

Increasing and Promoting Energy Efficiency and Storage



To ensure an equitable and sustainable energy future for New Jersey, the state must prioritize energy efficiency, building decarbonization, and energy storage as cornerstones of its clean energy strategy. By prioritizing these measures, New Jersey can lead the way in creating a clean energy economy that benefits all residents while addressing the urgent challenges of extreme weather events and energy equity. The dollars invested in expanded energy efficiency programs, including incentives, network lists, and installer and consumer education, will have a direct and beneficial effect on our GHG reduction and climate goals. Additionally, energy storage is both a strategic and significant technology necessary to achieve our transportation and clean energy goals, as well as to provide increased reliability throughout the distribution system.

New Jersey has an opportunity to set a national example by integrating these strategies into a cohesive framework that prioritizes accessibility and affordability. Targeted investments in efficiency, storage, and electrification—especially in underserved and overburdened communities—will drive job creation, strengthen local economies, and position the state at the forefront of the clean energy transition. A comprehensive and well-coordinated approach that leverages state, federal, and private-sector resources will be essential in meeting New Jersey’s climate goals while ensuring that all residents, regardless of income or location, benefit from cleaner, more affordable, and more reliable energy solutions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Adopt common sense changes to energy efficiency and building decarbonization initiatives

- Incorporate and integrate improvements to the building envelope to ensure proper sizing of heating and cooling equipment through Energy Efficiency programs
- Develop coordination of building decarbonization programs in conjunction with weatherization measures
- Prioritize encouraging the switch to high efficiency electric appliances whenever fossil fuel appliances are replaced

Prioritize and Improve Access to Energy Efficiency Programs

- Invest in outreach and education that targets those residents and buildings that can benefit the most; for example, municipalities with the oldest building stock...
- Improve language access to make sure all communities across our state know about the programs they can access

Expand and improve the Whole House Retrofit Program

- Expand this program from a pilot, utilize the findings to scale up and achieve its goals of holistically addressing health, energy burden, and equitable participation in the clean energy transition for New Jersey's disadvantaged communities.
- Provide a venue for robust stakeholder participation to both maximize the successful elements of the pilot and make adjustment to improve the program moving forward
- Revisit previously deferred accounts who applied for Comfort Partners assistance to incorporate health and safety repairs

Develop clear plans for meeting EO 317's requirements for gas infrastructure planning

- Proceed with the future of gas planning and set NJ on a clear path forward towards an affordable, reliable, & secure energy future that accounts for the best interest of the rate payer

- Develop plans and strategies to meet the goal of as close to zero leakage in any methane gas systems as feasible and for future proofing any gas piping
- Develop strong guidelines for responsible hydrogen usage to ensure that, when it is being deployed, it is indeed meeting its stated decarbonization goals
- Focus the use of hydrogen on hard to electrify sectors, given its lower energy density and potential safety concerns

Increase energy assistance and access to programs for low- and moderate-income families who bear a disproportionate burden of not only the health impacts of maintaining the status quo but also have disproportionately high energy burdens

- Expand and improve accessibility to state programs that help make energy bills more affordable to ensure all residents can benefit from clean energy initiatives
- Codified the dedicated BPU's Office of Clean Energy Equity program and provide a budget of at least \$50 million annually

Invest in and incentivize energy storage technologies to improve grid reliability

- Meet the Board of Public Utilities' statutory mandate of deploying 2000 MW of energy storage by 2030 and develop future goals and timelines for additional storage
- Explore widespread adoption of micro-solutions with clear storage goals along with suggested incentives at the local, county, and state level
- Creatively utilize the state's resources as natural batteries by implementing and incentivizing neighborhood-based distribution systems and incorporating combo systems like e-mobility and thermal networks into district storage
- Incentivize adding or upgrading central heating piping and underground electric utility lines whenever streets are opened for other purposes in order to decrease long term costs, increase efficiency, improve infrastructure, and prepare for the future