November 4, 2025

Connecticut Heat Pump Transition Pilot Program - New England Heat Pump Accelerator
Notice of Public Meeting and Request for Information (RFI)

Public Meeting date: November 13, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. ET

Deadline for RFI Responses: December 5, 2025, at 12:00 p.m. (noon) ET

To Support Program Design of the Connecticut Heat Pump Transition Pilot Program

Contents

Background

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) is requesting comments on a potential design for a state heat pump pilot program (Pilot) funded under the New England Heat Pump Accelerator (Accelerator). The Pilot is expected to launch in Spring 2026 and operate through October 2029. In 2024, Connecticut and four other New England states were awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Environmental Protection (EPA) for the New England Heat Pump Accelerator (Accelerator). This grant will fund a midstream heat pump incentive program, state heat pump pilot programs in each coalition state, community-based grants, and a data hub. State pilot programs under the Accelerator are intended to propel the adoption of cold climate air-source heat pumps (ASHPs), heat pump water heaters (HPWHs), and/or other efficient, electric heat pump technologies in single-family and/or multi-family residential

buildings. States are authorized to launch one or two pilot programs with the funding allocated to them. State heat pump pilots are separate and distinct from the Accelerator funds used for midstream heat pump incentives for heat pump distributors. DEEP will lead the design and implementation of the heat pump Pilot(s) in Connecticut.

DEEP aims to design Pilot(s) that improve heating and cooling affordability, economically reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) pollution, and overcome barriers to adoption of heat pumps faced by low- to moderate-income households. We are interested in designing Pilot(s) that may produce program features that Connecticut can use in whole or in part to inform improvements to existing programs and/or lead to improved market conditions that will result in increased heat pump adoption beyond the end of the Pilot(s) in October 2029.

The Pilot(s) will benefit households throughout the State of Connecticut where the resident household income, which can be different than the owner's income, is up to 80% area median income (AMI). DEEP also has an interest in supporting heat pump installations in low-income census tracks through this Pilot(s).

DEEP is considering a Pilot(s) focused on situations where the purchase of new heating and cooling equipment and/or hot water heaters is a non-discretionary purchase. These are situations where an existing heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) or hot water system is nearing the end of its useful life, has maintenance issues connected with system age and obsolescence, or has failed. DEEP is seeking stakeholder input on the opportunity, benefits, and challenges associated with replacing heating, cooling, or hot water systems which have reached the end of their useful life or have failed, with a heat pump system that may have different connection and infrastructure requirements from the previous system.

We are seeking stakeholder feedback on effective technical solutions, administrative structures, partnerships, referral pathways, and braided resources that could be piloted in Connecticut. The Pilot(s) should reach GHG pollution reduction goals which equate to approximately 25,000 installations from March, 2026 to October, 2029.

Since this type of Pilot will include situations where there is an emergency failure of HVAC or hot water heaters, we are interested to know if contractors and other respondents are aware of other programs that have installed temporary heating or hot water systems while the building updates needed to accommodate a permanent heat pump system are completed. We are interested in obtaining more detail about how to implement temporary systems during emergency failures and how receptive both contractors and building owners are to such a program element. While we believe temporary installations are likely to be an important part of the solution to emergency failures, we are interested in other solutions to this challenge as well.

DEEP is also seeking input on the opportunity to pilot new technology solutions that align with existing heating infrastructure in the older housing stock common throughout New England. Of particular interest would be perspectives on the most cost-effective and optimal pathways to integrate heat pumps into housing with hydronic heat distribution systems.

Funding Opportunity & Timeline

This RFI is *not* a funding opportunity. The State of Connecticut anticipates administering one or more heat pump Pilot(s), with a total pilot budget between $11-$14.5 million. Funds must be expended between March 2026 and October 2029. DEEP anticipates issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) by January 2026 for a Pilot administrator(s).

