

Campus Climate Action Corps

Maine Energy Efficiency Community Resource Guide



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compact.org/CCAC



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About Us

The Campus Climate Action Corps (CCAC) is a [Campus Compact](#) and [AmeriCorps](#) initiative dedicated to improving energy efficiency and cost savings for economically disadvantaged individuals and to lessening our environmental impact.

CCAC AmeriCorps members serve as a vital link to spread our message across the entire state! Campus Compact initiatives bring positive growth to both the AmeriCorps members and the communities they serve. The CCAC program is a staple in the community because it promotes energy conservation for environmental and financial reasons while bringing communities closer together.

The goal of CCAC is to reach households that have higher energy burdens or spend a disproportionate amount of their income on energy bills. Especially focused on economically disadvantaged residents, CCAC provides access to energy efficiency resources that aim to lower energy bills and promote environmental sustainability.

Environmental sustainability lies at the heart of every CCAC initiative. More people saving energy means fewer carbon emissions released into the environment, a vital step in the right direction in our battle against the climate crisis. CCAC initiatives build community partnerships to promote energy efficiency awareness. Not only do these partnerships encourage various groups to unite around environmental stewardship, but they also open pathways for future collaboration and opportunity in the community. Collectively, CCAC's initiatives spur environmental and financial progress while uniting communities in the name of energy efficiency.

Additionally, CCAC initiatives have a profound impact on the AmeriCorps members who participate in them. AmeriCorps members gain experience, for example, in planning and operating an environmentally focused public awareness campaign while developing valuable skills in the process. Over their term of service, members develop skills such as time management, leadership, communication, creativity, and volunteer management. The skills and experiences that CCAC members gain over the course of service are certainly invaluable to any individual seeking to enhance their professional self, regardless of their desired career.

CCAC's initiative provides an irreplaceable framework for sustainable living that works to preserve the environment, benefits the community, and provides priceless experiences and skill development for people passionate about making a difference.

CCAC In Maine

CCAC has a growing presence in Maine and currently is partnered with three host sites: College of the Atlantic, Southern Maine Community College, and the University of Maine. To learn more about our other projects, please visit our website [here](#).

Why is Energy Efficiency Important?

Energy efficiency means using *less* energy to perform a task (i.e. turning off a light.) Having an energy-efficient home improves your household's health, safety, and comfort, as well as helps protect the environment. Finding ways to maximize energy efficiency is particularly important for low-income households because economically disadvantaged people experience higher energy burdens. Low-income houses have an average of [5% more of an "energy cost burden](#) than average households.

Improves Health, Safety, and Comfort

Maximizing energy efficiency reduces the need to burn fossil fuels to generate electricity. Pollutants from fossil fuel combustion can lead to cancer, respiratory illnesses, heart disease, and stroke, all of which are leading causes of death in the United States. High energy burdens may also force you to cut back on heating, cooling, and lighting expenses, which can have many physical and mental health consequences, such as uncomfortable temperatures, inadequate lighting, unsafe housing conditions, and constant financial and social stress.

Helps the Environment

When you burn fossil fuels to power your home, you release carbon dioxide and other **greenhouse gasses** that trap heat in Earth's atmosphere, warming the planet's surface. This leads to **climate change** which causes sea-level rise, inhabitable climates, extreme weather, and many other problems that threaten life on Earth. Economically disadvantaged populations are especially vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Increasing energy efficiency can slow climate change by decreasing demand for energy imports and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy estimates that energy efficiency policies could reduce annual carbon dioxide emissions by 1 billion tons by 2030.

