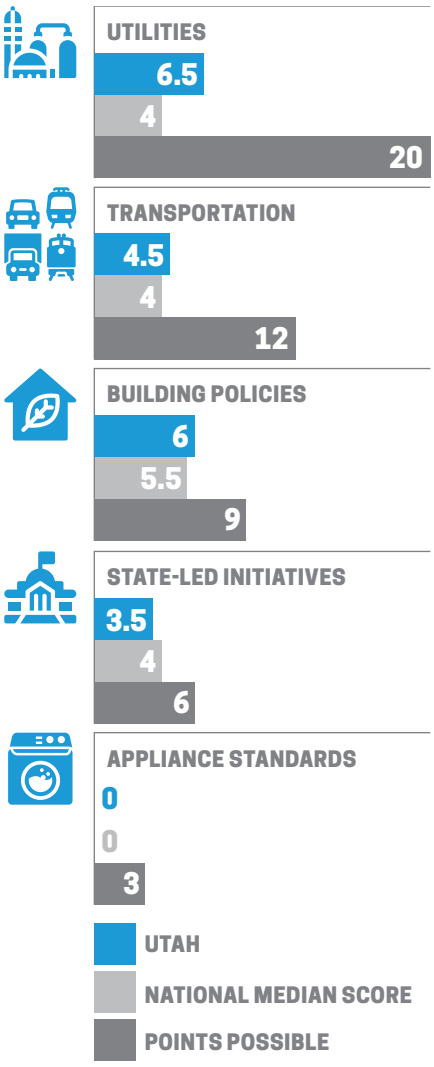
2020 STATE ENERGY EFFICIENCY SCORECARD

Utah

22

Utah ranked 22nd in the *2020 State Energy Efficiency Scorecard,* the same position it held in 2019. The state scored 20.5 points out of a possible 50, 1 point more than it earned last year.



The state passed legislation in 2019 completing significant updates to its commercial building energy code; however, utility-sector energy savings have dipped the past few years to levels roughly equivalent to the national median as Rocky Mountain Power has scaled back its energy efficiency programs. Establishing stand-alone energy savings goals and enabling performance incentives would encourage utilities to consider cost-effective efficiency to a greater extent in their resource planning processes. In the meantime, Utah has taken important steps to advance vehicle electrification across the state with recent legislation directing plans for a statewide electric vehicle (EV) charging network and other EV-supportive policies.

UTILITIES

Utilities implement both electricity and natural gas efficiency programs; however, savings fell to around the national average in 2018 as Rocky Mountain Power scaled back programs. In 2008, Utah adopted a renewable portfolio standard that included energy efficiency measures; however specific efficiency savings targets have not been codified by the Utah Public Service Commission. Decoupling is in place for natural gas utilities.

TRANSPORTATION

Utah has more EV registrations and public charging stations per capita than most states. The state has also enacted complete streets legislation and offers incentives for high-efficiency vehicles. Utah passed multiple important pieces of legislation to move ahead on vehicle electrification, including HB 259, which calls on the state transportation agency to develop a statewide plan for an EV charging network, including additional funding to address areas served by rural electric cooperatives. HB 396, also passed this year, authorizes Rocky Mountain Power to collect $50 million towards the buildout of its EV charging infrastructure, with additional provisions allowing the utility to update rate designs for EV charging customers.

BUILDING ENERGY EFFICIENCY POLICIES

During its 2019 session, the Utah legislature passed HB 218, adopting the 2018 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) for commercial provisions in its entirety. The amended 2015 IECC remains the statewide residential energy code. In 2019, the Institute for Market Transformation was awarded a U.S. Department of Energy grant to conduct a statewide residential energy code compliance study that will inform the design and implementation of a training, outreach, and education program to close gaps in code compliance. In 2020, the state legislature also passed HB 235, creating a home energy information pilot program and a home energy performance score system. The pilot program is designed to empower consumers with improved understanding of home energy efficiency and increase market demand for energy-efficient home and efficiency upgrades.

STATE GOVERNMENT-LED INITIATIVES

The state offers two loan programs for state-owned buildings and schools, as well as a commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program. State government leads by example by requiring energy-efficient public buildings and fleets, benchmarking energy use, and encouraging energy savings performance contracts. Research on energy efficiency occurs through the University of Utah–led Alliance for Computationally Guided Design of Energy Efficiency Electronic Materials and the USTAR Energy Research Triangle Program.

APPLIANCE STANDARDS

Utah has not set appliance standards beyond those required by the federal government.

ACEEE
American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy