

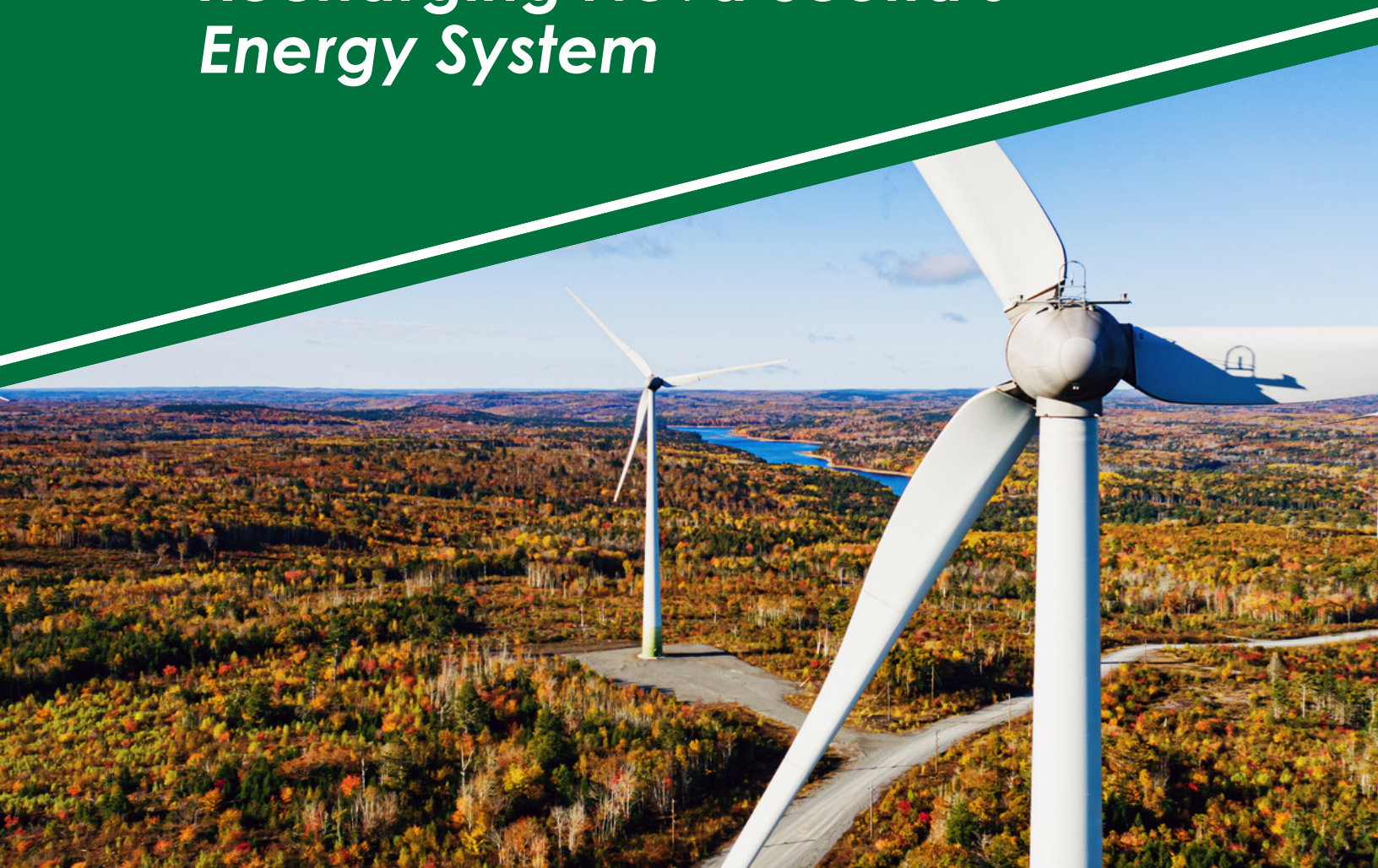
June 2026



Ecology Action Centre

IN OUR POWER:

*Recharging Nova Scotia's
Energy System*



Energy Transition: Building a Reliable,
Affordable and Sustainable Future



In Our Power: *Recharging Nova Scotia's Energy System*

Our energy system must meet the needs of all Nova Scotians. This is not wishful thinking. Energy is a human right, essential for health, safety, comfort and access to information. A system that is reliable, affordable and sustainable is essential.

