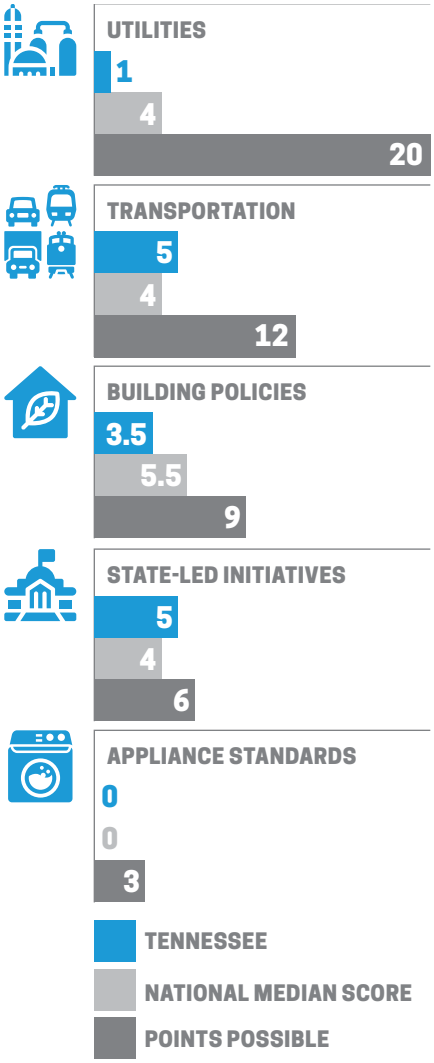
2020 STATE ENERGY EFFICIENCY SCORECARD

Tennessee

Tennessee tied for 29th place in the *2020 State Energy Efficiency Scorecard,* rising one spot from the position it held in 2019. The state earned 14.5 points out of a possible 50, the same number it earned last year.



Tennessee has shown energy efficiency leadership in recent years through its EmPower TN initiative to reduce consumption across state-owned and managed facilities. The Tennessee Valley Authority and its distribution utilities also provide efficiency services, although these offerings have been more limited in recent years and savings and investment levels remain below the national average. While Tennessee has taken important steps to assess and promote electric vehicle (EV) adoption, opportunities remain to expand efforts through policies that encourage efficient use of transportation fuels, and by adopting and enforcing stronger building energy codes.

UTILITIES

Tennessee is unique in the energy efficiency sector in that the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), a federally-owned corporation, provides electricity to almost all the electric service territory in the state. TVA's dominance in the state's energy sector contributes to the lack of a state utility commission that might otherwise mandate energy efficiency programming as other such commissions do in many other states. TVA runs electricity efficiency programs, but investments and savings remain below the national average. It also incorporates energy efficiency into its integrated resource planning process, although savings are expected to continue at low levels under the new integrated resource plan (IRP) approved in 2019. No utilities report budgets or savings for natural gas efficiency programs. Performance incentives are not available to utilities.

TRANSPORTATION

In 2019, Drive Electric Tennessee, a team of stakeholders including utilities, state agencies, manufacturers, and others, released the Electric Vehicle Roadmap for Tennessee, establishing a goal to increase electric vehicle adoption to 200,000 EVs by 2028. The group also published the Statewide Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Needs Assessment to evaluate the condition of the state's current EV charging infrastructure and identify where new chargers should be placed to promote EV adoption. The state has seen a reduction in vehicle miles traveled per capita in recent years and its MultiModal Access Grant Program supports projects that address the needs of transit users, pedestrians, and bicyclists. The state has passed complete street legislation, but additional opportunities remain. Tennessee also considers the proximity of transit facilities when distributing federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credits to qualifying property owners.

BUILDING ENERGY EFFICIENCY POLICIES

The state has adopted the 2009 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) for residential construction, and the 2012 IECC for commercial and state-owned buildings; however, because Tennessee is a "home rule" state, significant variation exists in codes adoption and enforcement at the local level. Many jurisdictions, including large cities like Chattanooga, Nashville, and Knoxville, have adopted codes exceeding those of the state. Tennessee conducted a residential energy code compliance field study in 2018 and hosts code training sessions.

STATE GOVERNMENT-LED INITIATIVES

The state offers a variety of financial incentives for energy efficiency in schools, public buildings, low-income households, and businesses. The state government leads by example by benchmarking energy use, requiring energy-efficient public buildings and fleets, and encouraging energy savings performance contracts. Tennessee has several major research centers with a focus on energy efficiency.

APPLIANCE STANDARDS

Tennessee has not set appliance standards beyond those required by the federal government.

ACEEE
American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy