C&I CUSTOM PROGRAM UPDATE – October 2025

Efficiency Maine's Commercial & Industrial (C&I) Custom Program provides Maine businesses and institutions with incentives for site-specific energy efficiency projects that are not otherwise covered by prescriptive incentives. Our newsletter keeps interested parties informed about important program updates and recently completed projects.

What's New?

Request for Information, Innovation Projects - Efficiency Maine Trust, with the Maine Department of Energy Resources (DOER) and the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future (GOPIF), seek comments on what priorities and designs should be considered for a suite of pilot programs to be funded over the next several years in Maine through the New England Heat Pump Accelerator (Accelerator). Please click here for the Request for Information (RFI) details and response submission form. Responses are due by November 14, 2025.

Compressed Air Leak Survey Program and Education Session – The Custom Program launched a compressed air leak survey program on July 1, 2025, that provides 50% of the costs to identify and fix leaks at facilities with compressors larger than 90 HP. Interested customers can review the program and submit an application here. The Trust also conducted a compressed air education session October 8, 2025, to discuss efficiency and incentive opportunities. Interested parties can view the session recording and download the presentation slides here.

Clean Electricity Investment Tax Credit for Batteries – The federal government has replaced the Energy Investment Tax Credit (ITC) with a new tech-neutral investment tax credit called the Clean Electricity Investment Credit. Eligible technologies can generate a 6% base tax credit and a 30% tax credit for those that meet prevailing wage and apprenticeship requirements. Ten percent adders also apply for projects meeting domestic content requirements or if they are located in an energy community. Details can be found on the IRS website here, and a table of eligible technologies can be found here. The recent federal budget reconciliation legislation signed July 4 confirms that battery systems can still qualify for this credit. Battery systems are eligible for additional performance-based incentives through Efficiency Maine's Energy Storage System Program Opportunity Notice.

Success Stories

Vertical Harvest – Westbrook – LED Horticultural Lighting

Vertical Harvest complements local food systems using hydroponic, vertical, controlled environmental agriculture (CEA) to deliver healthy food to local communities. By pursuing a vision to bring vertical agriculture to urban areas, Vertical Harvest delivers fresh micro greens year-round to local restaurants, cafeterias, and grocery stores.

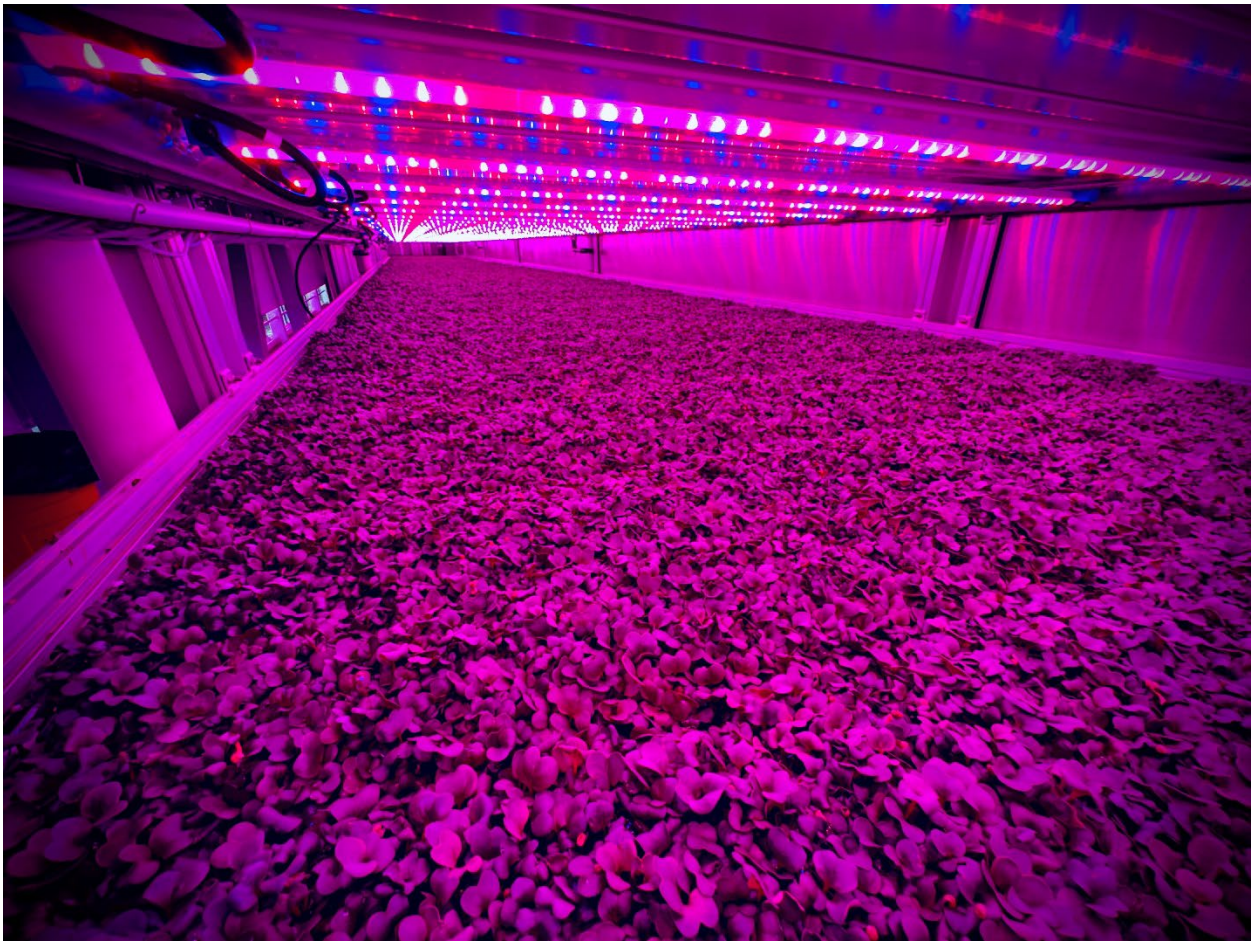
Vertical Harvest applied to Efficiency Maine's Custom Program for financial support to offset the additional costs of installing high-efficiency LED horticultural lighting instead of traditional fluorescent lighting in their recently completed facility in Westbrook. The new facility was developed in partnership with the city of Westbrook and local architects Harriman Associates. It is expected to produce 2 million pounds of produce annually. Once operational, the 52,000 sq. ft. facility will be highly automated and employ a local workforce.

