



**EFFICIENCY MAINE TRUST
PROGRAM OPPORTUNITY NOTICE**

Thermal Energy Investment Program

PON EM-006-2026 **[REVISED]**

Opening: August 1, 2025

Revised March 1, 2026

Closing: June 30, 2027 or when funding is exhausted

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Section 1: PON INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

1.1 Background

The Thermal Energy Investment Program is established by statute¹ within Efficiency Maine Trust (the Trust) to provide incentives to lower energy costs by increasing the efficient use of wood or wood derived biofuels.

1.2 Program Description

The Thermal Energy Investment Program (TEIP) provides financial incentives to businesses, municipalities, educational institutions, and nonprofit entities located in the state of Maine for the installation of **new** thermal energy derived projects. The Trust will consider any governmental entity as a nonprofit. A thermal energy derived project is defined as a project that produces thermal energy and thermal renewable energy credits including but not limited to (1) conversion of fossil fuel-fired boilers to wood-fueled boilers or boilers using biofuels derived from wood, and (2) installation of new wood-fueled boilers or boilers using biofuels derived from wood. TEIP requires program participants to substantially share in the cost of projects.

1.3 Contact Person

The Trust encourages any applicant who has an interest in or questions around this PON to contact the Trust. The Trust's designated contact for this PON is as follows:

Efficiency Maine C/O GDS Associates
337 State Street
Augusta, ME 04330-6856
TEIP@efficiencymaine.com
207-213-6247

1.4 Program Term

The Trust will accept applications on a rolling basis starting on August 1, 2025. The Trust will review these applications in the order received and make awards to applicants who meet the criteria within this PON, as funding allows.

1.5 Efficiency Maine Trust Rules

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this PON, all applications submitted in response to this PON, and any project award and Incentive Agreement resulting from this PON, shall be subject to all applicable rules and regulations of the Efficiency Maine Trust. *See, State of Maine Rules Chapters for Independent Agencies, 95-648 Efficiency Maine Trust Chapter 1.*

1.6 Additional Incentive Opportunities

Thermal Renewable Energy Credits (T-RECs): Through a program administered by the Maine Public Utilities Commission (PUC), both residential and commercial customers can earn T-RECs based on the volume of biomass fuels they purchase. All customers can access these payments through their fuel suppliers (click here for more information). Alternatively, commercial facilities can gain direct access by

¹ 35-A M.R.S. Sec. 10128.

petitioning the PUC for Thermal Energy Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) certification (click here for more information). The market price of T-RECs fluctuates and can be worth up to a cap of \$25 each.

Section 2: PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

2.1 Eligible Projects

For purposes of this subsection, "new thermal energy-derived project" means a project that produces thermal energy and thermal renewable energy credits, including, but not limited to, wood-fueled combined heat and power cogeneration boiler installations; colocation development that increases the efficient use of wood for energy production; conversion of fossil fuel-fired boilers to wood-fueled boilers or boilers using biofuels derived from wood; and the installation of new wood-fueled boilers or boilers using biofuels derived from wood.

Under this PON an eligible "small project" is defined as a conversion of an existing fossil fuel-fired boiler or wood-fueled boiler to a new wood-fueled boiler or boiler using biofuels derived from wood with an installed heating capacity of less than 600,000 Btu/h.

Under this PON an eligible "large project" is defined as a conversion of an existing fossil fuel-fired boiler or wood-fueled boiler to a new wood-fueled boiler or boiler using biofuels derived from wood with an installed heating capacity of greater 600,000 Btu/h.

Under this PON, new construction (or added building footprint) projects are eligible to participate in both small and large project pathways.

2.2 Ineligible Projects

Projects involving refurbishment or maintenance of existing wood-fueled or bio-fueled (derived from wood) equipment are not eligible for the program. However, projects that include expansion of system heating capacity for an existing heating system are eligible.

No project may combine incentives from this PON with any other Efficiency Maine Trust incentives (e.g., from Efficiency Maine's C&I Prescriptive Initiatives, the C&I Custom Programs, or from the Biomass Boiler/Furnace Rebate Program).