Energy Efficiency in Your Home

Whether you are a homeowner or a renter, you will find information in this manual about how you can lessen your household energy expenses through:

- The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)
- Rebates for energy and cost-efficient upgrades
- Tips for maximizing energy efficiency
- Advocating for climate action in Maine

Saves Money

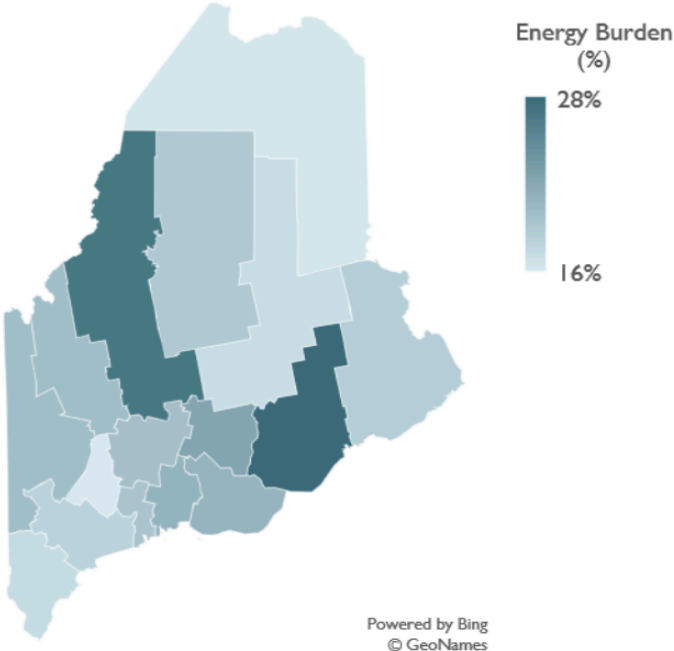
Economically disadvantaged households can save money on heating, water, electricity, and household appliances through energy efficiency benefit programs such as **LIHEAP** (Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, [pg. 7](#)), **WAP** (Weatherization Assistance Programs, [pg. 9](#)), and **rebate** and **incentive** programs ([pg. 10](#)). Simple tips and tricks can help you save even more energy and money in your home ([pg. 22](#))

Maine Energy Profile

Energy Burden in Maine

Energy burden is defined as the percentage of a household’s income spent on home energy bills. According to a [study](#) commissioned by the Maine Office of the Public Advocate, the average energy burden for low-income households is 24% compared to 14% for high-income households (p. 12). This means that some low-income families are spending close to a third of their income on energy bills alone. Click [here](#) to learn more about energy burdens.

Figure 10. Maine low-income household average home energy burden by county



Source: [Synapse Energy Economics](#)

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

What is LIHEAP?

The Maine Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (called **LIHEAP** or **HEAP**) is a state and federally-funded program that provides money to low-income homeowners and renters to help pay for winter heating bills from November 1st to April 30th. LIHEAP serves millions of people each year.

LIHEAP Eligibility in Maine

The amount of help you receive from LIHEAP is dependent on your income, household size, and energy costs. Typically, people who participate in or have family members who participate in benefit programs such as **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**, **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)**, and **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)** are automatically eligible for LIHEAP. Renters can qualify for LIHEAP benefits even if heating is included in their rent. In order to qualify, you must also have an annual household income (before taxes) that is below 60 percent of the State Median Income. To determine if you qualify for LIHEAP, contact your local **Community Action Agency (CAA)**, which can be found [here](#).

Other Benefits of LIHEAP

In Maine, LIHEAP eligibility is a gateway to other federally funded programs, such as:

- **The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)**, which provides grants for weatherization improvements such as insulation, weather-stripping, caulking, and some safety-related repairs.
- **The Central Heating Improvement Program (CHIP)**, which provides grants to repair or replace central heating systems.
- **Maine Housing's heat pump program** which pays for the cost and installation of heat pumps for eligible Maine homeowners.
- **Enhanced rebates** for energy efficiency upgrades
- **Low Income Assistance Plans (LIAP)** to assist with electricity costs.

To find out more about LIHEAP, click [here](#).

Weatherization & The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)

What is Weatherization?

Kind of like bundling up your home! **Weatherization** is the process of protecting a building from air leaks and the elements to increase energy efficiency and reduce heating and cooling costs. According to the **US Department of Energy**, proper weatherization helps households save up to [15% on heating and cooling costs and 11% on total energy costs annually.](#)

Why Should Maine Residents Weatherize?

Maine has some of the [oldest housing stock](#) in the country, which means that many homes lack modern air leak-preventing technology. In addition, Maine is vulnerable to extreme weather conditions in summer and winter. As a result, many Maine residents experience increased heating and cooling costs and uncomfortable temperatures in their homes. This makes weatherization measures particularly important for Maine residents who can save money and energy while improving the comfort of their homes.

