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NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY (NHDOE) E-NEWSLETTER

This e-newsletter provides news and updates on energy related funding.

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NHDOE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES, NEWS AND UPDATES

New Hampshire Fuel Assistance Program (FAP) Is Open

December 1 marked the official opening of New Hampshire's Fuel Assistance Program (FAP), which helps vulnerable Granite State families with their heating bills.

Last winter, the program provided benefits to more than 29,500 households. With 25,000 applications already received, there is still a great need for assistance with the cost of heating.

Known in Washington as the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program or LIHEAP, the Fuel Assistance Program aids New Hampshire families and seniors whose annual household income is **at or below 60% of the State Median Income**, the highest amount allowed by federal statute.

For a **family of four** this year, that means an annual maximum income of \$80,069.

For a **single person household**, the maximum income is \$41,635.

"The Fuel Assistance Program benefit helps eligible Granite Staters supplement the cost of heating regardless of how the household pays for heat, and benefits range from \$242 to \$2,419," said Jared Chicoine, NH Department of Energy Commissioner. "Whether a household heats with electric, natural gas, propane, wood, oil, kerosene, or even has heat included in their rent, anyone in need of assistance with home energy costs is encouraged to apply."

A nationwide 'Do I Qualify?' eligibility tool is available at energyhelp.us.

To apply to the program, NH residents should contact their local Community Action Program (CAP) Agency. Information about New Hampshire's five CAP Agencies, including locations and contact information, visit www.capnh.org.

To learn more about the Fuel Assistance Program, visit our [Fuel Assistance Program](#) webpage.

\$1,000,000 in LMI Community Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Project Grants

NHDOE issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) seeking proposals for community solar photovoltaic (PV) projects that will provide direct benefits to New Hampshire low, moderate, or low and moderate income (LMI) residential electric customers who reside within the same electric distribution utility service territory.

Proposals must present a comprehensive plan that clearly demonstrates and quantifies the net direct benefits to participating LMI customers. The maximum grant request amount is \$400,000.

Projects or portions of projects that have requested funds from the Department's Non-Residential Competitive Grant Program, Commercial & Industrial (C&I) Renewable Energy Rebate Program or Residential Renewable Electric Generation Incentive Program are not eligible for funding under this solicitation, and projects or portions of projects that are designed to depend upon LMI EAP Community Solar designation are not eligible for funding under this solicitation. Details regarding this RFP (2023-019) can be found [here](#).

Responses to the RFP are due no later than **12:00 p.m. (noon) on Friday, January 19, 2024**.

Municipal Solar Grant Program

NHDOE's application for EECBG Program funding remains under review with USDOE. NHDOE anticipates releasing an RFP for the Municipal Solar Grant Program sometime after that review in early 2024.

The following are several Municipal Solar Grant Program highlights to give municipalities a sense of program expectations:

- Only individual municipalities are eligible to apply to this program for new solar electricity/photovoltaic system that exclusively serves the load of municipally owned buildings within the same town or city. Municipalities must wholly own the project site location and any buildings benefiting from the project. Proposed projects must have at least 80% insolation.
- Municipalities are ineligible if they: qualify for a direct EECBG Formula grant, seek funding to expand existing solar facilities, seek funding for projects that have received full funding through municipal approval or other means, or are applying on behalf of an entity that is not a city or town.
- The Municipal Solar Grant Program will not cover costs unrelated to the direct material, equipment, or labor costs related to the design, construction, and installation of the solar system. Such costs will include roof replacement/repair, distribution system upgrades, or interconnection costs/fees. Municipalities are encouraged, but not required, to site their project in a way that prevents additional levels of federal environmental and historical reviews.

NHDOE will use this newsletter as the primary means to inform interested parties of program developments. Visit NHDOE's Municipal Solar Grant Program for more information [here](#).

NHDOE Completes Investigative Proceeding on Interconnection

On December 5, NHDOE issued a final report on its investigative proceeding under IP 2022-001.

This investigation looked into the modification of administrative rules to ensure cost-effective, predictable, and timely interconnection procedures for customer generation to the state's electric distribution system.

Visit NHDOE's website to view IP 2022-001 materials and the NHDOE's final report [here](#).

Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Home Energy Rebate Programs

NHDOE is reviewing the recent USDOE guidance as well as forthcoming updates and intends to apply for these funds in spring of 2024, with rebates being available late summer, early fall of 2024.

Visit the USDOE website for more information: Home Energy Rebate Programs [here](#) and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) [here](#).

NHDOE has set up webpages on its website to keep consumers informed on the latest Home Energy Rebate Program information. Consumers can visit those webpages [here](#).

Assessment Released: Offshore Wind in the Gulf of Maine New Hampshire Impact

In October, NHDOE released the 'Potential Environmental, Economic Impacts in New Hampshire from Development of Offshore Wind in the Gulf of Maine' assessment.

The viability of the deployment of offshore wind in the Gulf of Maine has been in discussion for many years. As the industry matured and technologies improved, the call to take a more substantial review of the potential for offshore wind in the Gulf of Maine increased.

To read the assessment report, click [here](#). For other details and related information, follow our webpage [here](#).

Section 40101(d) Grid Resilience Formula Grant Awarded to New Hampshire

In September, New Hampshire and other states and territories were awarded their formula grant funding through the [Grid Resilience State/Tribal Formula Grant Program](#), or Section 40101(d) Program. This program offers formula funding to states and territories over a five-year period to strengthen and modernize the nation's electric grid against disruptive events. New Hampshire was awarded its first two years of funding with \$6.6 million. NHDOE will subgrant out this funding through a competitive RFP called the Grid Resilience Grant Program. The funding will be open to NH's electric utilities and municipally owned utilities to fund projects that will lessen the duration of disruptive events in disadvantaged communities.