Section 3: BUDGET AND INCENTIVES

3.1 Budget

For fiscal year 2026 (July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026) the Trust has budgeted a total of approximately \$1,000,000 to be awarded to small projects and \$2,500,000 for large projects submitted under this PON.

3.2 Incentives

All awarded projects will receive an incentive of ~~35%~~ **45%** of the combined cost of the equipment and the labor for installation as funding permits. An additional ~~10%~~ **20%** incentive may apply if the project includes the installation of advanced emission controls or BTU meters. All costs associated with shipping and equipment warranty are the responsibility of the applicant or their contractor/vendor.

Equipment and their associated labor cost for the storage of wood-derived biofuel is not eligible, however any automated fuel conveyor system directly feeding into a new wood-fueled boiler or boiler using biofuels derived from wood may be included in the project application.

Equipment and their associated labor cost for the distribution of the thermal energy generated by the new wood-fueled boiler or boiler using biofuels derived from wood is not eligible for incentives.

Any cost incurred for the handling and delivery of the eligible equipment to the installation site is the responsibility of the applicant and can not be included as a project cost.

The Trust reserves the right to reject an application in whole or in part if it reasonably determines that project costs, expenses, or charges are unreasonable.

Section 4: APPLICATION PROCESS

4.1 Project Pre-approval

The process to apply for a project incentive starts with obtaining pre-approval. This must be done prior to ordering, procuring, or installing any equipment or materials. To receive pre-approval, Applicant must submit attachment A with:

- (1) Equipment cost quote, which must include equipment description, model number and quantity. Any anticipated installation materials should also be itemized and included in the quote,
- (2) Manufacturers specifications or cut sheets for the equipment,
- (3) Installation labor cost from each equipment installation contractor

Attachment A with the required submittals must be sent via email to the designated contact person as provided in Section 1.3. On the email subject line use "TEIP – Project approval request".

By submitting an application, the Applicant is making a representation to the Trust that all information provided in connection with the application is complete and accurate at the time of submission. The intentional provision of any false or misleading information, or the intentional omission of material information, will result in the application being deemed ineligible.

The Trust recognizes that, depending on the nature of a proposed project, third-party vendors, or energy service companies (ESCOs) may assist in the preparation, submittal, and processing of an application on behalf of a customer. Notwithstanding the participation of a third-party vendor or ESCO, the Trust considers the customer to be the program Applicant and requires the customer to be a direct party to the application. The Trust requires direct communication with the customer as necessary for review and evaluation of an application and proposed project. Customer and its third-party vendor or ESCO must consult with Trust staff regarding proposed project timing, scope, and any necessary pre-approval review. Because no project approval or incentive award is guaranteed, no third-party vendor or ESCO should make any firm commitment of incentive award funds in advance of a final notice of award to the customer.

4.2 Project Pre-approval and Incentive Offer Acceptance

Upon receipt of a complete application, the Trust will review all project documentation and cost estimates. If the project is determined to be eligible, the Trust will provide the Applicant with a project pre-approval and incentive offer letter. This letter will be sent electronically to the Applicant using the email address provided in attachment A

If the Applicant accepts the project terms and condition along with incentive offer, sign and return a copy of the approved project scope of work with an anticipated project completion date. Confirmation of acceptance will be sent via email to the Applicant indicating that this project may proceed with ordering and installing equipment in accordance with the approved scope of work.

4.3 Project Completion & Incentive Payment

Upon completion of equipment installation and equipment has been commissioned for service, the Applicant must request via email to the Trust contact person (See section 1.3) a project completion, acceptance, and incentive payment request. Documentation of the equipment that was installed and the actual to costs (customers) invoices will be required. Upon receipt of this, the Trust will provide the Applicant with a project completion sign-off which must be signed by the Applicant and the installation contractor. Upon receipt of the return project completion sign-off, the Trust will proceed with incentive payment. Final incentives may be adjusted based on final cost to maintain incentive cost share, however it will not exceed the pre-approved incentive amount. The Trust reserves the right to request and schedule with the Applicant a post project inspection prior to processing the incentive payment.