



Organizing an Energy Committee

Assembling and engaging a local energy committee is often the key ingredient for cities and towns looking to reduce energy waste and maximize their use of clean energy. Many Massachusetts communities have already organized energy/environmental committees or commissions, while others are handling energy issues through regional government agencies. These teams increase collaboration among all stakeholders and help build consensus needed for your city or town to reach its energy potential.

The following table lists potential team members and why they may be important to a successful energy management program, as well as how participation in an energy committee may benefit both them individually and their departments and agencies more broadly.

Local energy committees should include those outside of local government, as well as municipal representatives. State and federal energy programs and local utilities can provide training, technical assistance, loans, grants, and other vital services, while interested citizens can add their interest and perspective to the conversation.

KEY TEAM MEMBERS MAY INCLUDE:

- An experienced energy specialist or engineer
- The facilities maintenance department
- The finance department
- The local utility
- The Mayor's office, Board of Selectmen, City/Town Council or the Municipal Manager's office or City Manager's office
- Interested citizens

POTENTIAL TEAM MEMBERS	ROLE	BENEFIT
City/Town Council, Mayor, Board of Selectmen, Municipal Manager	Approve budgets and make necessary policy changes Create a high-profile program and add credibility	Achieve energy savings that allow for investment in other services
Facility maintenance staff	Provide facility information Maintain existing equipment to increase energy savings Purchase and install efficient equipment when existing equipment is replaced Identify retrofit opportunities Advise on retrofit strategies	Learn about function, maintenance requirements, and state-of-the-art technologies
Local utility	Provide energy use data, case studies from other local governments, technical assistance, and funding	Meet state-mandated energy efficiency program goals
Finance department	Assist in solving budgetary barriers and creating a financial plan Support the development of an energy accounting system	Save funds for other services Reduce energy bills and maintenance costs
Local government department heads	Foster support for the program, support energy-efficiency design modifications to new facilities, enhance the program's visibility and credibility, and assist with processing contracts related to energy efficiency	Improve comfort (indoor air quality, lighting, heat, and humidity) Achieve energy savings that can then be invested into other services
Construction managers	Ensure that energy-efficiency measures are properly installed during construction	Help ensure that project budgets are not exceeded Learn about new policies that they will need to follow
Purchasers	Assist information collection Facilitate purchasing energy-efficient equipment	Maintain product quality

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POTENTIAL TEAM MEMBERS	ROLE	BENEFIT
Building inspectors	Accept new technologies and enforce building codes	Better, more efficient building design
Designers: architects and engineers	Design energy efficiency and renewable energy systems into construction projects Provide technical assistance with implementing energy management programs	Improve comfort (indoor air quality, lighting, heat, and humidity) Express concerns about staying within the project budget Learn about state-of-the-art energy efficiency technologies Keep abreast of developing state and federal regulations
Public and non-profit representatives other than elected officials. Examples are representatives from the local historical building society, government advocacy groups, and environmental groups	Avoid complaints about the changes to public facilities Communicate that the government is improving energy efficiency Help the public understand why the changes are positive	Achieve energy savings that allow for investment in other services Upgrade facilities Improve comfort (indoor air quality, lighting, heat, and humidity) Improve local air quality Protect habitat Reduce global climate change
State and federal officials	Provide energy use data, case studies from other local governments, technical assistance, and funding	Meet state and federal energy goals Maintain support from elected representatives
Interested citizens	Provide case studies from other local governments, training, technical assistance, and financial resources	Help engage the wider community

Source: Urban Consortium Energy Taskforce

For more information, contact your *Green Communities Regional Coordinator*.

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