

Burlington Electric Department Awarded Department of Energy Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships Grant

Grant Will Enable BED to Offer Special Rates for Residential and Commercial Building Heating, Grow the Local Economy, and Create Green Jobs

Burlington, VT – Burlington Electric Department (BED) has been awarded a Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships (GRIP) grant from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) for the project titled Building Grid-edge Integrated and Aggregated Network of Thermal Storage (GIANTS). Advancing the Building GIANTS project, which will focus on enabling thermal storage in both residential and commercial buildings, will enable BED to better manage peak demand for technologies such as heat pumps and support greater thermal decarbonization. The project also will help grow the local economy and create green jobs.

“Burlington Electric Department is deeply appreciative of the federal grant support through the Bi-Partisan Infrastructure Legislation to help pursue our goal of thermal decarbonization,” stated Darren Springer, BED General Manager. “Just as we have provided customers an electric vehicle rate that saves money and reduces peak demand costs, we can with support from this grant extend similar efforts to support heat pump-related rates or bill credits and support commercial sector peak demand management through building system automation.”

Residential customers will use devices to measure and control their heat pump system operations to focus on off-peak usage. BED has partnered with Sensibo, manufacturer of a smart control device for heat pumps, and Emporia, manufacturer of metering devices. Working together with these partners and its customers, BED will realize the benefits of flexible load management that will reduce peak demand for heat pumps. These benefits will be passed along to participating customers to enable a cost-effective, 100 percent renewable thermal electricity rate.

In the commercial space, BED will partner with Dynamic Organics (DO), a local distributed energy resource aggregator focused on commercial and industrial devices, to enable grid-interactive and efficient buildings (GEBs) through optimization and automation of building energy management systems (BEMS). Participating customers will focus on shifting electrification usage off-peak to lower peak demand and will receive payments proportional to the amount of peak reduction they can provide to the grid.

Implementing the Building GIANTS project will have considerable benefits to the local economy by providing job opportunities and a strong customer pipeline for electricians, commercial HVAC contractors, and heat pump installers. In addition, reducing building-related greenhouse gas emissions is a key focus of Burlington’s Net Zero Energy 2030 Roadmap and a key strategy for Vermont’s climate action efforts. The Building GIANTS project will help enable greater thermal decarbonization in a cost-effective way for all BED customers.