

Washington State Ranked 7th Among "Energy Efficient"

Local News

Posted by: David Haviland

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WASHINGTON, D.C. (October 21, 2009): The current economic downturn is not sidetracking state-level efforts to make the most of energy efficiency as the cheapest, cleanest and quickest of all energy resources, according to a 50-state scorecard on energy efficiency policies, programs, and practices from the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE).

The 2009 State Energy Efficiency Scorecard, which ranks states in six categories, concludes that the 10 states doing the most to implement energy efficiency are: California (1); Massachusetts (2); Connecticut (3); Oregon (4); New York (5); Vermont (6); Washington state (7); Minnesota (8); Rhode Island (9); and Maine (10).

"By embracing a wide range of cost-effective energy efficiency strategies, the leading states are demonstrating that efficiency is their 'first fuel' to meet energy demands while growing their economies," said Maggie Eldridge, ACEEE research associate and lead author of the report.

"States continue to raise the bar with comprehensive strategies to improve efficiency in their buildings, industry, and transportation systems. They are the 'living laboratories' of energy efficiency."

Several states have made strong moves up in the ranks from 2008 to 2009, including: Maine (up from 19 to 10); Colorado (up from 24 to 16); Delaware (up from 32 to 20); District of Columbia (up from 30 to a tie for 20); South Dakota (up from 47 to 36); and Tennessee (up from 46 to 38). "The most improved states are stepping up their efforts in several ways, such as adopting new building energy codes and setting aggressive new energy savings targets," said Eldridge. "By highlighting these most improved states, we hope to encourage others to step up their efforts to implement energy efficiency as their first-priority resource."

The 2009 report is ACEEE's third edition of its annual state-by-state ranking on the adoption and implementation of energy efficiency policies, which aims to recognize leadership among the states and identify best practices. The scorecard examines six state energy efficiency policy areas: (1) utility-sector and public benefits programs and policies; (2) transportation policies; (3) building energy codes; (4) combined heat and power; (5) state government initiatives; and (6) appliance efficiency standards. States can earn up to 50 possible points in these six policy areas combined. ACEEE Executive Director Steven Nadel said: "The states continue to be leaders in advancing energy efficiency policies and programs. In fact, this growing and deepening commitment to energy efficiency is so strong that the current recession has not put a dent in the vast majority of state programs. And that is for good reason: Energy efficiency is the only resource that can actually reduce energy consumption while growing the economy — making efficiency the 'first fuel' states can use to balance their energy portfolios."

Maine Governor John E. Baldacci said: "I am pleased that Maine is being recognized for our commitment to energy efficiency. We began by making State government a model in order to show businesses and residents that reducing energy consumption improves our way of life by reducing harmful effects on our environment and our health, while making a significant impact to our bottom

line. We made this commitment in 2003 when the price of oil was \$20 a barrel. Since then, we've made new investments in weatherization, encouraged alternative modes of transportation, and encouraged voluntary alternative work schedules for State employees, and we became the first state to purchase 100 percent of our electricity from zero carbon renewable resources."

Delaware Governor Jack Markell said: "Investments in greater energy efficiency put people to work now and pay dividends for the future. Every dollar wasted from inefficient energy usage is a dollar that is not put to work getting our economy moving in the right direction. Delaware's jump in this report reflects our commitment to energy efficiency. We are creating market demand for energy efficiency through new legislation that requires we reduce consumption through efficiency by 15% by 2015. We've adopted new building codes, made it easier to adopt solar and wind power in residential and commercial settings and created net-metering rates to encourage efficiency and allow people to sell excess power back to the grid."

In 2009, energy efficiency has risen to a new level of recognition in the U.S. and is a resource that is increasingly being called upon at the state level. In the race for clean energy resources, states are adopting aggressive energy efficiency policies, increasing investments in efficiency programs, and improving efficiency in their own facilities and fleets. While some states have been making commitments toward energy efficiency for decades, others are just getting started in a big way, while still others have yet to tap this energy resource.

According to ACEEE, the states comprising the group that "most needs to improve" are (with ties): Arkansas (41); Missouri (41); Louisiana (41); Georgia (44); Alaska (45); West Virginia (45); Nebraska (47); Alabama (48); Mississippi (49); North Dakota (49); and Wyoming (51, including DC).

For detailed information about energy efficiency initiatives at the state level, visit ACEEE's State Energy Efficiency Policy Database on the Web (<http://www.aceee.org/energy/state/index.htm>). Complementing the Scorecard, the site serves as another resource for information on state energy efficiency policies. The online database is searchable by state or by policy, and documents state activities in the energy efficiency policy areas covered in the scorecard.

The 2009 State Energy Efficiency Scorecard is available for free download or a hard copy can be purchased for \$40 plus \$5 postage and handling from ACEEE Publications, 529 14th St, N.W., Suite 600, Washington, D.C. 20045, phone: 202-507-4000, fax: 202-429-2248, e-mail:

aceee_publications@aceee.org.

ABOUT ACEEE

The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (<http://www.aceee.org>) is an independent and nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing energy efficiency as a means of promoting economic prosperity, energy security, and environmental protection. ACEEE was founded in 1980 by leading researchers in the energy field. Since then the organization has grown to a staff of more than 30. Projects are carried out by ACEEE staff and collaborators from government, the private sector, research institutions, and other nonprofit organizations. For information about ACEEE and its programs, publications, and conferences, visit <http://www.aceee.org>.