



Overview

Decarbonized buildings incorporate energy efficiency upgrades, electrification, and design elements which can drastically lower U.S. energy demand while providing benefits such as cost savings, carbon pollution reduction, and improved indoor air quality.

Commercial and residential buildings account for ~13% of U.S. emissions, largely due to burning gas, diesel, or heating oil. States that are proactive about building codes and standards can reduce emissions while creating jobs in retrofitting and weatherization.

Legislation (***) indicates bipartisan support)

- ****CO HB23-1161 (enacted 2023)**: requires new gas furnaces and water heaters sold in Colorado to reduce emissions of smog-forming nitrogen dioxide pollution; phases out the sale of mercury-containing fluorescent light bulbs; updates Colorado's energy and water-saving standards for five products while adding an additional nine products.
- **Utah S.B.188 (enacted 2022)**: Expanded opportunities for low-income individuals and families to receive grants that will help cover the cost of replacing wood-burning fireplaces and appliances with energy-efficient ones.
- **Vermont S.5 (enacted 2023)**: creates a performance standard for the heating fuel sector that will reduce climate pollution over time and increase the equitable deployment of cleaner heat options [Learn more here.](#)
- **New York A.3006 (enacted 2023)**: included a statewide ban on fossil fuels in new buildings (originally introduced as the standalone policy, the "[All-Electric Buildings Act](#)"). [Learn more here.](#)
- **Connecticut S.B.356 (enacted 2021)**: Requires the Department of Housing to establish a housing energy efficiency retrofit program; prioritizes low-income households and applications that use the services of local contractors who pay the prevailing wage and make efforts to hire minority business enterprises.

KEY POINTS

- In 2021, buildings in the U.S. accounted for 28% of total U.S. energy consumption. ([U.S. Energy Information Administration](#))
- LEED-certified buildings are cost effective, saving \$1.2 billion in energy costs, \$149.5 million in water costs, \$715.3 million in maintenance costs, and \$54.2 million in waste costs. ([USGBC](#))
- Decarbonized buildings cost only marginally more to build, and result in significantly higher sales and rental rates, as well as tremendous savings on energy costs over time. ([USGBC](#))
- Homes with fossil fuel-powered appliances have poorer indoor air quality causing increased likelihood of diseases like asthma. Homes with gas stoves can have nitrogen dioxide concentrations that are 50–400% higher than homes with electric stoves, and children in a home with a gas stove have a 24–42% increased risk of having asthma. ([Rocky Mountain Institute](#))



Other Resources

- **Institute for Market Transformation**: [Building Performance Standards](#)
- **Rocky Mountain Institute, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Mothers Out Front, Sierra Club**: [Gas Stoves: Health and Air Quality Impacts and Solutions](#)
- **The American Institute of Architects**: [State and Local Green Building Initiatives](#)
- **US Green Building Council**: [Resources for State Legislators](#)

