development, and ownership structures.

### Expand and diversify the clean energy workforce

A skilled workforce remains essential to achieving policy, program, and market goals. In 2026, NEEP will prioritize inclusive workforce pathways, HVAC and geothermal installer training, code official capacity, and partnerships that prepare workers for in-demand roles across the energy efficiency sector.

**Inclusive Workforce Development:** Support states, municipalities, and workforce organizations with the development of equitable and inclusive pathways to in-demand, stable jobs in the energy efficiency sector. The team will support states in achieving workforce development targets by building on previous and ongoing work, such as the ReMaine Clean Energy Internship program in collaboration with the Maine Department of Energy Resources.

**HVAC Contractor Education:** Support the growth of ASHP and GSHP installers in the region through the development and publication of a best practices guide for heat pump installer networks. Seek opportunities to grow awareness and confidence of HVAC contractors to sell and install heat pumps through contractor training in the region.



NEEP convenes a series of in-person and virtual events that bring together a diverse network of energy efficiency and building decarbonization leaders and problem solvers to learn, connect, and collaborate. These signature events blend national expertise with local knowledge, creating a platform to highlight solutions and foster the necessary relationships to understand, access, and leverage resources that advance the region’s energy, environment and economic goals.

Event	Dates	Location
Ready, Set, Scale. A NEEP Webinar Series	Year-Round	Online
Summit 2026	June 2 - 4	Baltimore, Maryland
Heating Electrification Workshop (HEW2026)	October 20 - 22	Portland, Maine

