

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUPS

The EE TWG and the SRP TWG discussed progress on the 2027-2029 Energy Efficiency Plan and the 2027-2029 SRP Plan. Read more on pages 3 & 6.

EQUITY WORKING GROUP

The EWG provided updates on its 2026 Annual Report and touched on topics like small business outreach and weatherization workforce challenges. Read more on page 4.

EC4 UPDATE

The EC4 gave an overview on their 2027 budget timeline, the Climate Science Report, and legislative & resilience updates. Read more on pages 5 & 6.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

NEEP Ready. Set. Scale - September 15

NE Energy Roundtable
Transmission Costs, Value
and Innovation - September 18

NREC Massachusetts Clean
Energy Week - October 5-9

NEEP Heating
Electrification Workshop
2026 - October 20-22

NECA 2026 Energy
Innovation Forum - October 28

MEETINGS COVERED

EE TWG - 5/28, 6/30, 7/23

SRP TWG - 6/18

EE EWG - 5/18, 6/1, 6/22,
7/27

EC4 - 5/14, 6/24

EC4 STAB - 6/16

EC4 Advisory Board -
5/27

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SPOTLIGHT

Declaring An Energy Affordability Emergency and Providing Ratepayer Relief to Mitigate Winter Price Spike



Photo Credit: [Rhode Island Current](#)

On Thursday, July 23, Governor Dan McKee declared a state of emergency in Rhode Island in response to an impending double-digit increase in the winter electricity supply rate charged to residential customers ([Docket No. 26-27-EL](#)). The increase is attributed to energy market disruptions, including the 2026 conflict involving Iran and unanticipated regional costs associated with the implementation of the Day-Ahead Ancillary Services market. As part of the Executive Order, the Governor directed the Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources (OER) to allocate and disburse \$28 million from available Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) auction reserves to provide direct rate relief to all Rhode Island residential electricity consumers and to help mitigate unusually high winter energy costs. In a press release issued the same day, Governor McKee stated that, "once approved by the Public Utilities Commission (PUC), every residential electric customer will receive about \$61 in bill credits. For the average ratepayer, these credits will fully offset the increase during the winter months when bills are highest." Rhode Island Energy (RIE) also stated in the press release that the proposed electricity supply rate, scheduled to take effect on October 1, is 17.03 cents per kilowatt-hour. This represents a 15% increase from last winter's rate of 14.77 cents per kilowatt-hour. If the proposed rate increase is approved by the PUC, RIE estimates that the average residential customer's monthly electric bill will increase by approximately \$12.

Navigating the Rhode Island Energy Rate Case

Green Energy Consumers Alliance

On May 20, 2026, Green Energy Consumers Alliance (GECA) held a [webinar](#) titled "Navigating the Rhode Island Energy Rate Case." Speakers from GECA and the Conservation Law Foundation (CLF) broke down what RIE has proposed, how it could impact energy affordability, what's at stake for meeting the state's climate mandates under the Act on Climate, and what GECA is advocating for through this process. RIE has filed a major distribution case for both electricity and gas under [Docket No. 25-45-GE](#). The increased rates charged to RIE customers will increase their base collections by \$344/year for electric and \$7.78/month for gas in Year 1. Rates charged to RIE customers will be \$89/year for electric and \$1.56/month for gas in Year 2. RIE also proposed a return on equity of 10.75%, which is up from the current 9.25%. Other key elements of their proposal included development costs for time of use rates to be proposed in a future case, changing the low-income discount rate, and the omission of any proposals connected to the 2025 Climate Action Strategy. Parts of this rate case can impact the affordability of equipment such as heat pumps, and it could slow the expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure. Additionally, while the PUC has opened a docket to investigate the future of gas considering the Act on Climate, a final report from the Commission has not yet been released. Therefore, GECA and the CLF are advocating for several different initiatives. One includes ending subsidies for new gas connections, which encourage expansion of the gas system and increase risk of creating stranded assets. Eliminating this allowance policy could slow the growth of the gas system and ensure that customers are not committing to fuel costs that are predicted to rise in the future. GECA also advocated for heat pump rates that would lower delivery rates for heat pump customers that align with actual system costs. GECA and the CLF concluded the webinar with suggestions on how customers can get involved, such as contacting legislators and showing support for the resolution requesting that the PUC terminate gas line extension allowances ([H-7891/S-2354](#)), and the resolution requesting the PUC to consider the creation and adoption of a seasonal heat pump rate ([S-2535](#)).



Photo Credit: [Rhode Island Current](#)



The Energy Efficiency Technical Working Group (EE TWG) met on May 28 to discuss 2025 report updates, three-year planning process updates, a Large C&I Free Ridership study, and a presentation on delayed heat pump conversion assumptions. The EE TWG first heard from RIE, who provided an overview on 2025 energy efficiency year-end results. RIE also presented proposed updates to the Least Cost Procurement (LCP) Standards and an updated planning timeline for the 2027-2029 Energy Efficiency Plan. According to RIE, there was generally strong support for transitioning to a three-year plan, and several key themes emerged from the Plan Outline Memo feedback. These included: affordability and value, policy framing, implementation detail, Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) strategy, equity metrics, customer experience, data and EM&V, and support for three-year planning. In addition, there were mixed reviews from customer listening sessions. Some participants were happy and looking for more ways to save, while others were skeptical and did not consider participation worth the effort. In these listening sessions, RIE reinforced challenges with areas such as multifamily, landlord/renter, CAP capacity, and pre-weatherization barriers. The EE TWG also heard results from RIE's Large C&I Free Ridership study. RIE opted to assess its current framework and process for screening large C&I projects for free ridership potential prior to approving incentives. Guidehouse reviewed and compiled free ridership best practices in the industry: **(1) Estimate simple payback for assessment purposes, (2) Conduct pre-approval free ridership assessments, (3) Document baseline conditions, (4) Require letter of customer intent, (5) Project pre-approvals, and (6) Utilize pre-installation.** Guidehouse recommended next steps for developing the pre-approval free ridership assessment survey instrument as well as "The Rhode Island Energy Large C&I Free Ridership Policy" based on the findings of this study. Lastly, the EE TWG discussed delayed heat pump conversions. RIE is trying to address and account for weatherization savings more accurately and better understand the assumption that some weatherizing homes will convert to heat pumps over the life of the weatherization. RIE provided their updated assumptions for fossil fuel conversions and electric conversions. Their next steps include recommending a modification to fossil fuel conversion rate assumptions, incorporating historic RIE weatherization and heat pump conversion data to finalize electric conversion assumptions, continued coordination with OER on Clean Heat RI data, and applying finalized updates to savings assumptions and source documentation for the 2026 year-end data and 2027-2029 planning.

On June 30, the EE TWG reviewed Rhode Island Energy's first draft of the 2027-2029 Energy Efficiency Plan, which proposes combined electric and gas budgets of approximately \$95 million in 2027, \$93 million in 2028, and \$90 million in 2029. Rhode Island Energy highlighted projected net annual savings of 1.1 million MMBtu and lifetime savings of 14.4 million MMBtu, with benefit-cost ratios exceeding 1.0 for both electric and gas programs. Stakeholder feedback emphasized continued investment in weatherization, heat pumps, customer access, data-driven program design, and improved customer experience. In response, the draft plan includes weatherization and heat pump initiatives, community partnerships, AMI-informed strategies, streamlined enrollment processes, and enhanced customer outreach. Rhode Island Energy is continuing to refine savings assumptions, program details, evaluation frameworks, equity analyses, and other supporting materials before releasing the final plan.

On July 23, the EE TWG reviewed stakeholder feedback on the first draft of the 2027-2029 Energy Efficiency Plan. RIE received feedback from six stakeholders: Division of Public Utilities and Carriers (DPUC), Office of Energy Resources (OER), EEC, Acadia Center, Green Energy Consumers Alliance (GECA), and Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships (NEEP). Of the comments received, 62 requested clarifications, 39 consisted of questions or requests for additional information, and 27 provided positive feedback. Key themes of the stakeholder feedback included program design and implementation detail; AMI, data, and behavioral programs; budgets, benefits, and cost-effectiveness; Heat pumps and electrification; equity, access and affordability; EM&V, metrics, and reporting; and workforce and market development. RIE provided a more in-depth discussion on the future of AMI. Although RIE plans to suspend HERs for 2027, customers will continue to have access to interval usage data through [MyMeter](#) and the [Sense](#) App. RIE also noted that additional detail on AMI will be included in the final draft of the plan and they have expressed continued interest in developing strategies to better integrate AMI into energy efficiency programs. Open items that will be further developed for the final plan included tables and figures, evaluation planning, LCP standards, equity content, cost-of supply support, and final attachments. Following discussion on the first draft of the 2027-2029 Plan, the group heard a presentation on Electric Appliance Heated Homes and Heat Pump Eligibility. The goal of this effort is to define how "electric appliance" heated homes can qualify for Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) conversion. This project stems from [Docket No. 25-37-EE](#) Record Request 7 and Docket No. 25-37-EE Order. Under the draft criteria, a home would need to meet the following requirements: use at least a specific amount of electricity (X kWh) per month during the winter season; have a home energy audit verify the use of electric appliance heating in at least half of the home or in the main area inhabited during the winter season; and satisfy at least one of the following conditions: be classified as a winter-peaking home or demonstrate that at least 30% of its annual energy consumption occurs during the winter season. RIE provided an example case and noted that many potential participants in this measure fall into an "edge case" category. The company emphasized that flexibility will be necessary to accommodate the unique circumstances of individual customers.

