



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
**ENERGY EFFICIENCY &
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

CONSULTANT TEAM



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
**OFFICE OF
ENERGY RESOURCES**

2023 EERMC Annual Report Development Update

EERMC Consultant Team and
Office of Energy Resources
April 20, 2023



Outline

Annual Report Requirements

Annual Report Sections

Annual Report First Draft

EERMC Policy Recommendations

Timeline and Next Steps



Annual Report Requirements

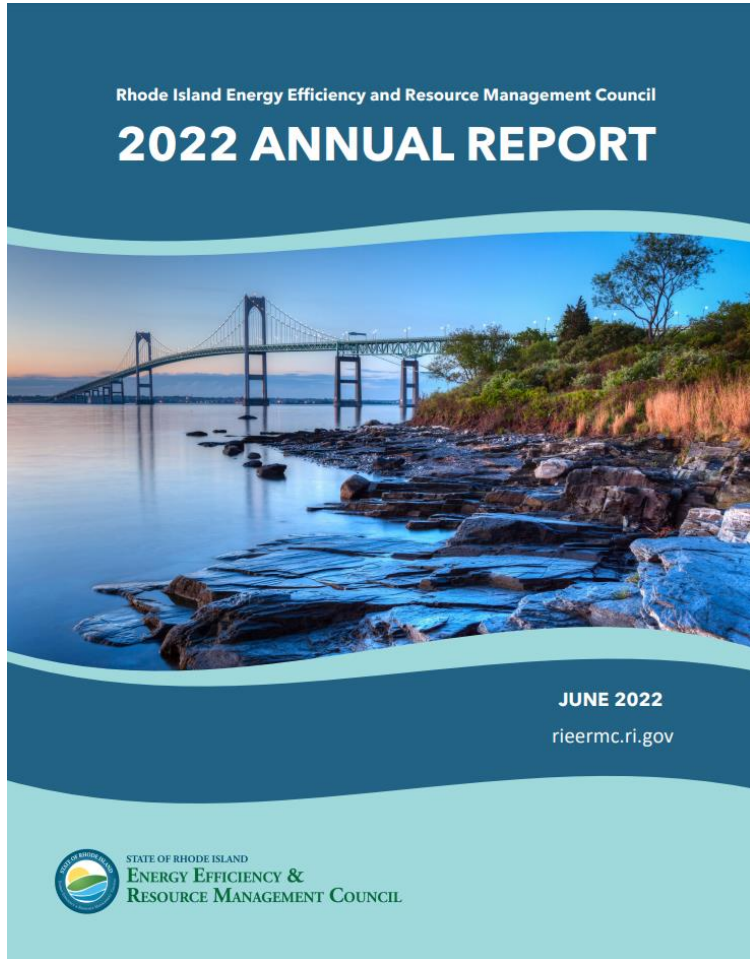
The Powers and Duties section of the EERMC's enabling legislation requires the Council to:

“Submit to the joint committee on energy an annual report on/or before April 15 of each year, commencing in 2008, regarding

- The activities of the council,*
- Its assessment of energy issues,*
- The status of system reliability, energy efficiency and conservation procurement, and*
- Recommendations regarding any improvements which might be necessary or desirable”*



Annual Report Sections



- Executive Summary
- Letters from the Chair & Executive Director
- About the EERMC
- 2022 Achievements & Highlights
- 2023 Policy Recommendations
- EERMC Priorities for 2024-2026 EE Plans
- 2022 Programs & Initiatives
- Council Public Education Efforts
- Planning Initiatives
- Looking Forward: 2023 EE Plan Highlights
- Appendices



Annual Report First Draft

- First draft is in Word Doc form – working draft
- Rhode Island Energy, OER and C-Team contributed content
- Pending final 2022 results from Rhode Island Energy
- Seeking Council member feedback ASAP
 - Especially on policy recommendations



EERMC Policy Recommendations

1. Integrate efficiency programming with Act on Climate mandates
2. Concentrate support on clean energy & efficiency workforce development
3. Continued emphasis & investment in energy program accessibility
4. Embed equity in energy programs
- NEW** 5. Coordinate and supplement efficiency programming with federal funding
- NEW** 6. Identify and maximize opportunities for weatherization and addressing pre-weatherization barriers
- NEW** 7. Align programming with federal Justice40 equity guidelines
- NEW** 8. Evaluate the state's energy future



1. INTEGRATE EFFICIENCY PROGRAMMING WITH ACT ON CLIMATE MANDATES

UPDATED LANGUAGE: Energy Efficiency is a key, foundational strategy to achieving the Act on Climate mandates and every effort must be made to coordinate the delivery and expand the programming of our energy efficiency portfolio. the EERMC should be integrated with Act on Climate Initiatives to help achieve these Act on Climate mandates.

2022 LANGUAGE: The passage of the Act on Climate legislation in 2021 sets mandatory Greenhouse Gas emission reduction targets that Rhode Island must meet. As stated in the law, “Addressing the impacts on climate change shall be deemed to be within the powers, duties, and obligations of all state departments, agencies, commissions, councils, and instrumentalities, including quasi-public agencies” and this lens should be used by all involved in developing future energy efficiency plans. Energy Efficiency is a key, foundational strategy to achieving the Act on Climate mandates and every effort must be made to coordinate the delivery and expand the programming of our energy efficiency portfolio to help achieve these Act on Climate mandates.



2. CONCENTRATE SUPPORT ON CLEAN ENERGY AND EFFICIENCY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

UPDATED LANGUAGE: A well-trained workforce to install robust energy efficiency measures and modernize heating and transportation equipment will be necessary to achieve the statewide decarbonization goals. Therefore, current efforts by the RI Department of Labor & Training, the Governor’s Workforce Board, and others should be ramped up and focused on training for this work. Where possible, federal funding should be pursued in coordination with existing clean energy programs should be encouraged. Historically marginalized communities may offer unique opportunities to both train new workers in fields ripe for employment growth and to better serve these marginalized communities moving forward. Supporting businesses in disadvantaged communities can create virtuous cycles as these businesses provide services to their neighbors and colleagues.

2022 LANGUAGE: If Rhode Island is to achieve its economy-wide greenhouse gas emissions targets, it will require a well-trained workforce to install robust energy efficiency measures and modernize heating and transportation equipment. In particular, the energy efficiency workforce will be rapidly changing in the coming years and requires a retooling of existing skillsets to meet these new and growing equipment needs. Therefore, current efforts by the RI Department of Labor & Training, the Governor’s Workforce Board, and others should be ramped up and focused on training for this work. Where possible, coordination with existing clean energy programs should be encouraged. This is particularly true for historically marginalized communities which may offer unique opportunities to both train new workers in fields ripe for employment growth and to better serve these marginalized communities moving forward.



3. CONTINUED EMPHASIS & INVESTMENT IN ENERGY PROGRAM ACCESSIBILITY

UPDATED LANGUAGE: Rhode Island energy efficiency programs should constantly work to ensure that all customers and segments of the market have access to the benefits of energy efficiency savings. There should be a concerted effort to reach those who are economically vulnerable and those who are currently above poverty guidelines but need significant assistance to make efficiency investments. Specifically, continued focus and resources should be placed on implementing strategies and providing new and different customer support mechanisms to realize increased participation in energy efficiency offerings from the Income Eligible and Multifamily sectors. **Efficiency improvements in these sectors can have significant impacts on household living expenses and improve quality of life for Rhode Islanders. Increased engagement with the commercial and industrial sector will also help drive emissions and energy reductions in the state.**



4. EMBED EQUITY IN ENERGY PROGRAMS

UPDATED LANGUAGE: Emphasizing and embedding equity considerations in the design and delivery of all state energy programs is critical to ensuring that all Rhode Islanders receive the maximum possible benefits. Barriers to equitable participation in energy programs must be examined and addressed as priorities. Such barriers, as well as recommendations, are identified in the RI Energy Efficiency Equity Working Group’s 2022 Report **and the RI Nonparticipant Market Barriers Study**. Particular attention should be paid towards programs that serve under-represented and disenfranchised communities, such as the income-eligible and multifamily energy efficiency programs. Efforts to incorporate the voices and experiences of those most impacted by energy system inequities must continue to be supported and integrated into decision making in order to achieve equitable outcomes.



NEW

5. COORDINATE AND SUPPLEMENT EFFICIENCY PROGRAMMING WITH FEDERAL FUNDING

With the passing of the historic Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act, there is once-in-a-generation investment in energy efficiency, decarbonization, and workforce development. These funding opportunities should be maximized for Rhode Islanders to provide a significant boost to the clean energy economy and expand upon the existing programming in the state.



NEW

6. IDENTIFY AND MAXIMIZE OPPORTUNITIES FOR WEATHERIZATION AND ADDRESSING PRE-WEATHERIZATION BARRIERS

Weatherization, including improving insulation and air sealing, is an essential component for improving energy efficiency in Rhode Island. Weatherization reduces energy burdens on the energy grid, improves the comfort of homes and buildings for occupants, and saves money for residents and building owners. Pre-weatherization barriers such as health and safety concerns including asbestos, vermiculite, and knob-and-tube wiring, can all prevent weatherization projects from moving forward. These issues are particularly prominent in Rhode Island, which has one of the oldest housing stocks in the nation. Identifying funding and supporting a workforce to address these barriers will be essential for weatherizing homes and buildings in Rhode Island and to help decarbonize the building sector.



NEW

7. ALIGN PROGRAMMING WITH FEDERAL JUSTICE40 EQUITY GUIDELINES

President Biden’s Executive Order 14008 set a goal that a minimum of 40% of the overall benefits of federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities overburdened by pollution. Aligning state energy programming with this goal can provide a framework for ensuring that disadvantaged and historically marginalized communities are able to access and benefit from state energy programs.



NEW

8. EVALUATE THE STATE'S ENERGY FUTURE

At the writing of this report, there is a conversation in the state hosted by the Public Utilities Commission exploring analyzing the future of the natural gas distribution system and the EERMC looks forward to reviewing the results of this analysis. The Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council is also developing plans for decarbonizing the statewide economy by 2050. These economy-wide analyses will be critical for guiding the future of the energy systems in Rhode Island. Evaluation and alignment of the delivered fuels sector will also be essential for achieving the mandates of the 2021 Act on Climate.



Annual Report Timeline

- March 16 – Council Meeting: First draft development overview
- March 30 – Content for First Draft due
- April 13 – Distribute First Draft for Council review
- April 15 – Official due date
- April 20 – Council Meeting: Review First Draft
- May 8 – Final numbers due from Rhode Island Energy
- May 11 – Distribute Final Draft for Council review
- May 18 – Council Meeting: Vote on Final Report



Council Member Discussion

