



U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20250
www.rd.usda.gov

News Release

Contact:
press@oc.usda.gov

USDA Rural Development Invests \$6 Million in Stowe Electric Department to Reduce Clean Energy Costs for Central Vermonters

Funding Part of \$78.3 Million National Investment through Agency's Powering Affordable Clean Energy (PACE) Program

STOWE, Vt., Dec. 16, 2024 –United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced \$78.3 million in funding to make clean, affordable, reliable energy accessible to Rural Americans. The investments come from the [Powering Affordable Clean Energy program \(PACE\)](#), with \$6 million going to the Stowe Electric Department in Vermont.

The Stowe investment will help develop small hydroelectric and solar facilities throughout central Vermont, and implement an energy-storage system to power approximately 115 rural households while lowering monthly power bills. The project is one of seven that will benefit rural residents in American Samoa (2), Maryland (2), Ohio and Washington State with more affordable clean energy.

In May 2023, USDA made \$1 billion available through PACE to fund new clean energy projects and energy storage in rural America. This program provides low interest loans with up to 60% loan forgiveness to renewable energy developers, rural electric cooperatives and other rural energy providers for renewable energy storage and projects that use wind, solar, hydropower, geothermal and biomass.

“PACE plays a vital role in helping small, rural utilities like Stowe Electric Department invest in infrastructure that supports an equitable energy transition for rural communities,” said Stowe Electric’s General Manager Jacki Pratt. “PACE-funded projects will enable Stowe Electric to support accelerated load growth from electrification of heating and transportation, facilitate increased distributed generation, and enhance system reliability and grid resiliency. In addition to these important system upgrades, it will also allow Stowe Electric to build a solar and small hydro generation project, providing new, locally produced, renewable energy at a reduced cost to low-income customers. This project will also contribute to decarbonizing Stowe Electric's power supply in alignment with Vermont's Renewable Energy Standard.”

USDA Rural Development supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural, tribal and high-poverty areas. Visit the Rural Data Gateway to learn how and where these investments are impacting rural America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov/vt-nh.

To subscribe to USDA Rural Development updates, visit [GovDelivery subscriber page](#).

#

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.