

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) ON HOME ENERGY SCORE APPROACHES

The Efficiency Maine Trust (the Trust) seeks information and comments from interested parties on approaches to home energy scores. In particular, the Maine legislature has directed the Trust to establish a home energy scoring system for residential buildings, establish a process by which a recipient of a home energy score may voluntarily report the score to us, and establish and maintain a database of these home energy scores. The Trust seeks comments on all aspects of this directive.

SECTION 1 - INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

1.1 Designated Contact Person

Michelle Turner, Administrative Secretary
Efficiency Maine Trust
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Email: mturner@efficiencymaine.com

1.2 Key Dates

RFI Release Date – January 19, 2024
RFI Comments Due – February 27, 2024

1.3 How to Submit a Response

Responses may be emailed to the designated contact person (see section 1.1) by the due date listed in section 1.2. Please find suggested guidelines below:

1. Cover Letter (1 page maximum)

Briefly describe your organization or personal background (for individuals), including relevant qualifications.

2. Response

Address one or more of the questions listed in section 3.2.

3. Appendices

Where helpful, attach relevant reports related to topics covered in the response. Please provide URLs where the documents may be accessed online. If online access is not possible, please provide electronic copies in the response email.

SECTION 2 - BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 Home Energy Score

Pursuant to *An Act to Support Lower Energy Costs by Establishing a Home Energy Scoring System*, now Title 35-A, Section 10117(4) of the Maine Statutes, the Efficiency Maine Trust (the Trust) shall:

Establish a home energy scoring system for residential buildings for the purposes of evaluating a building's energy efficiency. The home energy score must estimate energy use and associated costs and assist with the identification of energy solutions to improve the building's efficiency and be consistent with the United States Department of Energy asset-based home energy score. The trust shall establish a process by which a recipient of a home energy score may voluntarily report the score to the trust. The trust shall establish and maintain a database of these home energy scores.

Please [click here](#) for the statute.

2.2 Approach

In its approach to program administration and consumer programs, the Trust seeks to prioritize simplicity, minimize cost and other barriers for customers, and minimize administrative costs. The Trust seeks an approach to home energy scores that is simple for Maine homeowners and contractors, and also simple for the Trust to administer. The Trust is able to absorb minimal administrative costs to inform customers where and how they can get a score, and to post results, through its available program budgets, but does not have a budget to subsidize the cost of scoring homes or preparing reports for homeowners.

SECTION 3 - REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

The Trust requests written comments and reference materials on any issue relevant to the adoption of a home energy score system and creation of a database. The Trust particularly invites written responses that address the following specific questions:

1. What existing home energy scoring systems do you recommend that would meet the criteria outlined in statute?
 - a. Are there any minimum requirements, subscription fees, or membership criteria associated with the suggested system?
 - b. What costs might be incurred by:
 - i. The Trust;
 - ii. Homeowners; and/or
 - iii. Home energy score providers?
2. One approach to meeting the statute's goal would be to adopt the US Department of Energy's (DOE's) Home Energy Score. The Trust does not anticipate meeting the required partner guidelines set out by DOE including managing assessor onboarding, training, and mentoring;

scoring a minimum of 500 homes in first year; and conducting quality assurance (re-scores) on random sample of 5% of homes.

- a. Could the Trust adopt this system without meeting the partner guidelines and/or being a partner? If so, explain.
 - b. What costs, approximately, could we reasonably expect to be incurred by:
 - i. The Trust;
 - ii. Homeowners; and/or
 - iii. Home energy score providers?
 - c. How might the standard DOE recommendations be customized for Maine's building stock, climate, and available rebates?
3. Another approach to meeting the statutory directive would be for the Trust to develop its own home energy scoring system.
 - a. Who could provide technical support to develop a simple system that would be easy to understand and implement, but still provide meaningful results?
 - b. What rating approaches are consistent with the DOE asset-based home energy score and can:
 - i. estimate energy use and associated costs; and
 - ii. assist with the identification of energy solutions to improve a building's efficiency?
 - c. Under an alternative approach, how would the requirements for participating contractors compare to the DOE's Home Energy Score assessor requirements, and how might they impact participation?
 - d. What are the pros and cons of developing and maintaining a new system?
 - e. What costs might be incurred by:
 - i. The Trust;
 - ii. Homeowners; and/or
 - iii. Home energy score providers?
4. Please comment on ways the Trust could meet the statutory requirement of "establish(ing) a process by which a recipient of a home energy score may voluntarily report the score to the trust. The trust shall establish and maintain a database of these home energy scores."

3.2 Confidential Information

Information received in response to this RFI may be considered in the drafting or implementation of the Trust's approach to home energy scores. Submitted information is subject to the Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA), 1 M.R.S. §§ 401 et seq., unless there is a specific confidentiality exemption in the Efficiency Maine Trust Act, [35-A M.R.S. §10106](#). Please do not provide information that is considered confidential.

3.3 Disclaimer

This RFI is not a Request for Proposals (RFP), Request for Qualifications (RFQ), or Program Opportunity Notice (PON). Information submitted in response to this RFI may be considered by the Trust for planning and implementing a home energy score approach but is not a guarantee of a future contract or paid opportunity.