

July 20, 2015

Contact: Ryan Crowley
[\(401\) 574-9102](tel:(401)574-9102)
Ryan.Crowley@energy.ri.gov



Office of Energy Resources Announces Plan to Invest in Clean Energy, Reduce Energy Costs

Proposed plan allocates proceeds from Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiatives

Providence, R.I., – The Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources has announced the State’s plan to distribute \$14 million in proceeds from Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) auctions held during 2014 and early 2015. The proposed plan will make significant investments in Rhode Island’s clean energy sector and support local jobs, while reducing consumer and public sector energy costs. The proposal is now available for public comment at www.energy.ri.gov.

“This is a smart plan that will grow jobs, reduce energy costs, and help protect our environment,” said Governor Gina M. Raimondo. “By investing in innovative clean energy initiatives like the Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank, Solarize Rhode Island, and energy efficiency programs, Rhode Island can help lead the nation towards a more sustainable energy future while also growing our economy.”

“Rhode Island’s participation in RGGI is a vital component of the state’s energy and environmental policy framework. This plan will not only advance important energy goals, but it will also contribute to local economic growth by investing in carbon-free energy resources, including energy efficiency and renewable generation,” said State Energy Commissioner Marion Gold. “These investments will reduce electric consumption, generate cost savings for Ocean State residents and businesses, and allow state agencies and municipalities to more efficiently manage their energy cost burdens.”

“The Raimondo Administration is committed to reducing the cost of energy for consumers,” Michael DiBiase, Director of the Department of Administration, said. “This allocation plan allows municipalities, schools, businesses and homeowners to invest in clean energy and mitigate high energy costs. Through this strategic investment of Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative dollars, consumers will have the opportunity to lead by example while lowering their energy costs.”

Included in the proposed plan is an allocation of \$2.8 million to support the replacement of high-pressure sodium streetlights with highly-efficient LED lighting across the state’s entire highway footprint.

“Environmental protection is a top priority at RIDOT as we work to reduce energy consumption to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions,” Rhode Island Department of Transportation Director Peter Alviti Jr. said. “The conversion to LED streetlights not only has the potential of reducing statewide energy costs by approximately \$1 million per year, but it also demonstrates the financial benefits of good environmental stewardship.”

The plan also proposes to strategically deploy funds to support a variety of clean energy programs and investments, including:

- \$3 million to support the capitalization of the Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank;
- Nearly \$3.6 million to support cost-effective energy efficiency measures for residential, commercial, and industrial energy consumers;
- \$1 million to support the installation of highly-efficient LED streetlights and controller technologies throughout Rhode Island municipalities;
- \$1 million to support investments in clean energy and efficiency measures in state and municipal facilities; and
- \$300,000 to support the adoption of residential rooftop solar through new Solarize campaigns across Rhode Island.

“In addition to the cost and energy savings, these investments will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants, such as nitrogen oxides, that result from the combustion of fossil fuels,” said Department of Environmental Management Director Janet Coit. “Each kilowatt-hour of energy saved or generated by a renewable energy source means one less kilowatt-hour generated from fossil fuel-fired sources, improving air quality. Programs like these may start small, but they represent important steps forward toward achieving our greenhouse gas reduction goals and transitioning to a clean energy future.”

The proposed plan will not only drive energy and cost savings for local consumers and the public sector, but also:

- advance state energy and environmental policy goals;
- support local jobs and economic growth in Rhode Island's clean energy economy;
- diversify our local energy supply portfolio, and
- enhance energy security and sustainability.

Public comments on the proposed plan may be submitted in writing to the Office of Energy Resources at: One Capitol Hill, Providence, Rhode Island 02908 or via email to Barbara.Cesaro@energy.ri.gov.

A Public Hearing on this proposal will be held on July 29, 2015, at 10:00 a.m. in Conference Room B, Second Floor, One Capitol Hill, Providence, Rhode Island.

RGGI puts a cap on greenhouse gas emissions from the electric power sector in participating states and sells tradable allowances at auction. Rhode Island uses its portion of the proceeds from the auctions to support projects focused on renewable energy, as well as energy efficiency measures and programs, grid modernization, and innovation.

About the Office of Energy Resources:

The Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources works closely with private and public stakeholders to increase the reliability and security of our energy supply, reduce energy costs and mitigate price volatility, and improve environmental quality. Its mission is to lead Rhode Island to a secure, cost-effective, and sustainable energy future.