

Improving Community Resilience with Energy Efficient Buildings

Partner Support ►

How Does Energy Efficiency Improve Community Resilience?



Passive survivability. Highly efficient buildings allow occupants to shelter-in-place during emergencies by maintaining safe temperatures longer during power outages.

Reduced energy burden. Spending less on energy bills means more money available for housing, healthcare, food, water, transportation, and supplies, improving residents' ability to cope during disasters.

Protection from price volatility. buildings insulate residents and businesses from inevitable energy price shocks caused by supply interruptions around the globe.

Improved power reliability and lower infrastructure costs. Energy efficiency also reduces strains on aging infrastructure and may delay or eliminate the need for costly upgrades and expansions, helping keep costs down.

Boosting the local economy. Reduced utility costs boost the local economy with more disposable income to be spent on local restaurants, shops, and entertainment.

Healthy citizens. Energy efficient buildings result in better indoor and outdoor air quality reducing the risk of mold and byproducts of burning fossil fuels.

Reduced climate impacts. Communities acting together can help Pennsylvania achieve its goal of an 80 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 to help alleviate the worst impacts of climate change, which are likely to result in more weather-related disasters.



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What Can Your Municipality Do?

Create a community resiliency plan. The National Institute of Standards and Technology outlines a six-step planning process in their [Community Resilience Planning Guide](#).

Lead by example. Require municipal buildings be built or renovated to high-performance standards like LEED and pursue ENERGY STAR certification for existing municipal buildings.

Pass green zoning ordinances. Encourage highly efficient construction with zoning incentives like density bonuses for

projects that meet standards like ENERGY STAR, Zero Energy Ready Homes, Passive House, and LEED.

Support your local building department. Ensure your local code officials have adequate resources and make the energy code a priority.

Promote utility rebate programs. Request rebate program brochures from your local electric and gas utilities and distribute them to residents and business owners. Also, post links to program information on your municipal website.

Resources

Resilience & Sustainability Planning

NIST Resilience Planning Guide

[nist.gov/topics/community-resilience/planning-guide](https://www.nist.gov/topics/community-resilience/planning-guide)

Sustainable Pennsylvania Communities

sustainablepa.org

Building Code Training

Pennsylvania Construction Codes Academy

paconstructioncodesacademy.org

Pennsylvania Housing Research Center

phrc.psu.edu

Energy Efficiency Rebates

Duquesne Light

duquesnelight.com/energy-money-savings/watt-choices

FirstEnergy's Pennsylvania Utilities

energysavepa.com

PPL Electric Utilities

ppllectric.com/ways-to-save

PECO

peco.com/WaystoSave

PGW

pgwenergysense.com

UGI

ugi.com