NORTHEAST ENERGY EFFICIENCY PARTNERSHIPS 2030 STRATEGY & 2025 PROGRAM PORTFOLIO

Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships (NEEP) is a non-partisan, non-profit organization founded in 1996. We serve the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions, working in Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and West Virginia.

OUR MISSION AND VISION

VISION: We envision the region's homes, buildings, businesses, and communities transformed into efficient, affordable, low-carbon, resilient places to live, work, and play.

MISSION: We drive regional collaboration and best practices 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.

OUR VALUES

Core values spell out an organization's vision for the future and help shape its culture in the present. They define an organization's identity, including its philosophies, beliefs, and principles. As a mission-driven nonprofit, NEEP is motivated by a set of core values that underpin everything we do. These values are:

Collaboration

NEEP knows that authentic partnerships with a diverse range of organizations and individuals lay the foundation for successfully developing and implementing shared solutions. We meet people where they are, convening and listening to committed individuals and organizations. By building effective teams and coalitions, we foster improved problem-solving, innovative solutions, and greater impacts.

Integrity

NEEP is committed to finding realistic and practical solutions. We work with integrity and humility to produce fact-based research, tools, and analysis. Our thorough review processes, transparency in sources, and rigorous methods yield trusted publications, tools, and technical assistance.

Community

When NEEP looks for solutions, we see people first. People and partnerships are always at the forefront of our work to build a more sustainable future and a culture fueled by respect and appreciation. We value shared learning and believe that collective efforts lead to greater achievements. We believe that individuals and organizations thrive when they are connected and united in purpose.

Innovation

NEEP provides creative solutions to complex challenges. We seek new technologies, programs, and policies for market and community transformation that deliver benefits within our region and beyond. We believe in curiosity, continuously seeking better solutions, and being willing to adapt. We value continuous learning as it shapes our ability to be prepared for the unexpected, think long-term, center the perspectives of people who have historically been marginalized, and spark new ideas.

2030 STRATEGIC PILLARS

NEEP sets ambitious goals to drive market, policy and regulatory changes for the region by 2030. NEEP serves 13 Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states and jurisdictions including CT, DC, DE, MD, MA, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT, and WV. To guide our work and drive the region to achieve its energy, climate, and affordability goals, NEEP has set 2030 strategic plan pillars in four major areas. All components will be necessary to achieve success. This framework provides an umbrella under which we set our annual outcomes. Our 2030 strategic plan pillars are:

The region prioritizes energy efficiency as a key component to energy affordability, energy planning, and economy-wide emissions reductions to achieve consistent all-fuel emissions reductions with a focus on approaches that reduce energy burden.

The regional market shifts to primarily efficient, electric building and transportation technologies with an emphasis on both co-promotion with energy efficiency and uptake in underserved communities.

States and utilities implement policies and programs that enable homes, buildings, and vehicle charging to serve as flexible load when and where the grid needs the resources.

The region supports a highly qualified energy efficiency and heat pump workforce that reflects the communities they serve.

State and local governments face rising energy prices for their residents and businesses and concerns about load growth. Energy efficiency serves as an important low-cost resource to the utility system and a tool to help customers lower energy bills. State and local policymakers must continue to innovate in program design, regional coordination, and scalable policy solutions to be successful.

Most states in the Northeast have set ambitious goals to reduce GHG emissions by 40-50 percent by 2030 and to net zero emissions by 2050. Energy efficiency and electrification of the buildings, industry, and transportation sectors are key components to achieving these goals. Local governments also have ambitious goals and policy levers to reduce emissions through energy efficiency and electrification. Alongside GHG goals, state and local leaders have committed to advance equity by investing in homes and communities that have historically been left out.

The Northeast states lead the nation in implementing energy efficiency programs. These impacts reach well beyond the region. Their success inspires other leaders nationwide to raise the bar, and their lessons learned ensure that other jurisdictions follow models that work.

OUR APPROACH

Most of the solutions to make our homes and businesses energy efficient and low carbon are available now. The challenge is to rapidly scale these technologies, policies, and program models to support 2030 and 2050 goals.

Across all four of our 2030 pillars, NEEP advances a more energy-efficient and sustainable regional economy by ensuring the successful implementation of:

1. **Strong policies and regulations** to reduce emissions from homes and businesses, including advanced building codes, appliance efficiency and emissions standards, energy efficiency resource standards aligned with GHG, 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 strategies** for energy efficiency and electric space and water heating, including innovative program models that activate consumer demand, midstream approaches that drive contractor and distributor participation, and workforce development that prioritizes a diverse and experienced workforce.

