



New Jersey

New Jersey earned the distinction of most improved state in the 2018 State Energy Efficiency Scorecard, rising five spots compared to 2017 and tying for 18th place. The state scored 21.5 points out of a possible 50, 4 points more than it earned last year.

The state government signed Senate Bill 2314 earlier this year, establishing new savings targets for New Jersey utilities and setting in motion a significant increase in future energy savings. Other provisions of the legislation include a new energy storage target, strengthening the state's renewable portfolio standard, and setting energy benchmarking requirements for large buildings. New Jersey also has strong transportation policies and was one of the first states to update its building energy codes to meet 2015 standards, albeit with weakening amendments. However, while New Jersey showed a renewed commitment to efficiency this year, its legislature again approved a raid on the state's energy efficiency funding to fill a budget gap, indicating that progress toward the higher targets may not accelerate until funding is increased.



UTILITIES



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The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities administers the Clean Energy Program, delivering the bulk of electric and natural gas efficiency programs in the state. Though electric savings edged upwards in 2017, they remained below the national average. State legislation signed in 2018, which established savings targets of 2% and 0.75% of sales for electricity and natural gas, respectively, could lead to increased investment in efficiency in coming years.



TRANSPORTATION



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New Jersey saw an increase in electric vehicle registrations and a decrease in vehicle miles traveled in 2017. The state integrates transportation and land use planning and has a complete streets policy in place. New Jersey devotes a significant amount of funding to transportation initiatives and offers consumer incentives for high-efficiency vehicles.



BUILDING POLICIES



BUILDING ENERGY EFFICIENCY POLICIES

The state has adopted a residential building energy code based on the 2015 IECC, although it included amendments that weakened it significantly. The commercial building code is based on ASHRAE 90.1-2013. The state also provides training on building energy codes.



COMBINED HEAT AND POWER



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The state offers incentives for CHP deployment through several programs. The state's Energy Resilience Bank, which closed in 2016, was particularly active in providing grants and loans for installing CHP. The state's Superstorm Sandy Action Plan includes funding specifically for CHP and recommends that critical infrastructure use CHP in order to increase the system resiliency. New Jersey also has streamlined its air permitting process by offering a general permit for some eligible CHP systems. Ten new CHP installations were completed in 2017.



STATE-LED INITIATIVES



STATE GOVERNMENT-LED INITIATIVES

The bulk of the state's energy efficiency incentives are ratepayer funded, so New Jersey does not devote state dollars to these programs. The state government leads by example, benchmarking energy use in public buildings and encouraging the use of energy savings performance contracts. The Edison Innovation Clean Energy Fund sponsors energy efficiency research and development.



APPLIANCE STANDARDS



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New Jersey established minimum standards for eight products in 2005, but all have been preempted by federal standards.