This Request for Information (RFI) seeks input on Pilot design with respect to strategy, partnerships, leverage opportunities, administrative processes, and challenges. A long-term goal of a Pilot is to find solutions that can be scalable after the Pilot ends. We are interested in designing a Pilot(s) that can be adopted, in whole or in part, to permanently support heat pump adoption where beneficial for homeowners or tenants.

Notice of Virtual Conference

DEEP will hold a public meeting to solicit feedback on the proposed pilot approach described in this RFI. The meeting will be held virtually via Zoom on **November 13, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. ET.**

Please register for the public meeting by clicking this link and entering the requested information.

Potential Pilot Design and Goals

DEEP is considering implementing a Pilot(s) in Connecticut that focuses on increasing heat pump adoption in situations where the purchase of new heating and cooling equipment is a non-discretionary purchase. These are situations where an existing HVAC or hot water system is nearing the end of its useful life, has maintenance issues connected with system age and obsolescence, or has failed. Due to the cost of HVAC systems and hot water heaters and the financial pressures that residents struggle with, we believe that targeting necessary system replacements is a good strategy as those purchases are non-discretionary. We note that while end of useful life and system failures represent optimal opportunities to transition to heat pumps, owners and management agents are often advised and directed into purchasing similar or like-for-like systems by government programs, insurance agents, contractors and others, in many cases locking those buildings into inefficient, costly and polluting systems for decades to come. The goal

of this potential Pilot would be to disrupt this practice to ensure that owners whose systems are nearing the end of the system's useful life and whose systems have failed have support in planning, education, contracting services, and interim technology measures to facilitate a transition to heat pump technologies when heat pumps would provide long-term cost savings to the owner.

We are interested in building effective technical solutions, administrative structures, partnerships, referral pathways, and leveraged resources to achieve the goal of improve heating and cooling affordability, economically reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) pollution, and overcome barriers to adoption of heat pumps faced by low- to moderate-income households. Due to the fact that the potential Pilot may aim to address situations where there is an emergency failure of HVAC or hot water heaters, proposed project designs should consider the potential need to install temporary systems in cases where permanent electric HVAC or hot water system installations require planning and building updates. The installations will serve to benefit low- and moderate-income households, displace low efficiency systems, maximize greenhouse gas pollution savings, avoid automatic reinstallation of the same fossil fuel-based or low-efficiency electric resistance systems when those types of heat or hot water systems fail without analysis of potential benefits of other approaches, improve Contractor access and readiness, and improve air quality.

DEEP is also interested in stakeholder feedback on the concept of also funding a smaller pilot that will explore technology solutions that align with existing heating structures in existing and older housing stock. We are interested to know the most cost-effective and optimal pathways to integrate heat pumps into housing with hydronic systems.

We hope to achieve these goals:

- 25,000 heat pump installations by October 2029;
- Fewer emergency HVAC failures that result in a default replacement with like-for-like heating and hot water systems;
- Broadening practices of Emergency Replacement Programs to include heat pumps;
- Facilitate fuel switching from other fuels where cost effective;
- Deploy heat pumps in conjunction with weatherization or renewable energy;
- Deploy the cost-efficient heat pump solution appropriate to the building typology; and
- Improve and preserve housing through heat pump deployment.

The challenges we expect are:

- Low customer and building owner awareness about heat pumps;

- Emergency programs, contractors, and insurance agents that direct like-for-like replacement that replaces an obsolete heating system with the same type of system;
- Mismatch between the planning time needed to transition a property to electric heat pump technology and lack of time in emergency situations;
- Need for transitional HVAC or hot water unit during electrification planning;
- Added costs from the transition to electric heat pump technology;
- Existing contractor comfort level with heat pump technology and how that influences advice given to customers;
- Consumer difficulties identifying and gaining quick access to qualified installers and associated trades, especially in time limited situations;
- Lack of coordination between and complexity of energy programs;
- Difficulty scheduling weatherization services in a time sensitive situation;
- Need for post-installation heat pump maintenance and repair services; and
- Potentially higher operational costs for some customers and building types.

