

**The Vermont Energy Digest  
An Inventory of Renewable Energy and Efficiency**

**Appendices**

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## Vermont Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency

Vermont has numerous incentives and other initiatives that support renewable energy and efficiency. A summary of each of these is on the Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency website, [www.dsireusa.org](http://www.dsireusa.org). The text box below lists the incentives described on the website. Following is a description of just a few of Vermont's initiatives.

### **The Solar and Small Wind Incentive Program**

The Vermont Solar and Small Wind Incentive Program was established in 2003. The Vt. Department of Public Service oversees the program, and the Renewable Energy Resource Center, a project of the Vermont Energy Investment Corporation, administers it. A summary of the incentive amounts are given in the solar and wind chapters of this report. The program incentives generally cover about 20%-25% of the total installed cost of the systems.

In the first two rounds of the incentive program, about \$1.4 million in incentives was awarded, supporting the installation of more than 345 solar and wind energy systems and leveraging millions in private investment. In September 2006, another \$980,000 of incentive funding was made available. The new funding is expected to support the installation of about 210 new solar and wind energy systems during a one-year period.

Additional funding is expected to be provided for the next several years through the Clean Energy Fund. According to the Renewable Energy Resource Center, the participation rate and results achieved under the program are impressive, especially for solar. The program has achieved the results with incentive levels that are significantly lower than similar programs nationwide, indicating that these public dollars invested are providing a comparatively high return (Renewable Energy Resource Center).

### **School Energy Management Program**

This program, administered through the Vermont Superintendents' Association, assists schools with energy management, and has helped many Vermont schools install wood-chip-fired systems, as detailed in the Wood section of this report.

### **Sales Tax Exemption**

All equipment used in a net-metered system, and solar hot water systems are exempt from Vermont's 6% sales tax.

### **The Vermont Anemometer Loan Program**

This program provides wind measurement equipment to Vermont residents who are considering the installation of small wind systems on their property. It's administered by Vermont Technical College; faculty and students collect and analyze data from the equipment and prepare site reports.

### **Vermont Energy Star Homes Service, a project of Efficiency Vermont**

This service gives financial incentives for the construction of new homes meeting specified energy efficient criteria.

## Vermont Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency

### Financial Incentives

CVPS - Biomass Electricity Production Incentive  
Sales Tax Exemption  
Direct State Loan Program  
State Rebate Programs  
    Commercial Lighting Incentives  
    Cool Choice HVAC Incentives  
    Dairy Farm Incentive Program  
    Efficiency Vermont - Residential Energy Efficiency  
Rebate Programs  
    Energy Efficient Transformer Program  
    Incentives for Integrated Design and High  
Efficiency Equipment  
    LED Traffic Light Incentive Program  
    Small Commercial Refrigeration Incentive  
    Solar & Small Wind Incentive Program  
    Vending Machine Controller Incentive  
CVPS - Biomass Grant Program  
Vermont Gas - HomeBase Retrofit Loan Program  
Utility Rebate Programs  
    Burlington Electric Department - Neighbor\$ave  
Energy Efficiency Rebate Program  
    Vermont Gas - HomeBase Programs and WorkPlace  
Programs  
Alternative Fuel and Vehicle Incentives  
    Alternative Fuel Vehicle Research and Development  
Tax Credit  
    Natural Gas Vehicle Incentives

### Rules, Regulations and Policies

Energy Efficiency Standards for Appliances  
Vermont Building Energy Codes  
Fuel Source and Environmental Impact of Generation  
Disclosure  
Interconnection Standards  
Vermont Net Metering Rules  
Public Benefits Funds  
    Clean Energy Development Fund  
    Efficiency Vermont  
Renewable Portfolio Goal  
Alternative Fuel and Vehicle Policies  
    Agricultural Economic Development Plan for  
Biofuels  
    Governor's Commission on Climate Change  
    Fuel Efficient Vehicle Acquisition Requirements  
    Neighborhood Electric Vehicle (NEV) Access to  
Roadways  
    Alternative Fuel Vehicle (AFV) Acquisition  
Requirements  
    State Agency Energy Plan Transportation  
Requirements

### Related Programs and Initiatives

Utility Green Pricing Programs  
Central Vermont Public Service  
Green Mountain Power

Source: Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency, [www.dsireusa.org](http://www.dsireusa.org) and U.S. Department of Energy's Alternative Fuels Data Center, [www.eere.energy.gov/afdc/laws/incen\\_laws](http://www.eere.energy.gov/afdc/laws/incen_laws); see these websites for a description of each incentive.