What Does WAP Entail?

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) provides low-income households with full-scale home energy efficiency services. An average of \$4,725 in allowable energy efficiency measures is available to eligible households. The most common measures include air sealing, attic Insulation, sidewall Insulation, floor Insulation, pipe and/or duct insulation, and limited energy-related repairs.

The **Maine Housing Authority** manages the Weatherization Assistance Program in Maine by partnering with local Community Action Agencies (CAA) and nonprofits to provide economically disadvantaged Mainers with grants for weatherization services. The Maine Weatherization Assistance Program covers 100% of the cost of recommended weatherization improvements for LIHEAP-eligible households. On average, WAP spends [\\$4,695](#) per home on weatherization upgrades.

Weatherization Services that are Typically Funded Include:

- Insulation and venting
- Weather stripping
- Door sweeps
- Air sealing and caulking
- Sealing ducts
- Chimney bypasses
- Wrapping pipes
- Safety-related repairs
- Replacing incandescent bulbs with LED

Lasting Benefits of WAP

- Nationally, economically disadvantaged families spend an average of \$1,800 on energy bills each year. WAP's energy upgrades save families an average of \$437 annually on heating and cooling costs, with additional energy and cost savings from lighting and appliance upgrades.
- Low-income homes typically save an average of 35% on energy after weatherization services.
- Weatherization continues to save money and energy each year.
- Weatherization helps the environment by reducing carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions by 2.65 metric tons/year per home.
- Weatherization decreases pollution from burning fossil fuels and coal, improving local air quality and physical health.

To learn more about the Weatherization Assistance Program, click [here](#).

Efficiency Maine

About Efficiency Maine

The Efficiency Maine Trust provides financial incentives (rebates) for the purchase of high-efficiency equipment or changes to operations that help Maine residents save electricity, fuel, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Click [here](#) to learn more about Efficiency Maine rebate options.

Efficiency Maine Upgrades

Upgrading to more energy efficient appliances that perform the same tasks while using less energy will save money long term. However, the initial cost of upgrading can be an obstacle to many people. Below is a list of high-efficiency equipment that Efficiency Maine provides rebates for.

LED Lightbulbs

Compared to regular incandescent bulbs, LED light bulbs are:

- **83%** more energy efficient
- About **6x** less expensive
- Last **50x** longer
- Contain fewer toxic chemicals like mercury.

Electric Vehicles

Many Mainers are switching to electric vehicles because they cost less to operate, are better for the environment, and fun to drive! Efficiency Maine offers instant rebates for eligible **battery electric vehicles** (BEVs) and **plug-in hybrid electric vehicles** (PHEVs) at participating Maine car dealers.

High Efficiency Heat Pumps

Heat pumps are the most efficient way to heat and cool your home. That is why tens of thousands of Mainers decide to install heat pumps in their homes. Heat pumps provide highly efficient heating at temperatures low as -15°F, air conditioning, and dehumidification. Thanks to a new initiative to install 100,000 heat pumps in Maine by 2025, the following opportunities are available for Mainers:

- Residential rebates up to \$1,500 from Efficiency Maine
- Commercial rebates up to \$4,800 from Efficiency Maine
- Enhanced rebates from Efficiency Maine up to \$2,000 for first heat pump and up to \$500 for a second heat pump for homes with low assessed value.
- FREE heat pump installations for LIHEAP-eligible homes (contact your local CAA)

Climate Action in the United States

In the 21st century, the world faces an unprecedented crisis: climate change. Due to the burning of fossil fuels and other unsustainable practices, harmful greenhouse gases are released into the air that warm the planet and send a range of cascading effects down our natural ecosystems. Coastal homes will be flooded, extreme weather events will become stronger and more common, and a wide variety of other effects will cause both environmental and socioeconomic effects throughout the United States and the world. The Northeastern United States will not be shielded from these effects, and this brings about the urgent need for climate action.