2027-2029 EE FIRST DRAFT STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Stakeholder Primary Focus Areas

Stakeholder	Primary Focus Areas
DPUC	Governance, cost-effectiveness, plan mechanics
OER	Affordability, AMI targeting, Clean Heat RI coordination, heat pumps
EEC	Implementation detail, metrics, reporting, program design
Acadia Center	Climate alignment, equity, AMI, governance, RI Test
GECA	Electrification, heat pumps, fossil fuel incentives, budgets
NEEP	Investment levels, affordability, AMI, HER transition

Comment Categories

Clarification	62
Curiosity	39
Data/Reporting	39
Budget/Fiscal	30
Program Design	30
Federal/Compliance	29
Positive Feedback	27
Observation	27
Lighting	24
EM&V	18
CHP	16
Alignment	14



Research Highlight

Bridging the Equity Gap for Utility Energy Efficiency Programs | ACEEE

In 2024, investments in utility efficiency programs designed for low-income households rose to **14.1%** of efficiency budgets, an improvement from previous years, yet still leaving an average **13.8%** equity gap.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY EQUITY WORKING GROUP

On May 18, the Equity Working Group (EWG) heard from RIE about small business outreach. RIE works closely with community partners to develop culturally relevant and accessible communications tailored specifically to the businesses they serve. One example is RIE's partnership with the Rhode Island Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. The team co-created a [video](#), available in both Spanish and English, providing minority business owners with a clear, approachable view of what to expect during an energy assessment. In addition, RIE has launched a monthly newsletter specifically designed for organizations that support women- and minority-owned businesses. RIE also sends a monthly small business newsletter to approximately 26,000 small business customers, and the RIE small business team created a resource website where partners can access and download small business energy efficiency materials in multiple languages. RIE partnered with DownCity Design to showcase their small business energy assessment. In quarter 3, RIE plans to kick off their Main Street campaigns to increase participation in three different Environmental Justice communities. RIE also has social media partners and real small business customer advertising to aid with outreach. Following RIE's presentation, the EWG opened up the conversation for discussion and suggestions on how to deepen small business outreach and enrollment.

The June 1 EWG meeting provided an update on the 2027-2029 Plan and 2025 equity metrics. In 2025, the data indicates a higher share of audits and weatherization jobs in Environmental Justice communities than in 2024. The share of renters participating in audits and weatherization also increased in 2025. The EWG then did a deep dive on weatherization workforce challenges and strategies. Current weatherization workforce obstacles include a shortage of specialty contractors and a need for contractors to have more certifications and training. The EWG discussed possible solutions to these challenges such as better education and promotion of training and other learning opportunities that exist for contractors. Additionally, the EWG identified that once contractors are aware of these opportunities, there needs to be more support and guidance for them throughout the process. Lastly, the Healthy Homes Grant was suggested as a possible avenue for setting up significant contractor trainings as well as developing a formal strategy with the goal of enabling more contractors to enroll in the state program.

The EWG provided an overview of their Annual Report planning on June 22 and indicated that they would submit a completed report to RIE on August 3. The EWG heard from the Providence Housing Authority on the [Housing Choice Voucher \(HCV\) Program](#), also known as Section 8, which is a federal rental assistance program that allows very low-income families to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market. To qualify for the Section 8 HCV program, households must meet certain income limits, citizenship/eligible immigration status, background screening, and other requirements. All units must pass a basic housing quality standards inspection before the Providence Housing Authority can enter a contract and pay rental assistance. After the presentation concluded, the EWG discussed how RIE and/or its partners can encourage or incentivize HCV landlords to participate in the Income-Eligible Single Family or Multifamily weatherization programs.