## Recent Vermont Laws and Programs

Since 2005, there have been many events related to energy policy in Vermont. New legislation has been passed, new initiatives are underway in state government, and non-profit and business sectors. Below is an outline of the major legislation and initiatives in Vermont state government. Please refer to the Vt. Dept. of Public Service's *Update to the 2005 Vermont Electric Plan: Draft* released in October 2006 for a more complete summary of this recent activity in state government.

### Statutory changes

#### **Act 61: Renewable Energy, Efficiency, Transmission, and Vermont's Energy Future**

Act 61 was passed in 2005, and addressed many energy issues. It established the Sustainably Priced Energy Enterprise Development Program (SPEED), which encourages utilities to engage in contracts with renewable generators. The Legislature targeted efficiency programs and renewable sources to fill all incremental electricity load growth between 2005 and 2013; if this does not occur, a renewable portfolio standard will be established, according to the law. The Act also removed the budget cap from the efficiency budget, directing the Public Service Board to set the level of funding for efficiency programs. It also formalized the transmission planning process (Vt. Dept. of Public Service, October 20, 2006).

#### **Act 74: Vermont Yankee / Dry Cask Storage, and the Clean Energy Development Fund**

Act 74, passed in 2005, related to regulatory conditions of Vermont Yankee Nuclear Station applying for permits to construct a dry cask storage facility for spent nuclear fuel. In addition, it created the Vermont Clean Energy Development Fund, consisting of proceeds from the agreement with the state during the sale of Vermont Yankee to Entergy. The purpose of the fund is to promote the development of cost-effective and environmentally sustainable electric power, primarily renewable sources and combined heat and power. The fund will receive payments between \$6 - \$7.2 million per year through 2012 (Vt. Dept. of Public Service, October 20, 2006). The Vt. Dept. of Public Service, which administers the fund, distributed the first \$1.3 million in funds to be spent in 2006 as follows: to the Vermont Solar and Small Wind Incentive Program (see description below), to overcome lack of access by three farms to three-phase power lines needed for connection of anaerobic digestion systems, to support installation of a combined heat and power facility, to support installation of a biomass system in a public building, to start a public engagement process, and to the agricultural economic development special account which provides assistance to farmers in converting biomass to energy (Vt. Dept. of Public Service, July 2006).

#### **Act 208: Energy Security and Reliability**

Passed by the Legislature in 2006, this Act had many provisions, including: mandating a public engagement process on energy planning, focused on how to fill the upcoming electricity supply gap; establishing Commercial Building Energy standards which took effect in January 2007; requiring the Public Service Board and Dept. of Public Service to create an electricity affordability program and study; and requiring the Public Service Board to expand the scope of Vermont's net metering program (Vt. Dept. of Public Service, October 20, 2006).

#### **Act 168: Greenhouse Gas Reduction Goals**

This Act created the goal of reducing Vermont's global warming pollution to 25% below 1990 emissions by 2012, and 50% by 2028. It provides for the creation of a climate action plan for Vermont (Vt. Dept. of Public Service, October 20, 2006).

### **Act 152: Appliance Efficiency Standards**

This Act established minimum efficiency standards for certain products sold or installed in the state (Vt. Dept. of Public Service, October 20, 2006).

### **Climate change developments**

#### **The Governor's Commission on Climate Change**

In December 2005, Governor Douglas created by Executive Order the Governor's Commission on Climate Change, charged to develop a Vermont Climate Change Action Plan by September 2007. The commission consists of six members, plus a plenary group of about 30 members, with additional members in four technical work groups (Governor's Commission on Climate Change). The commission is currently considering policy proposals to deal with global warming (Porter, January 10, 2007).