Climate action is about the process of taking meaningful steps that reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and enacting meaningful change that will prevent the climate crisis from accelerating. Nationally, the [Inflation Reduction Act](#) is the flagship bill of the Biden administration that aims to curb greenhouse gas emissions and fight against climate change. Provisions of the bill include investing approximately 300 million into climate provisions, including renewable energy technology, investing in electric vehicle infrastructure, and over 1 billion dollars towards climate resilience in low-income areas. Also, as part of his climate agenda, Biden launched the [American Climate Corps](#) to train young people in climate-facing jobs, including renewable energy jobs and jobs that improve the country's climate resilience efforts. The initiative hopes to put 20,000 young people to work after a paid training program. International efforts are also underway to decarbonize, as demonstrated by the annual COP (Conference of Parties) conventions which aim to foster a sense of collaboration around the issue on a global scale. In 2015, a monumental conference was held in Paris, where nearly every country in the world committed to the Paris Climate Agreement, where greenhouse gas emission reduction targets were set, laying the groundwork for significant climate action. The [COP 28](#) convention was recently held in Dubai, UAE, in December 2023, with many of the world's leading countries and delegates once again committing to reducing fossil fuel use.

Climate Action in Maine

Maine's Climate Action

On December 1, 2020, the office of Governor Janet Mills released the following statement about Maine's new climate action plan:

"Governor Janet Mills today welcomed the release of [Maine Won't Wait \(PDF\)](#), the new four-year climate action plan from the Maine Climate Council and announced actions her Administration will take to protect Maine people and communities and spur economic growth in the fight against climate change.

Governor Mills and the Legislature last year enacted bipartisan legislation that created the Maine Climate Council – an assembly of scientists, industry leaders, bipartisan local and state elected officials, and engaged citizens – to develop a plan to reduce carbon emissions and achieve carbon neutrality in Maine by 2045. Backed by the most comprehensive scientific and economic assessments about the effects of climate change in Maine in a decade, Maine Won't Wait calls for decisive steps to achieve that goal, including bolstering the electric vehicle market in Maine, expanding the number of heat pumps installed in Maine homes, and transitioning to renewable energy to curb harmful greenhouse gas emissions.

Maine Won't Wait also details climate action steps to create economic opportunities for Maine, such as encouraging the growth of the clean energy economy; creating incentives for consumer, business and industry to invest in energy efficiency; and supporting innovative construction materials and agricultural systems that rely on Maine timber and farms to build and feed the state into the future. The plan also

highlights strategies to ensure our economy and communities are better prepared for the increasing impacts of climate change."

Click [here](#) to find out more about Maine's Climate Action Plan

Maine Won't Wait Energy Efficiency Goals

Below are energy efficiency goals Maine Won't Wait has set for Maine Households:

- Installing 100,000 heat pumps by 2025; by 2030 to have 130,000 homes use between 1-2 heat pumps
- Weatherize 17,500 additional homes and businesses by 2025, including 1,000 low-income units/year. Weatherize 35,000 homes and businesses by 2030
- Have an electricity grid where 80% of Maine's electricity comes from renewable sources.

Maine Won't Wait Updates

Since launching Maine Won't Wait, the state has made significant progress on it's climate action plan. In 2023, the Maine Climate Council released a [progress report](#) outlining its achievements.

Below is a statement about the progress report from the Maine Climate Council Co-Chairs.

"Since it was released in December 2020, Maine Won't Wait has become synonymous with climate action in Maine, creating historic momentum for reducing emissions, advancing clean energy, and protecting Maine's infrastructure and environment from climate effects.

This is the third year of Maine Won't Wait, and a milestone moment to take stock of what the plan has helped Maine achieve so far, and to cast our attention to the future, as the Maine Climate Council begins

its work to deliver an updated climate action plan by December 1, 2024.

As co-chairs of the Maine Climate Council, which was created in statute by Governor Janet Mills to develop the state's climate plan, we are proud of the work by so many people, communities, and organizations to advance the objectives of Maine Won't Wait. At the same time, we are excited and energized at the prospect of diving into the planning process anew, to build upon the extraordinary momentum of the past three years.

The past 36 months are a study in contrasts. On one side, the effects of climate change in Maine, our nation, and our world remain dire. Just here in our home state, extreme weather has caused millions of dollars in damages to valuable infrastructure, which is putting strain on communities that are only now preparing for the reality of damage of this magnitude.