To learn more about the program, visit NHDOE's website [here](#).

NHDOE Applied for EPA's Solar for All Program

NHDOE filed an application for the EPA's competitive Solar for All Program. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is expected to make its awards in March 2024.

US DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY (USDOE) FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES, NEWS AND UPDATES

USDOE Releases a New Guide for Rural and Remote Areas to Do Clean Energy Projects

USDOE's [Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations](#) (OCED) just released [Federal Energy Funding for Rural and Remote Areas: A Guide for Communities](#). This new guide is for people who live or work in rural and remote areas and who are looking to plan or build clean energy projects in their communities. The guide can help you find, get ready for, and apply to federal funding and programs for clean energy.

Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships (GRIP) Program

There is a second-round funding opportunity within the Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships (GRIP) Program for Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025. Successful projects will deploy Federal funding to maximize grid infrastructure deployment at-scale and leverage private sector and non-federal public capital to advance deployment goals.

Concept papers are a required first step in the application process and are due at **5:00 p.m. on Friday, January 12, 2024**. For more information about this program, click [here](#).

OTHER ENERGY RELATED NEWS

USDA Helps Low-Income Underserved VT and NH Homeowners and Communities

This week, the USDA announced \$29,905 in [Housing Preservation Grants](#) to Cover Home Repair to provide housing improvements for 6-10 very low-income households in NH and VT focused on reducing heating fuel costs and energy consumption. Targeted homeowners make less than 50% of median income. The rehabilitation will bring homes into compliance with applicable housing-quality standards and codes. The homes will be located within Orange and Windsor Counties in Vermont, and Grafton and Sullivan Counties in New Hampshire. All told, USDA made over \$80 million in awards through this program to fund more than 200 projects that will improve the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.

Read USDA's national announcement [here](#).

USDA and USDOE will Host a Series of Virtual Listening Sessions in January 2024

The Departments hope to hear perspectives on the benefits and challenges of the increased levels of clean energy projects being sited on agricultural lands and in rural communities.

USDA and USDOE seek feedback directly from a diverse set of stakeholders about what the agencies can do through their leadership, program guidance, or research and information sharing to encourage positive clean energy siting outcomes that benefit farmers, rural Americans, the renewable energy industry, and others.

USDOE and USDA are interested in better understanding the impact of renewable energy development on these communities and public sentiment about these projects.

The 4 stakeholder-specific listening sessions are listed below:

- *Government Permitting & Policy Representatives* – **Friday, January 12, 12:30 – 2 p.m.**
To register, click [here](#).
- *Agricultural Producers* – **Tuesday, January 16, 10 – 11:30 a.m.**
To register, click [here](#).
- *All Stakeholders and Members Of The Public* – **Tuesday, January 16, 2:30 – 4 p.m.**
To register, click [here](#).
- *Rural Electric Coops and Clean Energy Developers* – **Wednesday, January 17, 3 – 4:30 p.m.**
To register, Click [here](#).

In addition to the virtual listening sessions, stakeholders are invited to submit written comments to CleanEnergySiting@USDA.gov by **Saturday, January 20, 2024**.

ADDITIONAL NHDOE RESOURCE LINKS

- **NHDOE REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS (RFPs) CAN BE FOUND [HERE](#).** *This webpage is updated frequently with RFPs for competitive funding opportunities and consultant needs.*
- **NHDOE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES CAN BE FOUND [HERE](#).** *This webpage is continually updated with revised information and funding opportunities. This resource will detail state programs directly overseen by NHDOE. These programs may be of interest to residents, businesses, and local governments looking to implement energy efficiency or clean energy projects.*
- **NHDOE RENEWABLE ENERGY FUND GRANTS WEBPAGE CAN BE FOUND [HERE](#).** *This resource is helpful for those interested in state grant funding for renewable energy projects in the nonresidential sector or low-moderate income community solar projects.*
- **NHDOE RENEWABLE ENERGY FUND REBATES WEBPAGE CAN BE FOUND [HERE](#).** *This resource is helpful for those interested in state rebate funding for residential and commercial property owners that are looking to construct renewable electric generation resources or wood pellet heating systems.*

ADDITIONAL USDOE RESOURCE LINKS

- **USDOE FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS (FOAs) CAN BE FOUND [HERE](#).** *This resource is helpful for those interested in learning about the many US Department of Energy funding opportunities from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act.*
- **USDOE CONSUMER ENERGY SAVINGS HUB CAN BE FOUND [HERE](#).** *This resource is helpful for homeowners, renters, and drivers to gain information on federal energy rebates and tax incentives made available for various appliances, electric vehicles, and home improvements.*

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE LINKS

- **NHSAVES PROGRAMS CAN BE FOUND [HERE](#).** *NH's electric and natural gas utilities manage a suite of incentive programs to promote energy efficiency projects for residents, businesses, and municipalities.*
- **NH ENERGY AND UTILITY BILL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS CAN BE FOUND [HERE](#).** *Consumers may access several financial assistance programs for their energy and utility bills.*
- **USDA'S RURAL DEVELOPMENT ENERGY PROGRAMS CAN BE FOUND [HERE](#).** *This resource is helpful for rural small businesses and agricultural producers to get loans, grants, and technical assistance for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.*