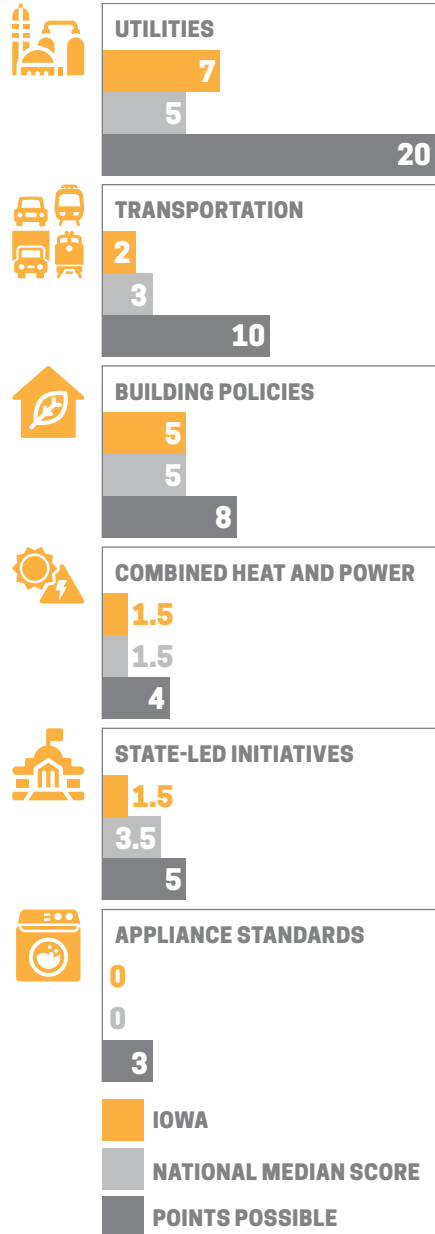




Iowa

Iowa ranked 24th in the 2018 State Energy Efficiency Scorecard, falling five places compared to its 2017 ranking. The state scored 17 points out of a possible 50, 3.5 fewer points than it earned last year, the largest decrease of any state this year.

State efficiency efforts suffered a major setback in early 2018 when lawmakers passed legislation that severely curtailed energy efficiency programs. Early indications from 2018 utility efficiency plans point to a drastic cut in funding for electric and gas savings programs as a result. Iowa has room to improve efficiency in other policy categories as well, including transportation, land use planning, and supporting combined heat and power development.



UTILITIES

Long a standard-bearer of midwestern energy efficiency, Iowa's utility savings programs were dealt a severe blow in 2018 with legislation that imposed a stifling spending cap on demand-side investment. The bill also allows customers to opt out of paying for programs that fail to pass the Ratepayer Impact Measure test, a dated and misguided approach to cost-benefit measurement that fails to account for societal savings benefits and is now only rarely used by other states as a basis for approving programs. Early indications from utility filings forecast a drop in savings of 25-50% for electric programs and of 75-80% for gas programs. No performance incentives are in place for utilities. Improving the utility business model to encourage energy efficiency as a strategic energy system resource would improve long-term and comprehensive energy savings opportunities in Iowa.

TRANSPORTATION

The state integrates transportation and land use planning, and 4% of the fees for new vehicle registration are used to support public transportation. Iowa also has a significant number of electric vehicles registered within the state. Although the state released a comprehensive freight plan in 2016, opportunities remain to strengthen the plan's energy efficiency goals through concrete performance targets.

BUILDING ENERGY EFFICIENCY POLICIES

Iowa's building energy codes for residential and commercial construction are currently based on 2012 IECC standards, although discussions are ongoing to adopt the 2015 IECC. The state hosts trainings for code officials and contractors and the recently released State Energy Plan includes objectives and strategies related to strengthening building efficiency. Utilities are active participants in supporting code compliance efforts, however the state has not completed a baseline compliance study since 2011.

COMBINED HEAT AND POWER

Iowa scored 1.5 out of 4 points for its combined heat and power policies. The state has an interconnection standard and offers technical assistance for CHP projects, but still has room for improvement in this policy area. No new CHP systems were installed in 2017.

STATE GOVERNMENT-LED INITIATIVES

Iowa offers a revolving loan program for consumer energy efficiency investments. The state government leads by example by requiring energy-efficient public buildings and regularly benchmarking their energy use; however it does not allow energy savings performance contracting. The Iowa Energy Center previously awarded several efficiency-focused incentive programs, but has temporarily discontinued loan programs while it charts a new course after its move from Iowa State University to the Iowa Economic Development Authority.

APPLIANCE STANDARDS

Iowa has not set appliance standards beyond those required by the federal government.