

FAQs

What is *Cleveland's Clean and Equitable Energy Future Report* about?

This report is an action-oriented roadmap the City of Cleveland and other community stakeholders can follow to successfully implement its Climate Action Plan ([CAP](#)) goal of transitioning to 100% clean energy by 2050. The report outlines policy and program actions which will help us improve energy efficiency and increase electricity supply from clean, renewable sources, while reducing energy burden for Cleveland residents, increasing economic activity and job creation, and improving health outcomes.

What does 100% clean and renewable energy mean?

100% clean and renewable energy means energy that is sourced from renewable sources such as solar, wind, biomass, hydropower, geothermal, and others. These sources typically have “clean,” low or zero-carbon emissions associated with their production, and often help communities in reaching their climate action goals.

What are the benefits of Cleveland achieving 100% clean energy?

Cleveland will see a number of benefits by reaching the goal of 100% clean energy including reduced greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, utility bill savings for residents, millions of dollars in public benefits and economic activity, creation of good, green jobs, and public health benefits such as improved air quality.

Why do we need to meet the 100% clean energy goal by 2050?

Climate change is an increasing threat in our cities, including Cleveland. One of the biggest contributors to climate change is greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and energy use accounts for a significant portion of GHG emissions in cities. By meeting the 100% clean energy goal and having all energy demand come from clean, renewable sources by 2050, we are reducing our GHG emissions and contribution to climate change, while building more resilient energy supply systems.

What has the City of Cleveland done to-date to work towards its 100% clean energy goal?

Since 2005, the City of Cleveland has been actively working to track and reduce its energy consumption, increase energy efficiency and renewable energy, and adopt policies and programs which support this. Projects have included lighting and HVAC upgrades in municipal buildings, residential energy efficiency programs, switching 60,000+ streetlights to more-efficient LED streetlights, and increasing renewable energy in Cleveland Public Power's portfolio.

In 2018, the City of Cleveland became the first city in the state of Ohio to commit to powering itself with 100% clean energy by 2050, as incorporated in our CAP. As we implement the actions in *Cleveland's Clean and Equitable Energy Future Report*, the City of Cleveland will continue to maintain its commitment to improving energy efficiency, adopting advanced and renewable energy sources, and identifying ways to reduce energy burdens for our most vulnerable residents.

What is energy burden?

Energy burden is defined as the percentage of gross household income spent on energy costs - usually electricity and gas. Households are considered in high energy burden if they spend over 6% of their income on energy bills, and in severe energy burden if they spend over 10%. Unfortunately, low-income households face disproportionately higher energy burden.

Nationally, energy bills for electricity and gas represent about 3.6% of the average household's income. Across Cleveland, average energy burden was around 6.6% in 2019, which is significantly higher than the national average. More than 100,000 Cleveland households live in high energy burden (above 6%) and over 40,000 households live in severe energy burden (above 10%).

There are many factors that may influence high energy burden. A few examples include higher-cost fuels, such as propane or other bottled fuels, as well as energy-inefficient homes. Energy-inefficiency can be attributed to a lack of insulation in older homes or older appliances. [Using less](#) energy through both conservation and efficiency measures can certainly help, but the overall goal is to ensure equity across all Cleveland households when it comes to energy burden.

Why is this Plan important to implement now?

The road to achieving our 100% clean and renewable energy goal is long and not without road bumps, so it is imperative to begin planning and implementation today, to begin to shift the mindset to adopt clean energy practices. A number of the recommendations in *Cleveland's Clean and Equitable Energy Future* Report require state-level policy changes or large-scale infrastructure investments to address our clean energy challenges, which may take several years or even decades to fully implement. The good news is we've already started implementing many initiatives to start our clean energy journey.

What are the next steps for the City of Cleveland to continue working towards its 100% clean energy goal?

As the City of Cleveland begins to take action towards our 100% clean energy goal, there is also a role for our community to play in achieving this goal. Over the coming months, the Office of Sustainability will continue to engage with stakeholders at all levels to share the findings of the Plan and how residents, businesses, and community organizations can help meet our 100% clean energy goal. Stay tuned for updates on upcoming projects and ways to get involved in this exciting work.

What can I as a Cleveland resident or business owner do to help our city reach this important goal?

As a resident or business owner, there are a number of things you can do to help Cleveland meet its 100% clean energy goal. You can start small by reviewing and understanding your

monthly electric bill and usage. From there, you can look for ways to [improve energy efficiency](#) around your home or business, because the cleanest energy is the energy you don't use. [Local utility companies also offer programs](#) which can help with these improvements. Finally, consider installing renewable energy on your home or property. Programs like the [Cuyahoga County Solar Co-op](#) can help reduce up-front costs for home and business owners to install solar panels.