3. **Community-led solutions** that include replicable program and business models for low-carbon retrofits, strategies to improve efficiency in multifamily affordable housing, community transportation planning, community cohorts for building benchmarking, electrification, and BPS, and locally-driven workforce development programs.

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 (for example, braiding new federal funding streams with existing funds). Both models are needed to drive change more rapidly. Regional consistency can transform the market and is suited to a faster rate of progress. At the same time, state and local conditions vary and much support requires customization to unique policy environments. NEEP serves as a technical expert – and brings other technical experts to the table – to provide information, briefings, models, opportunities for peer-learning, and connections to more customized technical assistance where needed.

OUR APPROACH

Analysis, Tools, and 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 and impactful dissemination of these resources – getting them into the hands of the organizations that need them, when they need them – so that they can act.

Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration: NEEP has a long track record of developing cross-sector, cross-jurisdiction partnerships and bringing stakeholders together to develop, advance, accelerate, and integrate solutions that advance energy efficiency. NEEP uses virtual and in-person engagement opportunities including an annual Summit, workshops, stakeholder working groups, and a webinar series. These forums also serve as a way for states and communities to develop new partnerships and solutions.

Thought Leadership: NEEP helps influence the narrative around energy efficiency and decarbonization by positioning itself as consistent, reliable expert sources of information and resources, and by championing leadership across the region. This leadership positions us well for the other strategies.

2025 PROGRAM OUTCOMES

NEEP marks progress towards our 2030 strategic goals with annual program outcomes. These metrics track both NEEP's impact and the region's progress towards its energy, climate, and affordability commitments. NEEP's 2025 Program Activities, detailed next, support the achievement of these key outcomes:

PROGRAM	OUTCOME
Codes & Standards	NEEP supports three states in implementing 2024 IECC with appendices or strengthening amendments, and two states or jurisdictions in implementing above-base codes..
	NEEP supports the region in developing a well-qualified code official workforce by developing two state specific baseline assessments and two roadmaps.
	NEEP supports three states in implementing appliance efficiency standards and two in developing low-NOx standards for water heaters.
Policy & Programs	The region sees increased investment in and prioritization of energy efficiency as a tool for emissions reductions and as a least-cost grid resource.
	Four states in the region implement improvements in the design and delivery of energy efficiency and electrification programs, in low-income and disadvantaged communities, as measured through increased program investments.
	Four states advance energy efficiency policy or program changes – through program and policy reform, rate design strategies, or other regulatory strategies – to increase the adoption of beneficial electrification while addressing consumer affordability.
Technology Market Transformation	NEEP supports regional ASHP market penetration growth of at least five percent for small equipment; and regional ASHP programs meet or exceed their 2025 goals.
	NEEP supports the growth of large multifamily and commercial electrification projects through state and utility programs.
	The number of air source heat pump and ground source heat pump installers listed on qualified-contractor lists grows by 10 percent regionwide.
Community Solutions	Three jurisdictions in the NEEP region advance implementation of building performance standards that invest in under-resourced buildings and maintain or improve energy and/or housing affordability and that apply to new and existing buildings.
	NEEP supports the region by developing a quantitative baseline assessment of energy efficiency programs for multifamily properties that reduce emissions and improve affordability, comfort, and health for low and moderate-income communities.
	NEEP supports three jurisdictions to promote geothermal heating and cooling by advancing policies that increase the number of shovel-ready projects, streamlining public-private partnerships, and promoting utility ownership models, particularly in environmental justice communities.

2025 PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

In 2025, NEEP will work across its four program areas to engage regional leaders in collaboration to equitably transform our homes and businesses to be energy efficient and low carbon: Public Policy and Programs, Building Energy Codes and Appliance Standards, Community Solutions, and Technology Market Transformation. This section provides an overview of each program, along with a summary of the 2025 activities that will support these outcomes.

PUBLIC POLICY AND PROGRAMS

A successful energy efficiency transition for homes, businesses, and communities in the Northeast will require a suite of complementary policies to ensure that no one is left behind. Policies are evolving to support industry, consumers, and other market actors to achieve the level of equitable decarbonization articulated in our states' climate goals and to manage issues around energy affordability and load growth. NEEP's 2025 plan recognizes that states will play an increasingly important role over the next several years in catalyzing a just transition and a flexible, reliable grid through utility regulation, environmental regulations, and new policies, such as clean heat standards. NEEP works with state energy offices, environmental agencies, and public utility commissions across the region to disseminate best practices and to enact policies that advance energy efficiency, electrification, and grid flexibility to optimize grid-level resources. NEEP also convenes utilities and other market actors to help states leverage data to design programs that identify those customers with the highest need and ensure that they are not left behind as we move to decarbonize. Finally, NEEP collaborates across state agencies to harmonize housing, environmental, and energy policies, and to help states creatively leverage various funding streams to facilitate energy efficiency at scale.