On the other side, the financial and technical wherewithal to act on climate change has arguably never been greater. Today, 174 communities are participating in the Community Resilience Partnership, which is helping cities, towns, and Tribal governments to identify climate and resilience priorities and start or expand local climate planning and actions. And historic federal legislation passed over the last three years – the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and the Chips and Science Act (CHIPS) – is delivering unprecedented support for climate and resilience priorities to upgrade community infrastructure, weatherize low-income homes, expand electric vehicle charging, and more. The IRA in particular has created incentives for homeowners, businesses, communities, schools and more to invest in critical technologies such as heat pumps, electric vehicles, battery systems, rooftop and community solar energy, that are central to curbing greenhouse gas emissions, slowing warming, and reducing our

reliance on fossil fuels. For more about these incentives, check out the Maine Climate Council's handy guides on maine.gov/climateplan. These incentives will continue the considerable momentum on climate action started by Maine people. This past July, we celebrated a major achievement of Maine Won't Wait – surpassing, two years early, our plan's goal of installing 100,000 heat pumps in Maine by 2025. To mark the occasion, Governor Mills set a new goal of 175,000 additional heat pumps by 2027, a bold step forward that other states around the nation are citing to advance efforts to install high efficiency heat pumps.

Also in that vein, the economic opportunities from addressing climate change are also coming to the fore in Maine. This year, TimberHP in Madison officially opened to produce climate-friendly wood-fiber insulation, an innovative product to help both increase the efficiency of buildings while sequestering carbon at the same time. This trailblazing factory shows Maine's potential in climate technology, as evidenced by our designation as a federal "tech hub" for innovative bio-based products through the CHIPS and Science Act, and continued success by Maine-based companies to develop products and services central to addressing climate change, on everything from generating renewable energy from our rivers, supporting the electrification of vehicle fleets, to developing exciting new ocean products that expand Maine's burgeoning blue economy. Although much progress has occurred under Maine Won't Wait, the Climate Council – as part of its work to update the climate plan for the next four years – is examining the critical challenges that lay ahead. While the upheaval in global energy markets of the past two year has eased, for now, it remains imperative to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. This is more than just a climate imperative for reducing emissions– it is now vital for the safety and

security of Maine people, businesses, and communities from hardships caused by unpredictable, unaffordable energy costs. Planning for clean energy requires important dialogues and discussions with communities across the state, to ensure infrastructure investments are done responsibly to unlock significant new economic and workforce benefits, and that Maine's most vulnerable communities and populations share in the benefits from these opportunities. The Council will weigh these matters, and many more, as it works to update Maine Won't Wait over the next 12 months. We know the damage that climate change, if unaddressed, poses to our people, communities, and economy. The Council's work comes as science is telling us to redouble our efforts, federal legislation is backing climate action with unprecedented support, and the chance to make impactful steps in Maine to curb emissions, create jobs

and investment, and reduce our nation-leading reliance on fossil fuels is within reach.

In other words, Maine can't wait, and Maine won't wait. As Council co-chairs, we are proud to lead this assembly of scientists, citizens, business leaders, and bipartisan public officials. We thank everyone for their partnership in our work, invite you to share your thoughts and ideas with the Council during the important year ahead, and look forward to putting forward a climate plan in the coming year that protects Maine people, communities, and environment for the next four years, and beyond." (Maine Climate Council Annual Report, 2023, pp. 2-3).

National Energy Efficiency Resources

American Council for an Energy-Efficiency Economy (ACEEE) – develops transformative policies to reduce energy waste and combat climate change.

Address: 529 14th Street NW, Ste. 600

Washington, DC 20045

Phone: (202)-507-4000

Website: aceee.org

Dashboard of State Incentives for Renewable Energy and Efficiency (DSIRE) – a website dedicated to finding programs that homeowners can benefit from in the realm of energy efficiency.

Website: <https://www.dsireusa.org/>

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – protects human health and the environment.

Website: epa.gov

Contact EPA: epa.gov/home/forms/contact-epa

National Energy Education Development (NEED) – trains and assists teachers in harnessing the energy of the classroom – the energy of students. Teaches students and teachers each year about energy.