Eligible Respondents

Anyone can respond to this RFI. We are particularly interested in response from these entities:

1. Administrators of emergency HVAC or hot water heaters replacement programs
2. Administrators of heating assistance programs
3. State Department of Housing
4. Housing owners and developers
5. Government affordable housing and naturally occurring affordable housing owners, developers, and managers
6. Contractors that install heat pumps
7. Heat pump distributors and manufacturers
8. Weatherization assistance programs
9. Organizations serving senior citizens
10. Organizations serving low- and moderate-income households, including housing and energy advocates for low-income residents
11. Municipal officials
12. Redevelopment officials
13. Building officials
14. Property insurance companies
15. Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA)

16. Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI)s
17. Banking officials focused on Community Reinvestment Act, Energy or Affordable Housing
18. The Connecticut Green Bank
19. Heat pump program administrators
20. State of CT 211

Instructions for Responding to this RFI

The deadline to submit responses to this RFI is **December 5, 2025**, at **12:00 p.m. (noon) ET**, via email to Deep.EnergyBureau@ct.gov. Please include "Accelerator State Grant RFI" in the subject line of the email.

Respondents are not required to submit responses pertaining to every question and sub-question, but DEEP encourages interested parties to respond to all aspects of this RFI that are relevant to them. All comments related to the Accelerator State Grants are encouraged and are not required to be in direct response to any question listed below.

Respondents are advised that all materials submitted in response to this RFI are subject to the terms of the Connecticut Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the Privacy Act, and all rules, regulations and interpretations resulting from them. FOIA generally requires the disclosure of documents in the possession of the State upon request of any citizen, unless the content of the document falls within certain categories of exemption, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-210(b). Respondents are generally advised not to include any confidential information in their responses. If a respondent does provide information it deems confidential and exempt from disclosure, it must clearly label the information as such and provide a convincing explanation and rationale sufficient to justify an exemption of the information from release under the FOIA. In no event shall the State or any of its employees have any liability for disclosure of documents or information in the possession of the State, which the State or its employees believe(s) to be required pursuant to the FOIA or other requirements of law.

CT DEEP has designated the individual below as the Official Contact for purposes of this RFI. The Official Contact is the **only authorized contact** for this RFI and, as such, handles all related communications on behalf of DEEP. Respondents and other interested parties are advised that any communication with any other DEEP employee(s) (including appointed officials) or personnel under contract to DEEP about this RFI is strictly prohibited. Respondents who violate this instruction may risk disqualification from consideration in resulting procurements.

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Please ensure that e-mail screening software (if used) recognizes and accepts e-mails from the Official Contact.

Please submit your response as either a Microsoft Word or PDF file to the Official Contact above by the deadline. Please label responses according to the question number, if applicable.

RFI Questions

Reminder: Stakeholders may respond to as many or as few questions as is relevant or practical. All comments related to the proposed Pilot concept are encouraged and are not required to be in direct response to any question listed below.

Respondents to the RFI are requested to provide feedback on the following questions. Please note the question number in your response:

On Emergency and End of Useful Life Replacement Program:

1. What potential challenges do you foresee in the implementation of a Pilot focused on emergency or end-of-useful-life HVAC or hot water replacements with heat pumps? How can these challenges be overcome? What do you see as the key components of a Pilot that would address these challenges.
2. Please describe the reasons for your position as to whether a program that enables heat pump replacement instead of like-for-like replacements when HVAC and water heating systems of other types are at end of their useful life or fail, addresses an important gap in energy services offered in Connecticut.
3. Please describe the reasons for your position as to whether a program that enables heat pump replacement instead of like-for-like replacements when HVAC and water heating systems of other types are at end of their useful life or fail, addresses an important skill gap in Connecticut's workforce.
4. Please describe how we could design this Pilot in an optimal way to enable Pilot features to be more practically integrated into permanent existing energy programs in Connecticut.
5. What measures can make building owners and contractors more comfortable with a program of this type?
6. What strengths and resources in existing Connecticut energy, housing, and other assistance programs, referral pathways, and workforce can be leveraged to benefit the Pilot?
7. What are the best strategies to find properties where income eligible people live that have systems that are reaching the end of their useful life but have not yet failed? For example,

should we send questionnaires to owners of affordable housing, low-income homeowners, or other population groups asking about the age and condition of their systems?

