Community Energy Challenge:

Promoting Energy Efficiency and Renewables in New England Cities and Towns

EPA challenges all New England communities to save money and reduce air pollution by assessing their energy use, taking action to improve energy efficiency, and seeking out renewable energy choices. EPA provides technical assistance to every community that joins the Challenge!

Participants assess energy use in schools, municipal buildings and/or wastewater/water treatment facilities. Reductions of 10% or more earn ENERGY STAR® recognition. EPA offers free training and technical assistance.

The Community Energy Challenge is an opportunity for municipalities across New England to identify simple and cost-effective measures that increase energy efficiency and renewable energy use while reducing air pollution and saving money.

Why are Energy Efficiency and Renewables so Important?

▶ Saves Money

New England has among the highest energy costs in the nation.

• New England's 1500 cities, towns and associated school districts together spend nearly one billion dollars every year on energy for buildings.

• Our 4500 public K-12 schools spend more than $500 million on energy – more than on textbooks and computers combined.

▶ Cuts Pollution

Energy use is the number one source of air pollution in New England and the nation.

• Electricity generation alone emits 48% of SO_2 and 8% of NOx emissions in New England.

• Nationally, electricity generation accounts for 43% of mercury emissions and 40% of carbon dioxide emissions.

• Energy from renewable sources (renewables) emits fewer pollutants during production and use.

▶ Reduces Strain on Limited Energy Supplies

Energy demand in New England is growing at 2% per year.

• Energy efficiency can dramatically reduce the chances of price increases and supply disruptions. It is also the cheapest and most environmentally sound way to slow this increasing demand.

• Use of renewables helps diversify energy supply and supports domestic production.

continued ➲

Please visit our Web site at:

www.epa.gov/ne/eco/energy/energy-challenge.html

Accessible and Achievable

Every community has opportunities to improve energy efficiency and increase use of renewables cost-effectively today.

• Numerous national studies agree that, on average, 30% of the energy used in commercial, institutional and public buildings is wasted.

• Savings of 10% or more are well within the reach of every community and school district through sensible management changes and cost-effective upgrades using proven, existing technologies.

• A 10% reduction across New England's municipal and school buildings could save $100 million, prevent billions of pounds of carbon dioxide emissions, and save enough energy to power tens of thousands of homes for one year.

• New England already offers a variety of renewable energy choices.

EPA United States Environmental Protection Agency New England

EPA-901-F-07-003
July 2007

Communities that join the Challenge will receive:

• Targeted training and technical support in the use of the ENERGY STAR® Portfolio Manager benchmarking software. Assessing performance is the first step toward identifying opportunities to improve energy efficiency through better facility management, upgrades to lighting, HVAC, controls, and other building systems and equipment.

• Assistance in efforts to increase their use of renewable energy, through renewable energy credits and the development of small scale renewable energy projects.

Communities that take the Challenge agree to:

• Make a commitment to improve energy efficiency.

• Assess—benchmark—the energy performance of all municipal buildings, schools and/or drinking water/waste water treatment facilities in the community.

• Set a goal to reduce energy use by 10% or more.

• Return a Community Energy Challenge letter to EPA New England.

• Promote energy efficiency and renewables to citizens, companies and organizations in the community.

Why Benchmark?

• Using EPA's Benchmarking tool helps a community establish an energy use baseline, making it easy to track improvements in efficiency over time.

• Benchmarking provides a uniform tool to compare progress across communities.

• Buildings that are benchmarked and achieve a certain level of performance receive recognition from EPA.

• It is easy to track further progress in improving energy efficiency in buildings that have been benchmarked, making possible further energy and financial savings.

• These improvements can help a community meet other environmental goals, such as a reduction in local air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

How will EPA help?

• EPA New England and EPA ENERGY STAR contractors will provide free, live web-based training in benchmarking and energy management, including follow up technical support, to all participating communities.

• EPA New England will recognize community achievements under the Challenge and track overall progress.

• Participating municipalities may be eligible for national EPA recognition:

  • ENERGY STAR Leaders – for a demonstrated average reduction of 10% or more across all buildings.

  • ENERGY STAR Label – awarded to buildings performing in the top 25% according to the National Energy Performance Rating System.

• EPA New England will organize additional recognition activities, including, but not limited to: media events to highlight progress; case studies posted on the web; and articles in general and trade publications.

• EPA will encourage members of our extensive partner network, notably regional utilities, and energy service and product providers, to help Challenge participants implement their energy efficiency plans.

For more information, contact:

Lucy Edmondson:
(617) 918-1004 or
edmondson.lucy@epa.gov

Shubhada Kambli:
(617) 918-1584 or
kambli.shubhada@epa.gov

CHANGE A LIGHT CHANGE THE WORLD ENERGY STAR

EPA GREEN POWER PARTNERSHIP

EPA United States Environmental Protection Agency New England