Address: 8404 Kao Circle, Manassas, VA 20110

Phone: 1-800-875-5029 or 1-703-257-1117

Email: info@need.org

Website: need.org/educators

US Department of Energy (DOE) – The mission of the Energy Department is to ensure America's security and prosperity by addressing its energy, environmental and nuclear challenges through transformative science and technology solutions

- [Energy Saver Guide](#)
- [DIY Projects](#)
- [Find incentives and financing](#)
- [Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy](#)

National Housing Trust– Assists with every stage of a home energy project including planning, financing, installation, and management. The National Housing Trust Fund is a federally funded program that assists in the production and preservation of affordable housing with services for extremely low- and very low-income households, including homeless families, who, without the availability of integrated supports, might experience less stable tenancies.

Address: 1101 30th Street, NW Suite 100 A Washington, DC 20007

Phone: 202-333-8931

Email: nht@nhtinc.org

Website: nationalhousingtrust.org

Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) –

provides no-cost energy audits and weatherization services for low-income homes. Find your local WAP agency [here](#).

About: energy.gov/eere/wap/about

How to Apply: energy.gov/eere/wap/how-apply

Maine State Resources

Efficiency Maine – Gives rebates and loans for energy upgrades to your home, including weatherization and heat pumps

Website: efficiencymaine.com

Phone: 866-376-2463

Email: info@efficiencymaine.com

Island Institute – works to sustain Maine’s island and coastal communities, and exchanges ideas and experiences to further the sustainability of communities here and elsewhere.

Address: 386 Main Street, PO Box 648, Rockland, ME 04841

Phone: 207-594-9209

Email: info@islandinstitute.org

Website: islandinstitute.org

Maine Climate Table – creates a state-based model for climate initiatives that increases broad civic engagement and leads to climate action. Aims to engage more people in community-based climate action that will collectively help to reduce climate changing pollution, support adaptation to the changing conditions around us and promote measures that will increase the resiliency of Maine’s communities and small businesses.

Address: 200 Main Street, Westbrook, ME 04092

Phone: 207-837-4868

Email: <mailto:info@maineclimatetable.org>

Website: maineclimatetable.org

Maine Environmental Education Association (MEEA) – enhances and amplifies the efforts of individuals and organizations building environmental awareness, appreciation, understanding, and action in Maine.

Address: 31 Woodside Drive, Brunswick, ME 04011

Phone: 207-619-1609

Email: info@meeasocciation.org

Website: meeasociation.org

Maine State Housing Authority (MaineHousing) – addresses problems of unsafe, unsuitable, overcrowded, and unaffordable housing. Administers a number of federal housing-related programs including the Weatherization Program and the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

Address: 26 Edison Drive, Augusta, ME 04330

Phone: 207-626-4600 (Toll Free: 800-452-4668)

Website: mainehousing.org

Natural Resources Council of Maine – a nonprofit membership organization protecting, restoring, and conserving Maine’s environment, now and for future generations.

Address: 3 Wade Street, Augusta, ME 04330-6317

Phone: 207-622-3101 (Toll Free: 800-287-2345)

Email: nrcm@nrcm.org

Website: nrcm.org

WindowDressers – brings community volunteers of all economic and social situations together to improve the warmth and comfort of interior spaces, lower heating costs, and reduce carbon dioxide pollution by producing low-cost insulating window inserts that function as custom, interior-mounted storm windows.

Address: PO Box 1135, Rockland, ME 04841

Phone: 207-596-3073 (Customer Service)

Email: info@windowdressers.org

Website: windowdressers.org

Bicycle Coalition of Maine – works to make Maine a better place to bike and walk.

Address: 38 Diamond Street Portland, Maine 04101

Phone: 207-623-4511

Website: bikemaine.org

EcoMaine – provides comprehensive, long-term solid waste solutions in a safe, environmentally responsible, economically sound manner, and is a leader in raising public awareness of sustainable waste management strategies.

