

Report details Focus on Energy impact

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The Focus on Energy program has helped reduce emissions equal to 15 million fewer cars in the state over the past decade, a recent report shows.

The program helps residents and businesses in the state to install energy efficiency and renewable energy projects by providing information, resources and certain financial incentives. Projects can include improvements to HVAC systems, refrigeration, lighting, windows, water treatment and heating, and more.

Focus on Energy is funded by investor-owned energy utilities, and the state Public Service Commission oversees the program.

This year's report covers calendar year 2021. It shows the program's incentives and technical assistance have helped keep 69 million tons of carbon dioxide from reaching the environment since 2011.

The independent evaluation report, from consulting firm Cadmus Group, found Wisconsin's Focus on Energy program resulted in a \$4 return for every dollar invested through the program in 2021, according to a release.

PSC Chairperson Rebecca Cameron Valcq says the program's mission is to "empower all of us to make smart energy decisions."

“Many of Wisconsin’s manufacturers, school districts, and large businesses employ energy managers now and many tell me when I visit that Focus on Energy incentives and technical assistance helped them expand — ensuring those companies stayed in Wisconsin,” she said in the release.

Meanwhile, the report also indicates COVID-19 “continues to affect performance” for nonresidential installations.

“Overall participation in the nonresidential solutions declined 16% from CY 2020, when participation started to be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic,” report authors wrote.

They note large industrial and agricultural projects were the “least affected,” with participation remaining steady last year compared to 2020. But commercial, industrial and new construction prescriptive offerings “appeared to be the most impacted” in 2021 compared to the prior year.

Based on survey results, they added that “lower participation rates could be partly attributed to factors such as business closures, supply chain delays resulting in deferred or canceled energy upgrade projects, lower revenues, and staffing and occupancy reductions.”

See the full report:

https://www.focusonenergy.com/sites/default/files/inline-files/WI_Focus_on%20Energy_CY_2021_Volume_I.pdf