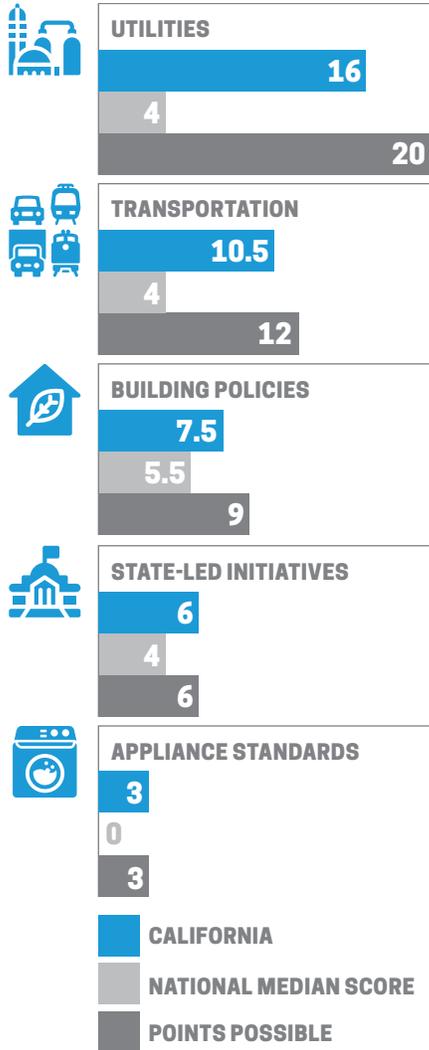




California

California ranked first in the 2020 State Energy Efficiency Scorecard, scoring 43 points out of a possible 50, a half-point less than it earned last year.

The state’s enduring leadership on building energy codes, vehicle emissions, and appliance standards continues to set the pace in advancing energy efficiency on a variety of fronts at the national level and among other states who model their own policies after California’s example. More than a dozen states have adopted its low-emissions vehicle regulations and 11 other states have adopted its zero-emissions vehicle (ZEV) program. Together these states created an important unified front against ongoing federal efforts to potentially revoke states’ ability to set stricter vehicle efficiency standards. The state also continued to maintain progress on important appliance standards, notably expanding the scope of its strong lightbulb standards last November in the face of federal efforts to reverse course on similar national standards.



UTILITIES

The state has strong, long-term savings targets in place for both electric and natural gas utilities. California also has a cap-and-trade program that encourages energy efficiency in homes and businesses. As a result, the state reports levels of utility-sector savings rivaling those of other top-10 states. Meanwhile, investor-owned utilities continue to seek ways to strengthen programs in pursuit of SB 350 goals to double cumulative energy savings by 2030 relative to 2015. California utilities are fully decoupled, which encourages energy efficiency, and performance incentives are in place for electric and natural gas utilities.

TRANSPORTATION

California has some of the most comprehensive transportation and land-use planning policies in the nation. The state has concrete targets and strategies for reducing vehicle miles traveled. California’s leadership in setting vehicle emissions standards has served as a model for standards on the federal level. Thirteen states and the District of Columbia currently have adopted California’s standards. The state also maintains a zero-emission standard that requires increased sales of plug-in hybrid, battery electric, and fuel-cell vehicles from 2018 to 2025. Aside from California, 11 states have adopted the California ZEV standard as of 2020. Additionally, a September Executive Order signed by the governor called for phasing out the sale of gasoline-powered vehicles by 2035, the most ambitious clean-car policy in the United States.

BUILDING ENERGY EFFICIENCY POLICIES

California’s energy code is one of the most aggressive in the country and has been a powerful vehicle for advancing energy efficiency standards for building equipment. The state’s latest codes are the first in the United States to require low-rise residential buildings to have photovoltaic systems sized to meet the building electricity load that remains after all energy efficiency requirements are met. The code also stands out because of its field verification requirements for certain measures. The adoption of AB 802 in 2015 strengthened the state’s benchmarking program by enabling access to whole building data for buildings above a certain size. The state also added a new appendix to its building energy codes in 2020, awarding compliance credits for smart heat pump water heaters in recognition of their unique grid benefits.

STATE GOVERNMENT-LED INITIATIVES

California earned a perfect score for its state-led energy efficiency initiatives, which include programs for schools, industry, residential consumers, and the public sector. State government leads by example, benchmarking energy usage in state buildings, encouraging energy savings performance contracts, and requiring energy-efficient fleets and buildings. The state also implements a cap-and-trade program and tracks avoided greenhouse gas emissions achieved through energy efficiency programs.

APPLIANCE STANDARDS

California was the first state in the country to adopt appliance and equipment efficiency standards and continues to lead in the development of standards for new devices and equipment. In 2019, just months after the U.S. Department of Energy narrowed the scope of light bulbs subject to federal standards, the California Energy Commission (CEC) picked up those same bulbs, broadening the scope of the state’s light bulbs standards. California has adopted the greatest number of efficiency standards and many other states base their standards on California’s. In 2019, the state also passed SB 49, which directs the CEC to develop standards for appliances related to flexible demand technologies that reduce statewide greenhouse gas emissions and improve the resiliency of the state’s electricity grid.