On July 27, the EWG held a feedback discussion on its Annual Report. The group provided recommendations on several topics, including equity metrics, improving language access and language needs assessments, and workforce developments. RIE shared that it is currently reviewing the Annual Report draft and will consider the feedback from the meeting for incorporation into the 2027-2029 Energy Efficiency Plan. The EWG also received a status update on the Whole Home and Electrification Program. Currently, 60 units are in pipeline for Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) investment, and 49 RGGI-eligible units have either been completed or are underway to date. Of these 49 units, 22 have completed health and safety work, while 16 are underway (pending contract, under contract, or in progress). For the 22 completed units, a total of \$615,222 in HUD and RGGI funding has been spent. To date, 33 RGGI units have been referred back to Community Action Partnership of Providence (CAPP) for weatherization, and 15 RGGI units have completed weatherization. Lastly, the GHHI RI team has begun discussions with several electrification candidates and plans to meet with the Clean Heat RI team to discuss next steps for heat pump adoption.

Report Recommendations:



Expanding
efficiency
program
investments



Enhancing
energy
affordability



Reaching
target
demographics



Better serving
renters,
multifamily
housing, and
manufactured
housing



Achieving
deeper
savings



Achieving
climate goals

HOME ENERGY REPORTS AND BEHAVIOR-BASED ENERGY EFFICIENCY: DRIVING SAVINGS IN A CHANGING ENERGY LANDSCAPE

On May 21, ACEEE hosted a [webinar](#) on their recent research report [Home Energy Reports and Beyond: Meeting the Movement with Behavior-Based Energy Efficiency](#). In this report, a review of 13 evaluations post 2022 found that average electricity savings for all customers who received Home Energy Reports (HERs) ranged from 0.31% to 2.29% per household and gas savings ranged from 0.11% to 1.4% per household, which equates to \$7-29 a year. From 2009 to 2022, HERs resulted in \$3.3 billion total bill savings. In addition to energy and financial savings, HERs can reach many customers quickly, generate energy savings, and channel customers to other programs. For example, HER programs promote rebates for structural measures equaling three times more savings. ACEEE also highlighted the emergence of their HER 2.0 pilot program. This program includes high-bill alerts, rate coaching, weekly energy updates, load-shaping focused HERs, virtual energy assessments, and infrared home visualizations. The report concludes with several recommendations for utility regulators, including encouraging customer participation in complementary programs by revising evaluation methods and supporting balanced efficiency portfolios. It also emphasizes the importance of piloting emerging behavior-based approaches to advance future program design.



EEC
NEWSLETTER

RHODE ISLAND
AUGUST 2026

EC4 UPDATE

On May 14, the EC4 opened with a discussion on the national challenge of balancing affordability with reducing greenhouse gas emissions, which is amplified by the stall in emissions reduction progress under the Trump Administration. OER provided updates on several new energy programs including the [Zero Emission Vehicle Fleet Cost Differential Rebate Program](#), the [Energy Storage Rebate Program](#), and the [New England Heat Pump Accelerator Program](#). In terms of statewide planning, this is the first year that the EC4 has provided funding to support resilience work in communities. The [Climate Resilience Fund](#) is now open for public entities and nonprofit organizations, with approximately two million dollars in grant funding available. The application deadline for proposals was May 29. Joseph Poccia, Rhode Island's State Climatologist, presented general updates on the [RI State Climate office](#) and confirmed that the office is available to assist the EC4 with summarizing historical climate data for the state. The EC4 unanimously approved the reallocation of the

[RIPTA Funding Vanpool Program](#), presented by the RI Public Transit Authority. The meeting concluded with a discussion on climate justice. The EC4 announced that a consultant has been hired to facilitate Health Equity Zone (HEZ) work, and a recent Community Conversations event was held. The EC4 began its June 24 meeting with a discussion of the 2026 legislative and budget outcomes. An overview was provided on [Article 11](#) (Relating to Energy) within the state budget, along with other relevant bills that passed. Following this discussion, the University of Rhode Island (URI) Cooperative Extension delivered a presentation on its [Fellows Programs](#). Rhode Island Commerce also presented updates on the Smart Business Resilience initiative, noting that preparedness and recovery resources for businesses are available on their [website](#). Updates were then provided on the EC4's FY2027 budget. The EC4 has a \$1.5 million budget for 2027. From mid-to-late August, there will be a two-week public feedback period on RFPs. The EC4 will review project proposals in early to mid-September before approving the final spending plan in late September. A motion was passed to approve OER's request to repurpose funds for its URI Energy Fellow. Additional updates were shared from RI's Chief Resilience Officer, including progress on translation services for Resilient Rhody and quarterly action tracking efforts. Lastly, OER reported the status of its HER program, Charge RI rebate program, electric leaf blower program, and heat pump pilot program. The Coastal Resources Management Council noted that it is awaiting one remaining federal permit related to the Sakonnet cable for offshore wind. The DPUC stated that it plans to provide updates on the RIE rate case in future meetings.