8. Who are the relevant partners we should work with to make referrals to the Pilot? What are the benefits and challenges of working with these partners?
9. What steps can we take and program design features can we adopt to make it easier for CT Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) administrators, housing programs, local building officials, 211, housing providers and others to make referrals to a program of this type for housing units that have heat or hot water systems nearing or past the end of useful life?
10. According to state housing programs, local building officials, 211, housing providers, and others what is the volume of referrals that this program can expect annually for heat and hot water systems and can you comment on the need for this program.
11. Are there any concerns with referring income eligible households to a Pilot where the mandatory replacement technology is an air source heat pump (ASHP) or heat pump hot water heater (HPWH)? If so, what are those concerns and how would you recommend they be mitigated?
12. What other grant/loan/rebate/incentive and financing sources should we target to braid or leverage funds with this Pilot?
13. How can we align this Pilot to optimize existing resources to achieve efficiency and ease for both customers and administrators? Examples may include accepting applicants referred by other programs based on those program's income eligibility screening and application; and/or aligning practices and eligibility with other programs, such as financing programs, in a way that increases ease of use for clients and administrators.
14. How should the Pilot approach development and retention of professional services, such as engineers, architects, contractors, plumbers, and electricians to do building electrification work and make recommendations about systems to be placed in service? Are there existing state services we can leverage in these trades? Are there existing pre-qualified lists or certification programs we should use?
15. If a project(s) require(s) participation of multiple contractors, how should the Pilot streamline the process or reduce bottlenecks?

Specifically on Temporary systems deployed in an Emergency and End of Useful Life Replacement Program:

16. What are the best strategies and/or technologies that can be used for temporary HVAC or hot water heaters while permanent systems are planned and implemented? If possible, please indicate in your response to which building type(s) a technology solution is best suited (e.g.,

single family, small multifamily, large multifamily, mobile home and townhouse/condominium).

17. How would you recommend cost sharing if a temporary system adds more cost to a customer's utility bill for a period of time before the installation of the new permanent system?
18. Describe your thoughts on how much potential cost temporary measures could add to a project and how long you project temporary measures would have to be in place for a heating system redesign and replacement? For a hot water system?
19. Do you suggest any program design features to manage the complexity of integrating temporary systems such as capping the number of projects that require temporary systems per year or other approaches?
20. Are you aware of other programs that have installed temporary heating or hot water systems while building updates needed to accommodate a permanent heat pump system were completed? If so, please describe the program.
21. Can you provide details about how to implement temporary systems during emergency failures and how receptive both contractors and building owners are to such a program element?
22. Are there other strategies besides employing a temporary system that we should consider in instances where conversion to a heat pump system during an emergency will take more time than a like-for-like replacement, resulting in a disruption of essential services?
23. Are there strategies which should be considered to reduce the time it will take to do the retrofit work necessary to accommodate a permanent heat pump solution?
24. What potential challenges do you foresee for each of these strategies, and how can these challenges be overcome?

Specifically on Technology Solutions Pilot:

25. What are the most promising technologies and strategies for transitioning housing with hydronic systems to heat pumps for heating and cooling?
26. What are the promising heat pump technologies that have the potential to increase the affordability of heating and cooling and reduce greenhouse gas pollution that would benefit from further test applications in New England? If possible, specify which technologies offer the greatest opportunities and which test applications (e.g., property type, existing heating system, system size, etc.) are most needed.

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer that is committed to complying with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Please contact us at (860) 418-5910 or deep.accommodations@ct.gov if you: have a

disability and need a communication aid or service; have limited proficiency in English and may need information in another language; or if you wish to file an ADA or Title VI discrimination complaint. Any person needing a hearing accommodation may call the State of Connecticut relay number - 711. In order to facilitate efforts to provide an accommodation, please request all accommodations as soon as possible following notice of any agency hearing, meeting, program or event.