Address: 64 Blueberry Road, Portland Maine 04102

Phone: 207-773-1738

Orono Community Garden – is a part of the University of Maine, Office of Sustainability. The main purpose of the garden is to produce food for a monthly meal at the Bangor Area Homeless Shelter. This meal provides food for 100 people and is served 10 months out of the year. The garden not only provides food for the monthly meals, it is also visually appealing with symmetry and perfectly tended rows of vibrant vegetables. This garden also offers the application of cooking skills after the produce is brought to the homeless shelter to be prepared.

Address: 39 Pine St, Orono, ME 04473

Phone: (207) 581-3241

Email: jemison@maine.edu

Website: umaine.edu/sustainability/community/ocg

Community Housing Improvement Project (CHiP inc.) – provides services such as weatherproofing, replacement of windows and doors, handicap access ramps and electrical plumbing repairs for Lincoln County homeowners who are not able to do so themselves...and limited emergency deliveries of heating oil and firewood to those in need.

Address: PO Box 6, Newcastle, ME 04553

Phone: 207-677-3450

Email: info@chipinc.org

Website: chipinc.org

Tips for Saving Energy and Money in Your Home Year Round

In Maine, we experience all four seasons— harsh winters, muddy springs, hot summers, and crisp falls. However, because of climate change, we are experiencing even more extreme weather patterns each year. Extreme and unpredictable weather means that Mass residents must adapt to many different kinds of conditions and temperatures to stay comfortable and save energy and money in their homes.

In the following section, you will find some do-it-yourself tips to maximize energy efficiency and cost savings during both the warm and cold months of the year

Warm Weather Energy Saving Tips

Fan Yourself

Fans are more energy and cost-efficient than air conditioning (AC). Just remember to turn off the fans when you're not in the room. They aren't intended to cool the space— just the people in the space via the wind chill effect.

Optimize Your Thermostat

If you opt for air conditioning (AC), the US Department of Energy recommends setting your thermostat to 78°F in the summer to save up to 10% in energy costs each year. For every degree you raise your thermostat above 72 degrees, you can save up to 3% of your cooling expenses. Also, consider setting your thermostat to a higher, less energy-intensive temperature while you're not home. Make sure you get routine maintenance checks of your AC;

[50%](#) of system failures associated with AC units are due to a lack of maintenance.

Monitor Water Usage

In the summer, water usage increases— whether it's watering your lawn or taking more showers. You can keep usage down and save money by:

- Getting a rain barrel to collect water for your garden or lawn.
- Watering grass and plants in the early morning or at dusk, so the water doesn't evaporate in the summer heat.
- Installing "low-flow" water fixtures, such as shower heads, toilets, and outdoor sprinklers.
- Taking cool showers and washing dishes with cold water.

Close the Blinds & Check Seals

Using a fan isn't the only way to keep your home cooler in the hot summer months. Take a quick walk around the house and close all the blinds and curtains during the day. This will keep your rooms from heating up and make spaces easier to cool with an air conditioner or fan. At night you can open the windows to let in the cooler night air. You can also add weather stripping to your doors and windows to better insulate your home.

Cold Weather Energy Saving Tips

Rock Your Winter Wardrobe Indoors

Layer up and stay bundled around the house in your winter best. [You can save 5%](#) for every degree you drop your thermostat between 60-70 degrees, so slip on your coziest

sweatshirt and some fuzzy socks to let your clothes do the warming.

Decrease the Heat

Turn your thermostat to 58 degrees when you leave your home or before you go to bed in the winter months. According to the US Dept. of Energy, turning the heat down by 7 to 10 degrees for an 8-hour period at night or when you are at work can cut your heating bill by 10%. Do not turn off your heat completely though as your pipes could become frozen. Conversely, if your home gets too hot, condensed air can negatively impact wood products such as flooring.

Let The Sunshine In Take advantage of the world's best furnace– the sun! Naturally heat your home by drawing the curtains of south-facing windows during the day to let the sunshine in. You'll save money on your heating bill and get to appreciate the wintery backdrop.

Tips to Follow Rain or Shine All Year Round!

Swap Out Old Light Bulbs With LEDs Not only are LED bulbs **83%** more energy efficient than traditional incandescent bulbs, but they also cost \$1.19 annually compared to the \$7.01 annual cost of incandescent bulbs. LED lights also contain less toxic chemicals like mercury.