To achieve its production and energy efficiency goals, Vertical Harvest selected Thrive Agritech's high-efficiency LED grow lights, which provide the light intensity and spectrum needed for consistent year-round production while reducing energy use compared to traditional fixtures.

Historically, indoor grow operations and greenhouses have used fluorescent and high-intensity discharge lighting fixtures to grow plants, such as micro greens, tomatoes, and cannabis. LED horticultural lighting has rapidly matured over recent years and is now capable of delivering the same light levels as traditional counterparts at much lower power requirements. Additionally, LED grow light fixtures can customize the delivered light spectrum allowing growers to modify or choose light fixtures best suited for the specific type of plant they are growing.

- Total additional cost of LED horticultural fixtures over traditional fluorescent fixtures: $2,000,000.
- Custom Program incentive award: $200,000.
- Estimated annual energy savings: 12,000,000 kWh

LED Horticulture Lighting and Microgreen Grow Rack



(Cont.)

Merrymeeting Shellfish – Harpswell – LED Aquaculture Lighting

Merrymeeting Shellfish Company runs a state-of-the-art hatchery in Harpswell that blends expertise in shellfish, sustainability, and science. As a hatchery, their business does not sell shellfish to market, but rather clam and oyster seeds to shellfish farmers, who then raise them to maturity.

A critical aspect of the hatchery operation is the cultivation of specific strains of algae, which are food for their shellfish. Since the health and growth of shellfish are dependent on the quality of algae they consume, this is an essential component of the operation. The algae is grown in a controlled environment using artificial light. Merrymeeting previously used fluorescent lighting to accomplish this and received an incentive award to retrofit their system with LED lighting.

This project illustrates the diversity of plants that can be grown using LED lighting instead of traditional fluorescent and high-intensity discharge lighting fixtures. In all applications, LED lighting provides comparable light levels at far lower power requirements and is quickly becoming the standard for indoor and aquaculture horticulture operations.

- Total project cost: $59,000
- Efficiency Maine incentive: $25,000
- Estimated annual energy savings: 83,000 kWh

LED Aquaculture Lighting and Algae Grow Tanks

Get Started

- Contact the C&I Custom Program at 207-620-0002 or custom@efficiencymaine.com for potential inquiries.
- Review additional C&I Custom Program eligibility and incentive information on our website.
- Consider a free Scoping Audit to help you assess where to start.
- Consider a Technical Assistance Study to help you conduct an energy analysis or develop project designs.