



C&I CUSTOM PROGRAM UPDATE – May 2024

Efficiency Maine's Commercial & Industrial (C&I) Custom Program provides Maine businesses and institutions with incentives for site-specific energy efficiency projects that are not otherwise covered by prescriptive incentives. Our newsletter keeps interested parties informed about important program updates and recently completed projects.

What's New?

Triennial Plan VI Planning – Efficiency Maine is hosting a series of planning workshops on the Triennial Plan VI. For a full list of upcoming workshops, please visit <https://www.energymaine.com/triennial-plan-vi/>.

Manufacturer PON Deadline Reminder – Time and funding is running out for manufacturing facilities to access enhanced incentives for fuel-saving projects. The Manufacturer Thermal Efficiency PON closes on June 30, 2024, and manufacturers are encouraged to email custom@energymaine.com to discuss incentive applications. For more information, visit [energymaine.com/manufacturer-thermal-efficiency-projects/](https://www.energymaine.com/manufacturer-thermal-efficiency-projects/).

Technical Assistance Program Changes – The Custom Technical Assistance (TA) Program, which provides a 50% cost share up to \$25,000 to support the engineering needed for more complex potential Custom Program projects, has recently been revised in several ways to better support developing projects:

- The cost-share cap has been increased from \$20,000 to \$25,000.
- Eligible studies have been broadened to include design and development of construction bid documents, battery system designs, and interconnection studies.

Success Stories

Backyard Farms – Madison – Thermal Curtains

[Backyard Farms](#) grows tomatoes year-round at their approximately 41-acre facility in Madison. Products include three types of tomatoes – on the vine, cocktail, and beefsteak. The facility is the largest building in Maine and has been growing tomatoes for New England grocery stores since 2007.

Backyard Farms reached out in the spring of 2023 seeking support to install high-efficiency thermal curtains to replace existing thermal curtains, which had reached the end of their useful life. The curtains are used at night to reduce thermal losses in the greenhouse. By installing thermal curtains with a higher R-value (insulation rating), the company has significantly reduced the facility's heating fuel use during the winter. Efficiency Maine was able to award an incentive bringing the estimated simple payback for the high-efficiency curtains over standard curtains down to one year.

This is a great example of a large local operation investing in their facility to reduce operating costs, thereby helping to ensure the long-term success of the business.

- Additional cost for high-efficiency option: \$1,400,000
- Incentive award: \$620,000
- Estimated annual energy savings: 82,000 MMBtu

Curtains Open



Curtains Closed



Peaks Renewables – Clinton – 280 kW Digester Combined Heat and Power Unit

[Peaks Renewables](#) is a renewable energy development company that has built an anaerobic digester facility that produces pipeline-quality renewable natural gas (RNG) from cow manure. The RNG dairy digester is located on the Flood Brothers' farm, the largest dairy farm in Maine and home to more than 3,100 cows. The RNG facility receives cow manure from six local dairy farms and returns dried processed manure (for use as bedding) and liquid fertilizer to the farms as byproducts of the RNG production process.

A variety of mixers, pumps, and blowers are used to upgrade the raw gas output from the digester to pipeline quality natural gas. Additionally, the process has thermal loads associated with pre-heating the feedstock and treatment of the generated biogas. The Custom Program was able to award Peaks Renewables an incentive for a 280 kW combined heat and power (CHP) unit to offset electric loads and to serve the continuous process heating needs of the RNG facility.

CHP is a great solution for facilities with continuous heating needs. The most common CHP technologies are reciprocating engines, like the one installed at Peaks Renewables, and backpressure turbines, which generate power from high-pressure steam. Project returns are particularly attractive for those sites with low-cost fuels and higher electricity costs. CHP is also eligible for an investment tax credit, which reduces overall project costs.

- CHP unit final installed cost: \$824,000
- Efficiency Maine incentive: \$337,500
- Estimated annual energy savings: 2,000,000 kWh

CHP Unit Container



Get Started

- Contact the C&I Custom Program at 207-358-7957 or custom@efficiencymaine.com for potential inquiries.
- Review additional C&I Custom Program eligibility and incentive information on our [website](#).
- Watch our C&I Custom Program introductory [video](#).
- Consider a free [Scoping Audit](#) to help you assess where to start.
- Consider a [Technical Assistance Study](#) to help you conduct an energy analysis or project design.