#### **The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative**

This initiative, launched in December 2005, is a cooperative effort by nine Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states to design a regional cap-and-trade system for carbon dioxide from power plants in the region. Governor Douglas was the first Governor to sign the initiative, which is the first effort of its kind that doesn't depend on federal authority. The program allows producers of energy and pollution to buy and sell credits for a limited amount of emissions. The RGGI agreement starts in 2009 and its goal is to reduce global warming pollution by 10% during the following decade (Porter, January 10, 2007). It caps region-wide carbon dioxide emissions at 121 million short tons. Vermont's share of this cap is about 1.2 million short tons (Vt. Dept. of Public Service, 2007).

### **Public/stakeholder involvement initiatives**

#### **The Participatory Energy Planning - Mediated Modeling Project**

This project was a series of workshops about the electrical energy future of Vermont. It was initiated by Mediated Modeling Partners using a grant given by the Northeastern States Research Collaborative, with the goal of collaborating to build a computer model simulating interrelationships in electrical energy use that impact cost, reliability, and environmental impact. The workshop participants were stakeholders from government, industry, non-profit organizations, and consumers. It is expected that the process will provide a baseline for further public discussion about Vermont's electric energy future (Vt. Dept. of Public Service, October 20, 2006). The final workshop occurred in late 2006, and a report was issued in January 2007.

In addition, the Public Service Board and Dept. of Public Service were engaged in rulemakings, technical workshops, and other regulatory changes. There have been developments related to the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Station. See the Vt. Dept. of Public Service's *Update to the 2005 Vermont Electric Plan: Draft* for a complete summary. Recent developments related to renewable generation, net metering, and transmission projects are detailed in other sections of this report.

### **Lawsuits**

Vermont is involved in two high-profile lawsuits regarding global warming. In Massachusetts versus EPA, Massachusetts and 11 other states including Vermont sued to force the EPA to regulate greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act. In April 2007, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of the states that the EPA has the authority to regulate greenhouse gases. In Green Mountain Chrysler versus

Torti, local auto dealers and auto industry supporters are suing to stop Vermont regulations adopted in 2006 that would mandate that fleets of new vehicles reduce their greenhouse gas emissions progressively through 2015, which would require vehicles to become more fuel efficient. This case is in process as of March 2007 (Johnson, 2007). Similar lawsuits are filed in California and Rhode Island.

## Resources

### **Organizations that work in multiple energy sectors**

Vermont Agency of Natural Resources  
[www.anr.state.vt.us](http://www.anr.state.vt.us)

Vermont Department of Public Service  
[www.publicservice.vermont.gov](http://www.publicservice.vermont.gov)

Renewable Energy Vermont  
[www.revermont.org](http://www.revermont.org)

Vermont Public Interest Research Group  
[www.vpirg.org](http://www.vpirg.org)

Conservation Law Foundation  
[www.clf.org](http://www.clf.org)

Clean Energy Group  
[www.cleanegroup.org](http://www.cleanegroup.org)

The Vermont Peak Oil Network  
[www.vtpeakoil.net](http://www.vtpeakoil.net)

Vermont Energy Partnership  
[www.vtep.org](http://www.vtep.org)

10% Challenge / Alliance for Climate Action  
[www.10percentchallenge.org](http://www.10percentchallenge.org)

Snelling Center for Government  
[www.snellingcenter.org](http://www.snellingcenter.org)

Interstate Renewable Energy Council  
[www.irecusa.org/index.html](http://www.irecusa.org/index.html)

Apollo Alliance, Vermont chapter  
[www.apolloalliance.org/state\\_and\\_local/Vermont/index.cfm](http://www.apolloalliance.org/state_and_local/Vermont/index.cfm)

Northeast Sustainable Energy Association  
[www.nesea.org](http://www.nesea.org)

U.S. Dept. of Energy funded Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency  
[www.dsireusa.org](http://www.dsireusa.org)

U.S. Dept. of Energy's Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy site  
[www.eere.energy.gov](http://www.eere.energy.gov)

U.S. Energy Information Administration  
[www.eia.doe.gov/fuelrenewable.html](http://www.eia.doe.gov/fuelrenewable.html)

### **Electricity**

Vermont Department of Public Service  
[publicservice.vermont.gov](http://publicservice.vermont.gov)

Vermont Public Service Board  
[www.state.vt.us/psb](http://www.state.vt.us/psb)

Efficiency Vermont  
[www.encyvermont.com/pages](http://www.encyvermont.com/pages)