Proposed Targeted Work

- **Technical assistance and advocacy:** Provide targeted assistance to states that are leading on energy efficiency and are at critical junctures in their policymaking processes. For example, MD, NJ, NY, PA, and MA are making major decisions on multi-year efficiency and electrification plans in 2025. We will provide resources, comments, and advice to states, regulatory agencies, and other nonprofits to advocate for increases in equitable access to energy efficiency benefits, alignment of programs with climate policies, and increased investments in electrification and efficiency programs.
- **Arming advocates with research:** Monitor policies and regulations, bills, and dockets in states; track national policy work, and provide research and support to local groups based on regional best practices and political insights.

2025 PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

- **Creation of the New England Heat Pump Accelerator:** Work with five New England states to develop a regional governance structure, release an RFP for a regional implementer for this new regional mid-stream heat pump program, and support program design and launch.
- **Convenings of state energy officials:** Convene a states-only State Energy Office Working Group on implementation of single family and multifamily efficiency and electrification programs. The content will be tailored to the needs of state energy offices and will explore common challenges and models to help states build effective, enduring programs. We will invite utilities, program administrators, and other industry experts to participate in this working group to ensure effective coordination among stakeholders, support scalable solutions, and avoid duplication of efforts.
- **Research and collaboration on rate design:** Convene regional stakeholders and experts to gather feedback and publish research on rate design for energy efficiency, electrification, affordability, and equitable outcomes. Leading states like MA and CA are reforming customer rates to better align with electrification and equity goals. This paper will summarize the current landscape of rate proceedings in the Northeast, challenges, and options for near- and long-term rate reform. The research will also address energy burden and other equity considerations, including time-of-use (TOU) rates, percentage of income payment plans (PIPPs), and heat pump rates.
- **Reimagining gas efficiency programs:** Compile the latest trends, provide case studies, and highlight options for states to modify gas efficiency programs and align them with affordability, equity, and decarbonization goals. This paper will help states lay the groundwork for what replaces these legacy programs as states continue to phase out incentives for new, efficient gas appliances.
- **Maintaining energy efficiency investments:** Publish a report on the current landscape of energy efficiency in New Hampshire and lay out opportunities for policy advancement. In collaboration with local partners, convene a working group that focuses on energy efficiency priorities.
- **Evolution of energy efficiency resource standards:** Provide thought leadership and support for the evolution of energy efficiency programs to incorporate beneficial electrification and other non-traditional components, including developing materials measuring success beyond energy savings and setting goals based on equity and climate outcomes.
- **Emerging policies:** Support states to work across energy and environmental offices on coordinating energy efficiency programs with long-term building decarbonization policies, including developing an action plan covering the design of policies that support building decarbonization, such as clean heat standards, cap-and-invest programs, building performance standards, and others.

BUILDING ENERGY CODES AND APPLIANCE STANDARDS

Building energy codes and appliance standards ensure that buildings and homes meet and exceed minimum energy efficiency performance, are low carbon emitters, are safe and resilient, and lock in priorities like electrification from the outset of a building's lifecycle. NEEP facilitates state code collaboratives and updates stakeholders and communities about adoption and implementation benefits and progress. NEEP provides technical assistance and educational resources on the advantages and cost savings associated with electric-readiness, electrification, stretch codes, and zero energy codes. NEEP works proactively with states and communities to share regional lessons learned and to raise awareness of regional trends before states finalize their code updates. NEEP supports the nation's leading states in advancing the adoption, implementation, and compliance with appliance efficiency standards. We also partner with other nonprofits to educate states about the potential for emissions-based appliance standards as a building decarbonization tool.

