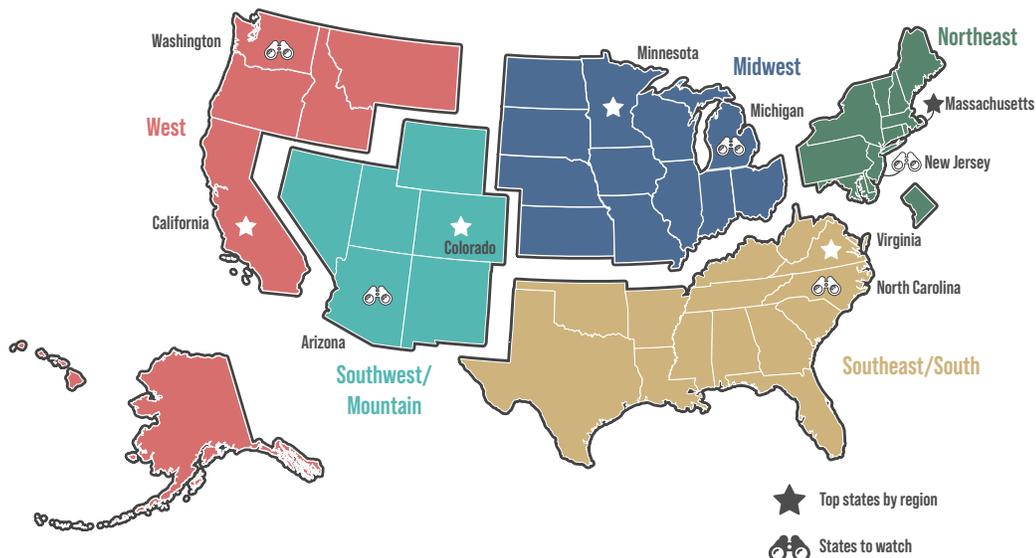




# United States

## REGIONAL RANKINGS

This year's *Scorecard* also highlights regional leaders. California and Massachusetts finished first and second, respectively, thanks in part to advanced policies to decarbonize the buildings sector. Other regional leaders include Virginia and Colorado, both of which have taken important steps to ramp up utility efficiency programs. Minnesota led the Midwest and continues to put forward potential policies to promote building electrification and EV adoption. States to watch include Arizona, Virginia, New York, and Washington, all of which have adopted 100% clean electricity standards. North Carolina is also pursuing potential energy-saving strategies informed by a recently released Energy Efficiency Roadmap.



## BUILDING ENERGY EFFICIENCY POLICIES

This year delivered major improvements for efficiency in new construction with the release of the 2021 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC), which establishes minimum building energy performance standards. Following more than a year of work by a broad coalition of organizations, International Code Council (ICC) voting members—including many cities and states—approved a code update to yield an estimated 10% or greater efficiency improvement in residential and commercial buildings.

After a decade that saw very few efficiency improvements in the IECC, the new codes are an important achievement. They represent a significant step toward decarbonizing the buildings sector with the addition of two new optional appendices that provide states and cities with pathways to incorporate zero-energy performance requirements into their codes through a mix of aggressive yet achievable levels of energy efficiency and renewable energy like rooftop solar panels.

## STATE GOVERNMENT-LED INITIATIVES

In addition to utility-sponsored programs, nearly every state offers some sort of financial incentive to its residents and businesses for energy-efficient upgrades, purchases, or projects. Some states offer a robust portfolio of programs, as well as strong lead by example policies such as benchmarking and/or efficiency requirements for public buildings and state vehicle fleets. These include top-ranking states, as well as others such as New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, Nevada, and Florida. Recent years have also seen a surge in actions to strengthen greenhouse gas (GHG) and renewable generation goals, including the 2019 enactment of 100% clean energy targets in Nevada, New Mexico, Washington, New York, Maine, and Arizona. Energy efficiency plays an important role in helping meet these goals. New Hampshire, a member of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), has dedicated roughly half of RGGI proceeds toward energy efficiency since 2009. As of December 2020, 11 states currently participate in RGGI with the recent addition of New Jersey and Virginia this year. Efforts on draft regulations to join RGGI also have been underway in Pennsylvania.

## APPLIANCE STANDARDS

State-driven appliance standards remained extremely important against the backdrop of federal rollback efforts. Although the COVID-19 pandemic forced many state legislatures to adjourn or to operate on a limited basis, there were still successes during the past 12 months. New York Governor Andrew Cuomo signed an appliance standards bill in December 2019, the California Energy Commission adopted several new standards, and Oregon completed an efficiency standards rulemaking on August 28, 2020, establishing new standards for nine products and updating standards for two products. Bills in Massachusetts and New Jersey are under consideration.

State appliance standards are a proven policy that lowers utility bills, reduces pollution, and helps spur national standards. Even when standards are not adopted at the federal level, adoption by just a few states can be enough to impact national markets. The Appliance Standards Awareness Project recently outlined new or strengthened standards for 47 products that would reduce annual average household utility bills by more than \$100 in 2030 and deliver cumulative utility bill savings of \$1.1 trillion through 2050 for consumers and businesses.