



C&I CUSTOM PROGRAM UPDATE – February 2026

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?

RFP's currently available – Small Battery Program Device Aggregators - Efficiency Maine Trust is seeking applications from aggregators to recruit, enroll, and support battery installations in Maine and to discharge them to the grid when called upon by the Trust. Device Aggregators (Program Partners) will be paid \$200 per year per average kW discharged, averaged over all peak load events in a Program Year. Interested parties can review the Program Opportunity Notice [here](#).

Prescriptive Funding Opportunity Notices (FONs) – The C&I Prescriptive Program currently has two FONs with enhanced incentives for specific opportunities, including [school lighting retrofits](#) and [electrification in new affordable multifamily housing](#). Standard incentives remain available for all other facility types.

Success Stories

Preble Street Food Security Hub – Portland – Commercial Kitchen Efficiency Measures

[Preble Street Food Security Hub](#) is a critical component of Preble Street's low-barrier social work programs and is dedicated to addressing food insecurity and to ending hunger in Maine. The newly renovated facility is equipped with state-of-the-art kitchen equipment and can produce up to 10,000 meals a day plus it has the ability to store 50,000 fully prepared frozen meals.

During the design stage of the new Food Security Hub, Preble street engaged with Efficiency Maine's Custom Program to identify ways to improve efficiency and to minimize energy costs of the new facility. The Custom Program provided incentives to offset the additional costs associated with three energy efficiency measures:

- Heat pump-driven food dehydrator by Nyle Food Dehydrators
- Heat recovery dishwasher by Jackson Warewashing Systems
- Kitchen demand control ventilation system by EcoAzure

All three are excellent examples of efficiency measures that can be implemented in commercial kitchen facilities. Food dehydrators are an effective example of using heat pumps for low-temperature heating that also provides an opportunity to recover heat from the dehydrator exhaust, which the Nyle system does. Dishwashers do not typically recover heat from their effluent, but high-use facilities can benefit from recovering this heat to offset the need to heat supply water. Kitchen demand control ventilation systems are a common efficiency measure that uses sensors to monitor when cooking is taking place and to control exhaust ventilation based on need rather than on whether the system is simply on or off.

- Total additional cost of high efficiency equipment over standard options: \$52,000
- Total approximate Custom Program incentive award: \$35,000
- Total estimated annual energy savings: 37,000 kWh plus 500 MMBtus NG

Nyle Food Dehydrator Heat Pump



Jackson Heat Recovery Dishwasher



Kitchen Exhaust Hoods with EcoAzure Demand Controls



Sunday River Ski Area – Bethel – Snowmaking

[Sunday River Ski Area](#) is one of the largest ski areas in Maine and maintains 884 acres of skiable terrain across 139 trails and glades. Their terrain is served by 19 lifts and more than 2,000 snow guns. Snow making is a crucial component of Sunday River's operations and one of their largest energy consumers. Snow making is energy intensive because it typically relies on compressed air or large fans to atomize water into small droplets, which freeze in the air to become manmade snow. Modern snow guns vastly reduce compressed air usage compared to legacy equipment through improved low-flow nozzle designs.

Over the last decade and with Custom Program support, Sunday River has transitioned nearly its entire fleet of older inefficient snow guns to new highly efficient HKD snow guns. This has had a meaningful impact on their compressed air energy usage and even allowed Sunday River to decommission several air compressors.

Nearly all ski areas, including those in Maine, rely on some level of manmade snow to ensure predictable opening dates and reliable skiing conditions. By replacing older inefficient snow guns, Maine ski areas can minimize their operating costs and maintain their current levels of snow production.

- Total retrofit cost of latest phase of snow gun upgrades: \$1,700,000
- Efficiency Maine incentive: \$490,000
- Estimated annual energy savings: 1,750,000 kWh

Snow Gun with Low-Flow Nozzles



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.