

# Memo



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND  
**ENERGY EFFICIENCY &  
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

**To:** Energy Efficiency & Resource Management Council  
**From:** EERMC Consultant Team  
**CC:** Becca Trietch  
**Date:** August 19, 2021  
**Subject:** NEEP RI Energy Efficiency Partnership Update

CONSULTANT TEAM

As in past years, the Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources (RI OER), National Grid Rhode Island (National Grid), and Rhode Island Energy Efficiency & Resource Management Council (RI EERMC) have partnered with Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships in 2021 to help achieve Rhode Island's goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and advance energy efficiency and demand reduction. While the three RI partner organizations share in oversight of this work, the funds (amounting to \$105,000) are contributed solely from ratepayer funds through National Grid.

This memo provides RI-focused updates for Q1 and Q2 on the deliverables which NEEP has committed to producing as part of the seven regional projects supported by the RI partners. If any Council member wishes to read the detailed NEEP quarterly reports, please contact Rachel Sholly at [rachel.sholly@gmail.com](mailto:rachel.sholly@gmail.com).

## 1. NEEP 2021 SUMMIT SERIES: RESILIENT, LOW-CARBON COMMUNITY PATHWAYS

**Mission:** Provide a public program of opportunities and resources that inspire, inform, drive, and support community leadership and collaboration across the region to accelerate resilient, healthy, affordable, low-carbon homes and buildings that serve especially the most vulnerable. More info: <https://neep.org/event/neep-summit-sessions-2021>

### Progress Updates:

- An ongoing partnership with the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) and Urban Land Institute (ULI) continued in the second quarter to host a series of workshops for communities interested in sustainable zoning initiatives.
- NEEP finalized and published a new module in its online Community Action Planning for Energy Efficiency (CAPEE) tool highlighting how communities can approach strategic electrification at the local level.
- Rhode Island signed its climate bill, The 2021 Act on Climate (SB0078/HB5445). This bill will increase the state's targets to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions 80% by 2040 with net-zero emissions by 2050.
- NEEP initiatives have been included in eleven media stories to increase public visibility of these issues. In addition, NEEP launched a marketing campaign to support the Summit Series, which further highlights these themes.

## 2. EFFICIENT, RESILIENT COMMUNITY PATHWAYS AND RESOURCES

**Mission:** Assist Northeast and Mid-Atlantic communities to equitably advance home and building energy efficiency to achieve local clean energy, climate resiliency, and economic development goals. More info: <https://neep.org/our-work/energy-efficient-buildings>

**Progress Updates:**

- Through the Achieving Community Efficiency (ACE) project, NEEP provides two communities in Rhode Island with assistance to develop community energy plans.
- NEEP continues with the research and development of its Regional Schools Report, which will provide best practices for state agencies as they seek to improve upon their school construction programs to fund local school projects.
- NEEP launched a project working with the town of Jamestown, Rhode Island to develop a zero energy plan for their community.

### 3. BUILDING ENERGY CODES AND APPLIANCE STANDARDS

**Mission:** Assist states and communities to adopt and implement building energy codes, and support appliance efficiency standards aligned with public policy goals for climate stabilization and resiliency, clean affordable energy, public health and safety, and equitable economic development. More info: <https://neep.org/efficient-resilient-buildings-and-communities/energy-codes>  
<https://neep.org/smart-efficient-low-carbon-building-energy-solutions/appliance-efficiency-standards>

**Progress Updates:**

- Pennsylvania and Rhode Island have expressed interest in conducting a new code compliance baseline study.
- Rhode Island introduced a standards bill in March to be enacted in the third quarter.

### 4. LOW-CARBON RETROFIT SOLUTIONS

**Mission:** Ensuring equitable access to low-carbon retrofit solutions to improve the energy efficiency of homes and buildings. More info: <https://neep.org/low-carbon-retrofit-solutions>

**Progress Updates:**

- The HELIX team is developing a plan for the regional energy efficiency organizations (REEOs) to collaborate and expand HELIX outreach and training efforts beyond the NEEP region.
- Progress is happening all across the country on this building performance standards, but cities in the NEEP region are taking a leadership role.

### 5. HEATING ELECTRIFICATION MARKET TRANSFORMATION

**Mission:** Accelerating market adoption of high-performance heat pumps for residential and commercial space heating and cooling. More info: <https://neep.org/smart-efficient-low-carbon-building-energy-solutions/air-source-heat-pumps>

**Progress Updates:**

- Twenty-three programs inside and outside of the NEEP region, including National Grid Rhode Island, now reference NEEP's Cold Climate Air Source Heat Pump (ccASHP) specification/product list.
- The 2021 Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) Market Transformation Progress Survey was updated to facilitate more participation by stakeholders and to collect information on initiatives related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ), COVID-19 impacts, and needs/opportunities

around heat pump technologies. Fifty-one stakeholders in the Heating Electrification Initiative responded to the survey, and the 2021 ASHP Market Transformation Progress Report will be published early in the third quarter.

## 6. SMART ENERGY HOMES AND BUILDINGS

**Mission:** Enabling building-sector decarbonization by transforming homes and buildings to be efficient and flexible grid assets. More info: <https://neep.org/events/smart-energy-homes-and-buildings-2020>

### Progress Updates:

- A couple of states enacted policies that support the deployment of smart energy homes and buildings grid service. Rhode Island's 2021 Act on Climate Bill (signed into law in April 2021) requires the state's Climate Change Coordinating Council to create a Climate Action Plan by 2025 and every five years thereafter. The plan must include strategies to create quality and family-sustaining clean energy jobs, as well as develop workforce programs that recruit, train, and retrain underrepresented workers.

## 7. STRATEGIC ENERGY MANAGEMENT

**Mission:** Accelerating adoption of Strategic Energy Management (SEM) to continuously improve building and industrial facility energy efficiency, productivity, health, comfort and safety, while reducing costs and carbon emissions. More info: <https://neep.org/smart-efficient-low-carbon-building-energy-solutions/strategic-energy-management>

### Progress Updates:

- SEM programs have been reporting increased customer participation since many have pivoted to online SEM offerings (which many term SEM Lite), while others have been returning to business-as-usual following the COVID-19 pandemic. In the second quarter of 2021, Massachusetts and Rhode Island – two states that are still pursuing the SEM cohort approach – reported a return to in-person activities. Between these two states, four more workshops were facilitated to leverage lessons learned during COVID-19.
- Key strategies for NEEP's Regional Market Transformation Strategy Report have been identified, and we expect to publish the in September 2021.