Proposed Targeted Work

- **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. As federal standards are at risk, states will need to do more to save energy and reduce emissions by adopting and enforcing their own standards.
- **Emissions-based standards:** Partner with other nonprofits to educate states about the potential for emissions-based appliance standards as a building decarbonization tool and the potential for energy efficiency programs to support affordable, equitable standards regulations. Explore adding products with emissions-based appliance standards into SASD.
- **Code official workforce:** Use results of 2024 regional code official workforce gap analysis to develop regional and state-specific training roadmaps. Increased code official capacity will be an essential component of building code compliance and ensuring the emissions reductions promised from these policies.
- **Collaboratives on base and stretch codes:** Facilitate state code collaboratives in Maine, Massachusetts, and New Jersey to provide technical support and advance state-specific solutions. Convene working group to support states in adopting 2024 IECC and optional appendices.
- **Technical assistance on codes:** Develop and disseminate guidance and provide technical assistance for states that have accessed federal IRA funds, including Section 50131 (zero-energy codes; measurement, training, and enforcement). Support states on code implementation in the face of potential federal funding cuts.
- **Compliance studies:** Collect data from building sites to determine energy code compliance in Pennsylvania and Delaware. This data will inform code official and contractor training programs.
- **Rural commitment:** Convene a National Rural Codes Collaborative, which will identify communities that suffer from high energy burden in 10 states for pilot program implementation to address affordability.

- **Emerging practices:** Develop and disseminate research, case studies, and briefs on topics that advance efficient and electrified building codes and appliance standards, such as identifying and addressing barriers to adoption and implementation of stronger base and stretch/zero/electrification codes, electric-ready codes, next-generation embodied carbon and resiliency codes.
- **Inform national code development:** Contribute technical expertise and regional know-how to national code dialogue, including with the U.S. Department of Energy and its national labs, the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE) in its role as convener of the National Codes Collaborative, and the International Code Council (ICC), to develop a strong national model code and support compliance with current national model code.

COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

Effective community-level initiatives should engage under-resourced and underserved populations to develop locally tailored solutions that advance energy efficiency and decarbonization. However, communities often lack sufficient capacity – including expertise and bandwidth – to advance energy efficiency and decarbonization in single and multifamily residences, businesses, and community-serving institutions. 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 and technical assistance 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.

Proposed Targeted Work

- **Municipal learning group on multifamily and rental property energy efficiency programs:** Convene and facilitate a working group that advances energy efficiency and building decarbonization at the community level, particularly in the affordable multifamily sector. This cohort will focus on specific, shared opportunities including providing access to decarbonization for renters in multifamily buildings, engaging with owners and residents to decarbonize naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH), and workforce development strategies for multifamily retrofits. NEEP will engage topical experts, facilitate peer-to-peer exchange, and provide learning group members with tailored technical assistance to support them as they seek to establish or advance rental- or multifamily-property programs in their municipalities.

2025 PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

- **Multifamily retrofit case studies:** Building on the working group, NEEP will produce research, resources, and tools identified by participants as gaps. We will engage with regional stakeholders to develop and disseminate case studies on tackling key challenges like pre-weatherization barriers to retrofitting affordable multifamily properties, resident engagement, income qualifying data collection, and program data collection.
- **Multifamily program case studies:** Develop a series of case studies on innovative multifamily programs in the NEEP region. By examining how regional programs are tackling issues such as data access, program implementation, financing, stakeholder engagement, and post-upgrade measurement and verification, NEEP intends to identify lessons learned and best practices to inform the development of a multifamily program working group.
- **Multifamily baseline program assessment:** Conduct a regional inventory of state and utility multifamily programs to better understand how and where program investments and outcome metrics are reported. This snapshot will be disseminated to give stakeholders valuable insights into the impact of multifamily programs on state greenhouse gas reduction targets.
- **Technical assistance for community retrofit models:** Build on NEEP's role as regional navigator for nine Department of Energy prize recipients working to develop scalable retrofit models and best practices by providing project management support and technical assistance in areas such as heat pump technologies, building system design, and workforce development and by helping teams navigate complex and dynamic grant administration and compliance requirements.
- **Community heating electrification:** Convene a cohort of municipal sustainability officers interested in launching community heating electrification campaigns. The cohort engages in peer learning and developing software tools and other shared resources to enhance electrification programs and to inform the development of campaign marketing materials.
- **Community decarbonization workshop:** Host a one-day Decarbonizing Communities Workshop to convene energy efficiency professionals, efficiency and electrification program funding experts, utility representatives, and other stakeholders to discuss challenges and advance strategies for community-level building decarbonization. Sessions will cover topics including centering equity in community engagement, innovative approaches to retrofit financing, equitable multifamily program implementation, utility/municipal partnerships, networked geothermal, and community energy programs.
- **Networked geothermal heating and cooling:** Provide comprehensive technical assistance and strategic support to key stakeholders who are spearheading efforts to increase private/public partnerships and enhance utility engagement as a strategy for growing energy-efficient geothermal solutions. Facilitate knowledge sharing and collaboration among program administrators, industry players, and utilities to overcome barriers and accelerate the adoption of geothermal as a scalable solution for heating and cooling.