Here's how offshore wind helped New England beat record heat

Analysts compared how the regional system performed during the July heat wave and a hot stretch in June 2025, before much of the current offshore wind capacity came online. During peak-demand conditions on July 2, 2026, that period's hottest day, oil provided nearly 10% of the region's total power supply, which was down from around 15% at the highest point on June 24, 2025. Grid Status stated that stronger generation from the region's utility-scale offshore wind farms was a key factor in this decline. Hydropower delivered by the New England Clean Energy Connect power line, which started distributing electricity from Canada to Maine in January, also helped to reduce peak oil use. Rooftop solar installations significantly helped to ease overall electricity demand during the heat wave as well. While wind speeds are lower during the summer, the recent heat wave confirms that the projects still play a meaningful role on the hottest days of summer. New England operators produced 42.2 gigawatt-hours of oil-fired power during that four-day heat wave, which in total was down 37% from the total oil burned from June 23 to 25, 2025.



GROWING THE HEAT PUMP WORKFORCE

A recent report, published by the Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships (NEEP), reviews HVAC-oriented energy efficiency contractor networks and heat pump installer networks (HPINs) in the Northeast. Through research and interviews the report suggests five key best practice areas relevant to any HPIN: (1) emphasize heat pump system sizing and design in required training, (2) prioritize flexible continuing education offerings that highlight emerging innovations and best practices, (3) provide continuous learning and accountability through meaningful quality assessment and quality control procedures, (4) foster a community of opportunity and recognition to make contractor participation worthwhile, and (5) adapt programs and networks to local conditions but identify opportunities to align standards across the region.

for passage on May 26 by the House. Under this Act, the state's existing online E-Permitting Portal would be modernized by requiring automated plan review and instant permits issuance for residential solar energy systems or other eligible small-scale solar energy systems that meet all safety codes. The Advisory Board also discussed a recent bill that was introduced to the house on the renewable energy standard. H-8519 would expand the definition of a "zero-emission resource" to include nuclear energy resources and large-scale hydropower facilities, while also providing that such resources may be used to meet certain clean energy compliance requirements. In addition to legislative updates, the Advisory Board discussed potential funding opportunities for 2027. Several engagement updates were provided including updates on Health Equity Zones (HEZ) in Pawtucket, Central Falls, Warwick, and West Warwick. There is also an upcoming Community Conversations event occurring on September 15. Lastly, the Advisory Board provided resilience updates. Work was being conducted on transitioning data, estimating the costs of translation services, and the continuation of tracking meetings and information sharing.

EC4 STAB

On June 16, the EC4 Science & Technical Advisory Board (STAB) welcomed two new members: Dr. Austin Becker, Chair of Marine Affairs at the University of Rhode Island, and Joseph Poccia, the State Climatologist within RIDEM. The STAB then voted to approve the memo supporting the STAB Statement adopted in February 2026. The discussion moved to the EC4 funding process for the 2027 fiscal year. The funding process will begin in early July, with proposals accepted through early August. After submission, proposals will be opened for public comment, which will be reviewed by the EC4. By the end of September, the full EC4 will approve its spending plan. The meeting concluded with a discussion on the progress of the Climate Science Report. The target date for the finalized draft of the report was August 7, and the STAB aims to release the final report publicly in mid-September.

EC4 ADVISORY BOARD

On May 27, the EC4 Advisory Board began with several legislative updates. On May 26, the House passed the Building Benchmarking and Reporting Act of 2026 (H-7183). This Act would establish a building energy reporting program for residential properties, nonresidential properties, and campuses containing 25,000 or more gross square feet, and OER would be responsible for reporting this information to the public. On June 24, this bill was vetoed by the Governor. The Solar Cost Production Act (H-7726 SUB A) was also recommended

SYSTEM RELIABILITY PROCUREMENT Technical Working Group

At the June 18 meeting, the System Reliability Procurement (SRP) Technical Working Group continued its discussions on the development of the three-year plan. The group reviewed sections five through nine of the 2027-2029 SRP/ Active Demand Management Plan and invited members to share any suggestions or feedback. A final draft of the Plan will be shared with the Division, EEC, and stakeholders in September, and the EEC is scheduled to vote on the Plan at the October 15 meeting. The SRP TWG also noted that they plan to mirror the SRP timeline for the ConnectedSolutions Plan. In addition, the group discussed a potential investment proposal. RIE is exploring a gas decommissioning pilot program and evaluating where this proposal would best fit. Initial reactions suggested that the SRP Plan may be an appropriate place to introduce the pilot. RIE stated they will continue to update the SRP TWG as the proposal and next steps are developed.