Wash Your Clothes with Cold Water and Minimize Loads

Washing your clothes with cold water could save you up to **\$200** annually! Also, try to air dry your clothes instead of using a dryer and do BIG loads of laundry. Doing one load of laundry has the same carbon footprint as leaving an LED light on for 13 days straight.

Eliminate Phantom Loads/Energy Vampires

[Energy vampires](#) or Phantom Loads are appliances or plugged-in devices that draw energy even when not in use, usually by being in “standby” mode. Vampire energy can account for up to 10% of your monthly energy bill! The best way to avoid vampire energy is to plug energy vampires into power strips that can be turned off when not in use. Common appliances that are energy vampires include:

- Phone chargers
- Desktop computers
- Stereos and TVs
- Coffee makers
- Microwaves,
- Video game consoles
- Satellite & cable boxes
- Printers

Turn off the Lights

Turn off the lights and other electronics when not in use --it's such a simple way to help the planet!

Follow the “Three R's” - Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

When following the “Three R's,” reducing your consumption of energy, for example, is the best option. If you are unable to reduce the action you are participating in, the next best options are to reuse then recycle. You can also implement these guidelines in many other daily habits, such as reducing food waste by composting, reusing water bottles, and recycling appropriate materials from your residence.

Energy Saving Tips

- Caulk and weatherstrip doors and windows that leak air.
- When home, turn down the heat to 68° For as low as comfortable.
- When you are asleep or away from home, turn the thermostat back 7° to 10° for eight hours and save as much as 10% a year on your heating and cooling bills.

- Consider changing to a programmable thermostat.
- Turn down the temperature of your hot water heater to 120°.
- Have your oil-fired heating system serviced annually or your gas-fired heating system serviced every three years.
- Clean or replace furnace filters every other month.
- Keep the fireplace flue damper closed unless a fire is burning.
- Check that warm-air registers, baseboard heaters, and radiators are not blocked by furniture or drapes.
- During the winter heating season, close your curtains and shades at night; open them during the day.

Glossary

The Climate Crisis	The urgent and escalating global environmental challenge characterized by significant and adverse changes in climate patterns. It is primarily driven by human activities, such as the burning of fossil fuels, deforestation, and industrial processes, leading to increased concentrations of greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere and resulting in long-term changes in temperature, weather patterns, and sea levels.
Energy Burden	Energy Burden is the proportion of a household's income that is spent on energy-related expenses, including electricity, heating, and cooling. A high energy burden indicates that a significant portion of a household's income is allocated to meeting energy needs, potentially leading to financial strain.
Energy Efficiency	Energy Efficiency refers to the use of less energy to provide the same level of performance or output. It involves adopting technologies, practices, and systems that minimize energy waste and enhance the overall effectiveness of energy use, contributing to reduced energy consumption and environmental impact.
Greenhouse Gasses	Greenhouse Gasses are atmospheric gasses that trap heat, leading to the greenhouse effect and the warming of the Earth's surface. Common greenhouse gasses include carbon dioxide (CO ₂), methane (CH ₄), nitrous oxide (N ₂ O), and fluorinated gasses. Human activities, such as burning fossil fuels and deforestation, significantly contribute to the increased concentrations of these gasses, contributing to climate change.
Inflation Reduction Act	The Inflation Reduction Act is a legislative measure designed to address and mitigate the impacts of inflation on the economy. It may include policies and strategies aimed at controlling inflation, stabilizing prices, and promoting economic growth while minimizing adverse effects on consumers and businesses.
Phantom Loads	Phantom loads refer to the energy consumed by devices when they are off or in standby mode.
Rebate	A Rebate is a partial refund or discount on a product or service. In the context of energy, rebates are often provided by governments or utility companies to incentivize individuals or businesses to adopt energy-efficient technologies or practices. These financial incentives help offset the initial costs of implementing energy-efficient measures.
Weatherization	Weatherization involves making structural and operational improvements to a building or home to enhance its resistance to the impacts of weather conditions. This may include insulation, sealing gaps and cracks, upgrading

windows and doors, and other measures aimed at improving energy efficiency and reducing energy consumption for heating and cooling. Weatherization initiatives contribute to both cost savings for individuals and a reduction in overall energy demand