We need that system now.



How is Nova Scotia's Energy System changing?

We are currently undergoing the biggest energy-system transformation since Nova Scotia Power (then a Crown corporation) was established in 1972. For more than a century, electricity in the province has been generated largely by burning fossil fuels such as coal and oil. Today, those finite sources are being replaced with cleaner, renewable energy and more efficient technologies.

This transition is necessary to address climate change, but it also presents a unique opportunity to make energy more affordable and accessible.

Climate change is already affecting Nova Scotia. We are experiencing:

- More intense storms and hurricanes
- Flooding and coastal damage
- More frequent and severe wildfires
- Higher infrastructure costs

Burning fossil fuels for electricity is a major source of pollution. Transitioning to zero-carbon energy sources is essential to reduce these impacts and meet climate commitments.



What will the future energy system look like?

In a clean energy future:

- Electricity comes from clean, renewable sources such as wind and solar.
- Heating and transportation are electrified or powered by zero-carbon, low-pollution fuels.
- Buildings are better insulated and more energy efficient, reducing energy demand.
- Homes and businesses use technologies like heat pumps and rooftop solar.

Changes like these reduce energy waste and lower long-term energy costs.

What will the future energy system look like?

Energy efficiency is often the fastest and cheapest way to reduce energy bills. This includes insulating homes and buildings, upgrading windows and doors, installing heat pumps and improving building ventilation and energy management.



When buildings use less energy, households and businesses can save money even if electricity rates increase.

Nova Scotia was once a national leader in energy-efficiency programs, but recent rankings show the province has slipped behind several others.

Efficiency Canada's 2024 Canadian Energy Efficiency Scorecard ranked Nova Scotia fifth, down from second. We were surpassed by New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. Renewed investment in efficiency programs — especially for low-income households and renters — is critical.

What is energy poverty?

Energy poverty occurs when households cannot afford or access adequate energy services for heating, cooling, lighting and cooking, often spending a high percentage of their income on utility bills.

It affects over two million households in Canada. In Nova Scotia, 40 per cent of households experience energy poverty, about twice the national average.



Why is energy efficiency so important?

Reducing energy demand through efficiency improvements can help lower monthly bills and reduce difficult choices between energy and other necessities. Simply put, the less energy we use, the less it costs. Programs that help households improve insulation, install heat pumps and access clean electricity are key to ensuring the energy transition benefits everyone, not just those who can afford upgrades.

Despite Nova Scotia's old building stock, with the establishment of Efficiency Nova Scotia in 2010, this province has long been a leader in energy efficiency for homeowners. With the establishment of a rental retrofit program (the Affordable Multifamily Housing program) in 2018, this leadership extended to renters.

Is there an economic opportunity here?

The clean energy transition is not only about reducing emissions; it's about building a stronger economy. Studies have estimated that the move toward a net-zero economy could create thousands of long-term jobs each year that can support



communities across the province.

According to the 2019 Gardner Pinfold study, Nova Scotia Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act Economic Costs and Benefits for Proposed Goals, a net-zero transition could create 15,000 new jobs per year by 2030.

What other changes are being made to the system?

Nova Scotia is also reforming how the electricity system is managed. A new independent energy system operator (IESO) will oversee planning and electricity grid operations. This separation is intended to reduce potential conflicts of interest and allow grid planning to focus on the public good. To be effective, the IESO must prioritize sustainability, reliability, and affordability. That would mean integrating more renewable energy into the grid while maintaining reliability.