Vermont Energy Investment Corporation  
[www.veic.org](http://www.veic.org)

Regulatory Assistance Project  
[www.raonline.org](http://www.raonline.org)

U.S. Dept. of Energy's Green Power Network  
[www.eere.energy.gov/greenpower](http://www.eere.energy.gov/greenpower)

Consortium for Energy Efficiency  
[www.cee1.org](http://www.cee1.org)

American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy  
[www.aceee.org](http://www.aceee.org)

### **Transportation**

Clean Cities Vermont / Vermont Clean Vehicle Coalition Website under development  
Contacts: Snelling Center for Government, [www.snellingcenter.org](http://www.snellingcenter.org) and UVM University Transportation Center, [rwatts@uvm.edu](mailto:rwatts@uvm.edu)

Vermont Agency of Transportation  
[www.aot.state.vt.us](http://www.aot.state.vt.us)

Vermont Public Transportation Association  
[www.vpta.net](http://www.vpta.net)

### **Land use**

Vermont Forum on Sprawl  
[www.vtsprawl.org](http://www.vtsprawl.org)

Vermont Smart Growth Collaborative  
[www.vtsprawl.org/Initiatives/sgcollaborative/VSGC\\_main.htm](http://www.vtsprawl.org/Initiatives/sgcollaborative/VSGC_main.htm)

Vermont Downtown Program  
[www.dhca.state.vt.us/DHP/programs/downtown.html](http://www.dhca.state.vt.us/DHP/programs/downtown.html)

## **Natural gas efficiency**

Vermont Gas Systems  
[www.vermontgas.com](http://www.vermontgas.com)

Consortium for Energy Efficiency  
[www.cee1.org](http://www.cee1.org)

## **Wood**

Biomass Energy Resource Center  
[www.biomasscenter.org](http://www.biomasscenter.org)

Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation  
[www.vtfpr.org](http://www.vtfpr.org)

Vermont Superintendents Association, School Energy Management Program  
<http://www.vtvs.org/>

## **Farm biogas**

Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets  
[www.vermontagriculture.com](http://www.vermontagriculture.com)

Central Vermont Public Service  
[www.cvps.com/cowpower](http://www.cvps.com/cowpower)

## **Landfill biogas**

Washington Electric Cooperative  
[www.washingtonco-op.com](http://www.washingtonco-op.com)

Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Waste Management Division  
[www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/wmd.htm](http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/wmd.htm)

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Landfill Methane Outreach Program  
[www.epa.gov/lmop](http://www.epa.gov/lmop)

## **Biofuels**

Vermont Biofuels Association  
[www.vermontbiofuels.org](http://www.vermontbiofuels.org)

Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund  
[www.vsjf.org](http://www.vsjf.org)

Vermont Biodiesel Project  
[www.vtbiodieselproject.org](http://www.vtbiodieselproject.org)

National Biodiesel Board  
[www.biodiesel.org](http://www.biodiesel.org)

## **Wind**

Renewable Energy Resource Center  
[www.nerc-vt.org/index.htm](http://www.nerc-vt.org/index.htm)

Vermont Anemometer Loan Program  
[web.vtc.edu/users/jnk06190/VTALP/index.htm](http://web.vtc.edu/users/jnk06190/VTALP/index.htm)

Vermont Small-Scale Wind Energy Program  
[www.vtwindprogram.org](http://www.vtwindprogram.org)

U.S. Dept. of Energy's Wind Powering America site  
[www.eere.energy.gov/windandhydro/windpoweringamerica](http://www.eere.energy.gov/windandhydro/windpoweringamerica)

American Wind Energy Association  
[www.awea.org](http://www.awea.org)

## **Solar**

Renewable Energy Resource Center  
[www.nerc-vt.org/index.htm](http://www.nerc-vt.org/index.htm)

## **Hydroelectric**

Community Hydro – Vermont Small Hydro Association  
[www.communityhydro.biz/vsha.html](http://www.communityhydro.biz/vsha.html)

## **Geothermal**

Water Energy Distributors  
[www.northeastgeo.com](http://www.northeastgeo.com)

Geothermal Energy Association  
[www.geo-energy.org](http://www.geo-energy.org)



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