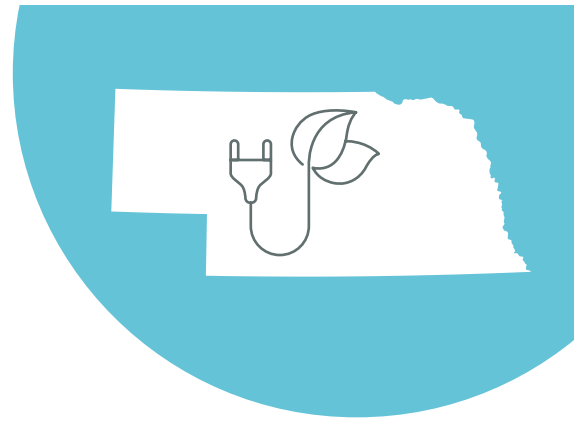


FACT SHEET: ENERGY EFFICIENCY OFFERS SAVINGS FOR NEBRASKANS



While access to electricity is essential for homes and businesses across the U.S., the cost of service can pose a burden to customers. One key strategy to limit this burden is to implement efficiency measures that can cut costs by reducing energy consumption.

ENERGY COSTS HAVE AN OUTSIZED IMPACT ON RURAL RATEPAYERS

- On average, a U.S. household spends \$1,409.52 for electricity annually. In 2020, Nebraskans paid \$1,312.68.¹
- Rural households tend to have a higher energy burden—the percentage of household income spent on energy.²
 - Rural households spend 40% more than their metropolitan counterparts on their energy bills relative to income.³ The average burden for rural elderly residents is typically 44% higher than the non-elderly.⁴
 - Low-income households spend three times more of their income on energy costs compared to the median spending of non-low-income households.⁵
 - Non-white and older adult households, as well as families living in low-income multi-family housing, manufactured housing, and older buildings also have disproportionately high energy burdens.⁶

INVESTMENTS IN ENERGY EFFICIENCY SUPPORT ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

- Energy efficiency allows rural residents to decrease their energy use and burden while simultaneously supporting local economies. Local professionals can do energy audits of homes and make many energy efficiency improvements to homes and businesses.
- The sector employs 2.1 million workers across construction, manufacturing, wholesale trade, and professional and business services.⁷ Of these, 281,589 are in rural communities.⁸
 - The median hourly wage of \$24.44 for energy efficiency careers is 28% above the national median.⁹
 - In Nebraska, energy efficiency is the second-largest energy sector.¹⁰
 - Energy-efficiency jobs are not limited to urban areas. In Nebraska, energy-efficiency workers are located in 98% of counties, and the state has 12,432 jobs related to energy efficiency, with 5,310 of those located in rural areas.¹¹

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STRONG POLICIES CAN ASSIST IN IMPROVING ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Investments in energy efficiency can create significant cost savings. For example, weatherization efforts can reduce low-income household energy burdens by as much as 25%.¹²

While many families and businesses may benefit from implementing energy-efficiency improvements, the cost of investment presents its own burden. States can improve rural energy-efficiency efforts through policies that encourage statewide collaboration on rural energy-efficiency programs, incentivize program administrators for reaching rural customers, measure rural economic impacts of energy-efficiency policies, and help municipal electric utilities and rural electric co-ops succeed.¹³

- Nebraska ranks 41st among states in energy-efficiency policy at the state or local level.



Property Assessed Clean Energy

- In 2015, Nebraska passed legislation enabling Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing in the state.¹⁵
- Through PACE, property owners can finance energy-efficient and clean-energy projects through an assessment on their property taxes. This allows property owners to pay back the cost of projects over time, limiting the upfront investment while also reducing energy costs for consumers.
- One advantage of PACE financing is that it is attached to the property subject to energy-efficiency improvements, rather than to an individual. This means regardless of ownership, these investments ensure long-term efficiency improvements and savings.



Dollar and Energy Saving Loans

- The Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy maintains the Dollar and Energy Saving Loans program, which can be used for a variety of energy-efficiency improvements as well as renewable-energy projects.
- Applications are submitted to local lenders and the Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy to ensure they are in compliance with efficiency standards for the program.¹⁴



Sources

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Weatherization Assistance Program

- Weatherization enables low-income families to save money on their energy bills by making their homes more energy-efficient.¹⁶
- Free weatherization services are available to households with income that falls below 200% of the federal poverty level.
- Weatherization improvements may include adding insulation, weatherstripping around doors, and replacing broken windows.



Nebraska Public Power District's EnergyWise Incentives

- EnergyWise Incentives offer rebates for a variety of energy-efficiency home, business, agriculture operations, and lawn and garden improvements.¹⁷
- Incentives for home improvements including attic insulation, high-efficiency heat pumps and water heaters, induction cooking, and smart thermostats are available.

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