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August Newsletter

Friends—

In recent months, we've seen a series of important efficiency actions from federal agencies, such as new standards for [water heaters](#) and other appliances, [updated requirements](#) for new federally backed homes, and the launch of several programs created by the 2021 bipartisan infrastructure law and 2022's Inflation Reduction Act.

But one much-anticipated and high-impact [action](#) remains undone: The Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) has yet to require new homes with mortgages backed by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to be built to up-to-date energy codes.

In a U.S. Senate [hearing](#) in April, FHFA Director Sandra Thompson said her agency was undertaking an analysis on the issue, that it was a "priority," and that she expected to take a next step by the end of June. That date came and went with no news.

You can [send FHFA a message](#) encouraging it to act. Inaction by FHFA would mean continued construction of inefficient new homes in many states across the country with severely outdated codes.

Thank you, as always, for your interest in our work. I look forward to seeing many of you next week at [Summer Study](#).

Best,

Steven Nadel
Executive Director

Efficiency Update

- The Environmental Protection Agency [recently awarded](#) \$4.3 billion in grants to 25 projects in 30 states to reduce climate pollution and accelerate the clean energy transition. With these awards, the Climate Pollution Reduction Grants program, which was created under 2022's Inflation Reduction Act, will support a range of decarbonization priorities, including industrial decarbonization, transit, chargers for electric vehicles, buildings efficiency, heat pumps, and networked geothermal systems.
- Regulators in Massachusetts [approved a plan](#) from Unitil, a power company serving a small portion of the state, to offer households with heat pumps a lower electric rate during the winter and a further discounted rate for low-income households. In a recent [blog post](#), we examined how such rate structures can help spur efficient, equitable electrification.
- Milwaukee recently adopted a [commercial energy benchmarking ordinance](#) requiring commercial buildings that are 50,000 square feet or bigger to track and report their energy performance beginning in 2025. Benchmarking policies help encourage building owners to improve their buildings' energy efficiency and can lay the foundation for future policies that target improvements, such as building performance standards.

Our Latest Research



[The Power Grid Isn't Ready for Electric Truck Fleets. Time Is Running Low to Prepare.](#)

As more truck and bus fleets go electric, their charging needs will create significant new loads on the grid. Two new publications can help utilities plan for upgrades that will take several years.



[Utility Energy Codes Programs and Their Potential Extension to Building Performance Standards](#)

Our latest white paper examines current approaches to crediting utilities for supporting the adoption and implementation of building energy codes.



[Issue in Focus: Benchmarking Local Governments' Equity-Related Clean Energy Actions](#)

Drawing from the *2024 City Clean Energy Scorecard*, this brief highlights several emerging strategies city governments are employing to advance equity in their clean energy actions.

See all our recent [blog posts](#) and [press releases](#).

ACEEE in Action



At a U.S. Department of Transportation [symposium](#), ACEEE transportation director Rachel Aland (second from right) spoke on a panel on strategies to reduce freight emissions.

What We're Reading

A few of our favorite media highlights from the past month:

- Senior local policy manager Stefen Samarripas published an op-ed in [Next City](#) on how cities can ensure equity in clean energy programs.
- The [Washington Post](#) quoted senior fellow Jennifer Amann in an article about air conditioning costs increasing with hotter outdoor temperatures.

- The [National League of Cities](#) published a blog post on ACEEE’s recent survey research on marketing and promoting electrification.

Staff Update

Matt Malinowski joins us as buildings director. Matt previously worked at CLASP, where he was director of climate research, and earlier at ICF International, where he led a team of consultants developing specifications for ENERGY STAR. He holds master’s and bachelor’s degrees from MIT.



Andrea Rivas joins us as a RAY fellow in communications. Andrea previously worked at Air Alliance Houston. She holds a bachelor’s degree in environmental engineering and a certificate in civic leadership from Rice University.



Upcoming Events








August 4–9, Pacific Grove, CA



**December 3, Washington, DC
(Save the date)**

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