



January 2021 Newsletter

Hello Friends—

Wednesday's assault on our democratic government was deeply disturbing. The president incited the attack on our Capitol. Together, as Americans, we must recognize that our democratic institutions cannot be taken for granted and condemn those who would undermine them.

In last month's newsletter, I congratulated President-elect Biden on his victory. I want to reiterate that now. We don't just need new leadership to move the needle on energy efficiency and climate. We need leadership that values this democracy.

In this same troubling week, we also saw cause for hope.

On Tuesday, the people of Georgia voted for two new senators, shifting party control of the Senate. Together with the Biden-Harris administration, a new Senate majority brings increased opportunity for progress on energy efficiency, climate, and equity issues, helping to respond to ACEEE's [Call to Action](#). I hope that the silver lining to this week's events is increased interest in bipartisan work on some issues, including building on our recent work featured in the newsletter below.

Be safe and be well.

Best,

Steven Nadel
Executive Director

Highlights



2020 was a wild ride; opportunities await in 2021

The past year, dominated by COVID-19 and the Trump administration, was a difficult one in energy efficiency, but quite a few states and localities quietly made progress amid the tumult. Many challenges of the pandemic will remain in 2021, but the Biden administration and state and local actions will provide opportunities for progress.



Scorecard: States adopt new energy-saving rules, but COVID-19 slows overall progress

More U.S. states have adopted or advanced new energy-saving targets and vehicle and appliance rules, but COVID-19 slowed other efficiency efforts. The *Scorecard* was covered by outlets including [U.S. News & World Report](#),



the [Boston Globe](#), [Virginia Mercury](#), and the [Forum](#) of Fargo.

Year-end bill includes some energy efficiency provisions but leaves much to be done

A massive year-end bill includes provisions to improve the weatherization of low-income homes and reduce industrial emissions, while missing the opportunity to include a critical measure that could save \$40 billion in energy costs by making new buildings more efficient.



Granholm will bring strong energy efficiency record to DOE

As a two-term governor of Michigan, Jennifer Granholm successfully pushed for the state's first energy-saving targets for utilities, financing for energy efficiency building retrofits, and a climate action plan.



"Buy Clean" policies have promise, but first we need to know which products are low carbon

Legislators and advocates are increasingly looking to spur demand for low-carbon

products, including through Buy Clean policies. But implementation has proven difficult, with key information often missing—pointing to a larger data challenge.



Hurt by COVID-19, transit needs public confidence and increased funding

As COVID-19 continues to devastate the U.S. population and economy, investing now in public transit will not only serve as a much-needed economic stimulus once the nation emerges from the pandemic, but will also lead to more-efficient, more-accessible, more-equitable transportation systems in the long run.



Energy efficiency financing must grow to meet climate goals

Energy efficiency financing has grown more than 40% since 2014, reaching at least \$7 billion annually, but it will need to increase significantly more to achieve urgent climate goals, according to a new ACEEE analysis.



Bipartisan bill to spur building upgrades would cut energy costs and emissions

A new bill to spur energy-efficiency upgrades in buildings would help save businesses and households a cumulative \$15 billion on energy bills and reduce carbon emissions equivalent to those from 22 million cars and light trucks in a year.



COVID-19 cut energy efficiency investments, but efficiency plays notable role in global economic recovery packages

Energy efficiency is expected to attract less investment and employ fewer people this year because of COVID-19 and the resulting recession, but it is still figuring notably into global economic recovery packages, according to the International Energy Agency's annual Energy Efficiency report.



2020 takeaways: Our top dozen blog posts from a challenging year

2020 was a challenging year. As we look forward to the Biden administration's economic recovery and climate efforts, energy efficiency will need to be a top priority. To help you prepare, we revisit our dozen most-read blog posts of 2020.

BECC and first Energy Efficiency and Climate Policy Forum demonstrate that virtual conferences can still be social

The [Behavior, Energy, and Climate Change Conference](#) (BECC) highlights research to encourage climate action and reduce energy use, so when the pandemic hit, the conference took the opportunity to reduce its emissions by going virtual. Innovative online strategies maintained the social nature BECC is known for. The conference drew 591 registrants and received high praise for achieving a level of social interaction and networking often lacking in virtual events.

ACEEE hosted the first [Energy Efficiency and Climate Policy Forum](#) to discuss key steps and policies that will help the United States halve its energy use and greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 through energy efficiency. More than 350 attendees participated in this one-day, virtual event that included sessions on buildings, transportation, industry, and cross-cutting initiatives. Keynotes by Dan Reicher of Stanford University and U.S. Representative Paul Tonko (D-NY) focused on the Biden administration's work with energy efficiency and climate change policies as well as legislation supporting ACEEE's [Call to Action](#). The forum was a great success and, as one attendee noted, it offered "fantastic speakers and opportunities to engage, ask questions, and network."

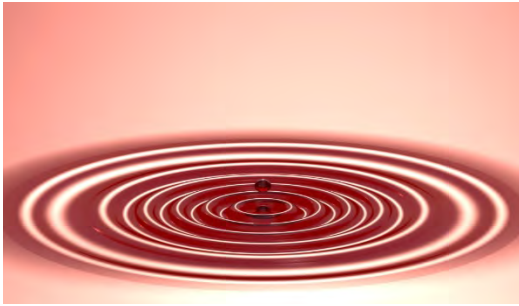
ACEEE in the News

A few of our favorite media highlights from the past month:

- [Roll Call](#), [Grist](#), and [Greentech Media](#) quoted Steven Nadel on President-elect Biden nominating Jennifer Granholm for energy secretary.
- [USA Today](#) quoted Steven Nadel responding to a UN climate report.

- [Reuters](#), [NPR](#), [People](#), and [CNN](#) quoted ASAP's Andrew deLaski responding to DOE's final rule on showerhead efficiency.

Upcoming Events



2021 Hot Water Forum: VIRTUAL

March 10–11 and March 17–18, 2021

The hot water industry is experiencing a renaissance. Join us as we explore new technologies and methods that help us provide efficient hot water to users in commercial, multifamily, and residential buildings.

Community News

The 2021 International Energy Conservation Code was extraordinarily successful in increasing efficiency, but it now [faces an uncertain future](#) as the International Code Council (ICC) has proposed overturning its democratic process in favor of one likely to be dominated by a handful of industry players. The Code Council Board will be meeting the week of January 18 to hear verbal testimony from interested members and stakeholders. If you are interested in submitting written comments and providing verbal testimony, please contact memberinput@iccsafe.org. All written submissions and commitments to participate must be received by 8:00 PM ET on Monday, January 11. Visit [ICC's website](#) to learn more about the public comment period.

The 2021 [Green Lease Leader](#) program, run by the Department of Energy and the Institute for Market Transformation (IMT), is accepting applications. Green leases are critical to improving building efficiency and holding tenants and landlords accountable. Application categories include landlord, tenant, and team transaction. This year's award process is being updated to support multifamily applicants. Contact [Audi Banny at IMT](#) to learn more.

Upcoming Webinars:

[Registration open for the 2021 Midwest Energy Solutions Experience – February 16–19](#) | Join the Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (MEEA) for the region's premier energy efficiency event. The virtual MES 2021 will expand your knowledge and facilitate important business opportunities.






Staff Spotlight

Amanda Dewey joins ACEEE as a senior research analyst with the Local Policy Program. Amanda received her bachelor's degree from Vanderbilt University and her master's degree from the University of Maryland, where she is completing her doctorate. Amanda is the mayor of Berwyn Heights in Prince George's County, Maryland.



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