- **Building Performance Standards (BPS):** Support states on BPS policy and program design and implementation. Efforts include co-leading a community cohort to support BPS compliance in Maryland, supporting the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) on Large Building Energy Reporting (LBER) implementation, leading a BPS Community Cohort in Massachusetts, drafting a Building Energy and Resilience Performance Standard for the Resilience Authority of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County in Maryland, and working with the NJ Board of Public Utilities and the Rutgers Built Environment and Green Building Group to develop an incentive-based pilot program for BPS.
- **Clean Energy Internship Program:** Work with Maine Governor's Energy Office (ME GEO) and other project partners to identify a new program implementer that will continue to build on the success of this three-year partnership. Since inception, the program has placed over 35 interns in a variety of energy efficiency and clean energy jobs, with 50 percent being women and 40 percent representing BIPOC communities.
- **Community-driven transportation planning:** Work with local nonprofits in Vermont, New Hampshire, and Connecticut to conduct transportation audits, determine high priority transportation actions, identify workforce and public education needs, and develop implementation plans to address those needs.

TECHNOLOGY MARKET TRANSFORMATION

Replacing building technologies that use fossil fuels with those that use efficient electric equipment is critical for states to achieve their GHG reduction goals. Heat pump technologies offer households and businesses opportunities to significantly reduce these emissions. Electrifying heating can also improve comfort and indoor air quality, and reduce risks related to combustion. These attributes create safer and healthier buildings. NEEP accelerates market adoption of high-efficiency residential and commercial heat pumps for space and water heating through multi-sector stakeholder collaboration. Informed by this collaborative network, NEEP develops strategies, tools, and resources for policy makers, program administrators, utilities, contractors, advocates, and industry to implement through their unique market channels. In the residential sector, we strive for high-efficiency heat pumps to reach 65 percent of equipment sales by 2030. The region faces numerous challenges in achieving this goal, including upfront costs compared to incumbent technologies, operational economics that are not always favorable, insufficient contractor confidence and skill and program design that lacks important components of market transformation such as midstream and upstream intervention in the HVAC market.

Proposed Targeted Work

- **Stakeholder convenings to support regional best practices:** Expand the successful multi-year residential and commercial heating electrification working groups to support detailed and targeted areas of opportunity such as low- and moderate-income programs, contractor best practices, workforce development, and midstream program design.
- **Expand cold climate ASHP database to include new categories:** Engage on "cold-climate" specification development for emerging technologies (including air-to-water heat pumps and window heat pumps) and continue to develop NEEP's Cold Climate ASHP Product List. This nationally recognized resource serves to assist 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.
- **Advance regional progress on efficient electrification:** Serve as a backstop against potential federal rollbacks in cold climate heat pump specifications and technology research. NEEP's trusted role in heating electrification will play a critical role in preserving and expanding the significant regional gains made over the past several years.
- **Heat pump sizing and design:** Scale up work to support contractors on properly designing and sizing heat pumps in cold climates, including marketing a sizing tool to the heat pump product list and convening an HVAC workforce development program best practices cohort.
- **Multifamily retrofit opportunities:** Scope projects to support multifamily heating and hot water electrification retrofits.
- **Industrial electrification:** Build on existing momentum for residential and commercial applications to explore opportunities for regional activity and collaboration towards the electrification of industrial end-uses and will highlight successful case studies at its annual Summit.
- **Provide regional and national technical leadership on high-efficiency technologies:** Serve as the regional lead for national market transformation projects, including in heat pump water heating, building envelope, advanced window solutions, and heat pump space heating. This will be increasingly important in the face of federal cuts.

2025 NEEP EVENTS

NEEP convenes a series of in-person and virtual events to gather a diverse network of energy efficiency and building decarbonization leaders and problem solvers to learn, connect, and collaborate. These signature events combine national expertise with local knowledge while providing a venue to highlight the solutions and relationships necessary to understand, access, and utilize resources to meet our region's energy, environment and economic goals.

Communities Workshop	April 9	Rhode Island
NEEP Summit	June 10 - 12	Massachusetts
Heating Electrification Workshop	October	New Jersey