

Innovating Utility Customer Programs for a Zero-Carbon, Equitable Energy Future

Aniket Agrawal, Conner Harmon, Hunter Woodruff
In Partnership with E Source

Electric and gas utilities are critical to the provision and delivery of energy, but they also play an important role in economic development, job creation, and environmental stewardship. The energy sector has historically mirrored socioeconomic disparities in housing, education, health, and employment. The concept of energy equity aims to minimize the negative impacts of energy systems on disadvantaged communities and ensures that all utility customers receive the benefits of utility offerings and equitable access to clean, affordable, and reliable energy.

States and provinces are prioritizing energy equity as a key goal or metric of utility regulation and customer programs. Through effective program design, both the customer and the utility can reap the benefits of equitable offerings. Utilities can more easily meet regulatory mandates and can see increased customer participation in programs (Figure 1) leading to new savings opportunities and improved public perception. For underserved customers, these programs provide cost savings, increased comfort, improved air quality, and other non-energy benefits.

A Snapshot of the Energy Equity Landscape

Our project sought to understand and document the landscape of all known energy equity programs throughout the United States and Canada, including how equity is being incorporated into utility transportation electrification plans (TEPs). The information gathered was organized by customer sector, program type, eligibility criteria based on equity metrics, and energy goals of the program.



Figure 1: Areas to incorporate equity at the utility

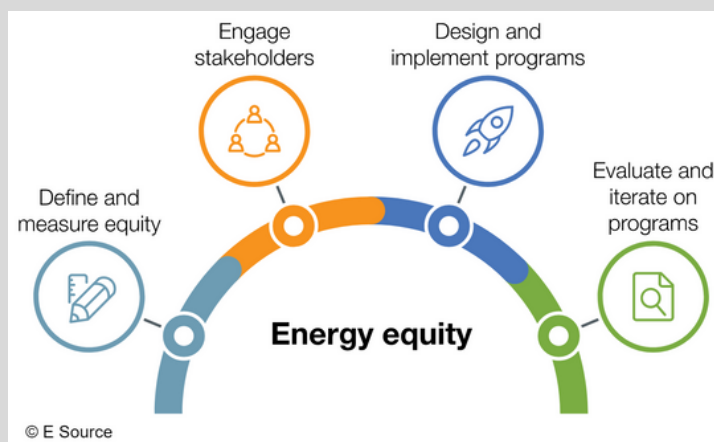


Figure 2: The E Source Energy Equity Framework

This project provides E Source utility clients with data that can be used for designing, implementing, and iterating on new or existing energy equity customer programs. The research and analysis builds off the current E Source energy equity framework, shown in figure 2, by highlighting programs and initiatives that exemplify each of the actionable steps of the framework.



Methods

- Our team identified, assessed, and categorized energy equity-focused initiatives, programs, pilots, and plans administered by energy utilities, states and provinces, local governments, and nonprofit agencies.
- The data was consolidated into an Excel-based spreadsheet, intended to be user-friendly, filterable, and easy to update.
- Resources consisted of internal E Source tools, program administrator websites, and utility TEP regulatory filings.
- Figure 3 outlines the equity metrics used to qualify programs, initiatives, and plans.
- Subsequent research sought to identify and analyze utility TEPs with explicit equity goals and considerations.

Demographics	
Income and energy burden	Disability
Race and ethnicity	Language and information access
Age	Business type
Location and housing	
Energy efficiency of housing	Climate change impacts
Building stock value and age	Heat-island effect
Homeownership	Rural vs. urban
Local pollution	
Access to resources	
Employment	Local grid infrastructure quality
Access to personal or public transportation	Access to healthcare
Access to EV charging infrastructure	

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Figure 3: Metrics and customer characteristics in equity programs

Published Deliverables

A database of energy equity programs across the US and Canada - Focuses on energy equity programs across the U.S. and Canada and analyzes the drivers of these programs, target communities, and current trends. [Report and database](#)

How to incorporate equity into your transportation electrification plan (TEP) - Provides actionable methods for how U.S. and Canadian utilities can create and incorporate energy equity goals, metrics, and components into their strategic TEPs. [Report](#)

By designing holistic programs with equity embedded from the beginning, utilities can begin to see an increase in customer participation in their energy programs while ensuring a more sustainable and equitable future for their communities.

Equity Database Highlights

891

energy equity programs cataloged

26

different equity metrics incorporated

368

unique program administrators identified

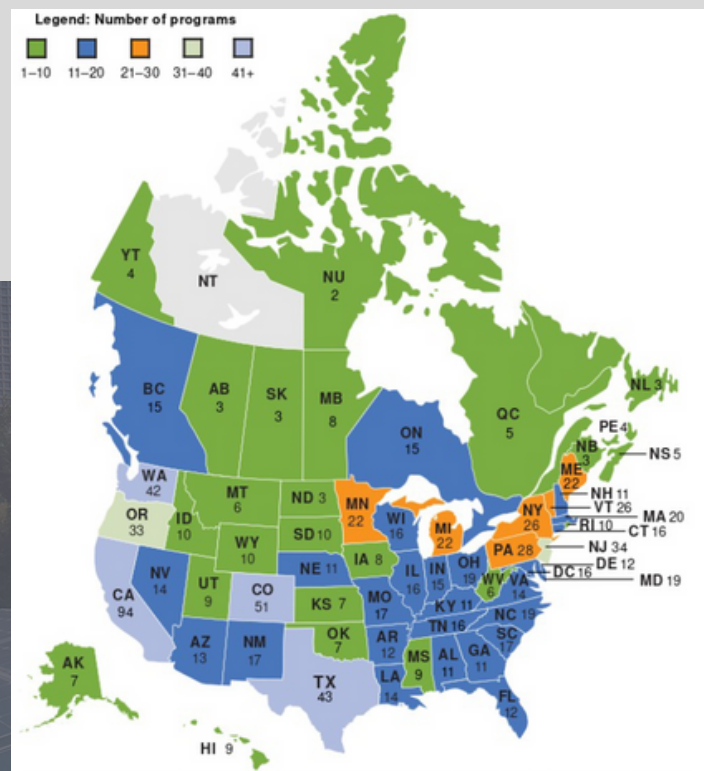


Figure 4: Equity programs by state and province

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