

Energy Efficiency Programs for Small Businesses Maine

In 2009, the Efficiency Maine Trust Act (Title 35-A, Chapter 97) was established as a new entity to oversee Maine's energy efficiency and renewable energy programs. Prior to 2009, energy efficiency programs were administered by the State Planning Office (SPO), the state's electric utility companies, or the Maine Public Utilities Commission (MPUC). The programs were consolidated in an effort to maximize efforts to improve energy efficiency in the state of Maine. Since 2009, Efficiency Maine has administered energy efficiency and alternative energy programs for residents, small businesses, non-profits, local governments, etc. Efficiency Maine is funded by the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) and the System Benefit Charge (SBC). The SBC appears on customers' utility bills, so whether you are an individual paying for your residential energy usage or small business usage, you are paying the SBC.

Small businesses have the opportunity to take advantage of these great programs through [Efficiency Maine](#). The programs offered to business owners provide opportunities to upgrade to new, energy efficient equipment at a very reasonable cost. Efficiency Maine offers cash incentives up to \$50,000 per business, per calendar year on qualified projects including lighting, HVAC equipment, refrigeration and system controls. Incentives are available to all non-residential customers, but there are eligibility requirements, including:

- Products purchased with Efficiency Maine incentives must be installed in your place of business in Maine.
- Pre-approval is not required for prescriptive applications of \$2,500 or less, or for prescriptive applications submitted by a Qualified Partner of \$5,000 or less.
- Pre-approval is required for prescriptive applications more than \$2,500 in incentives or for prescriptive applications submitted by a Qualified Partner requesting more than \$5,000 in incentives. It is also required for custom applications.

Prescriptive incentives are fixed for certain types of equipment, including, lighting, HVAC, commercial refrigeration, compressed air systems, variable-speed motor drives, and agricultural equipment. Incentives for custom applications are also offered, but costs and savings vary by application. The calculations are supplied by the vendor and reviewed by Efficiency Maine. The amount of custom incentives depends on the type of project, and only projects that result in yearly energy savings of 70,000 kWh or more are eligible. For retrofit projects, the incentive may be up to 35% of the total cost of the project, including labor. For new construction and major renovations, the incentives may be up to 75% of the incremental cost of high-efficiency equipment over standard equipment.

[Click here](#) to find a qualified partner to assist with any energy upgrade projects your business may be interested in.

For additional information or questions, visit the [contact us](#) section of Efficiency Maine's website.

Efficiency Maine also offers a natural gas program for Unitil business customers. The program offers prescriptive incentives on boilers, furnaces, heaters, and their associated controls. For additional information, applications, and eligibility requirements [click here](#).