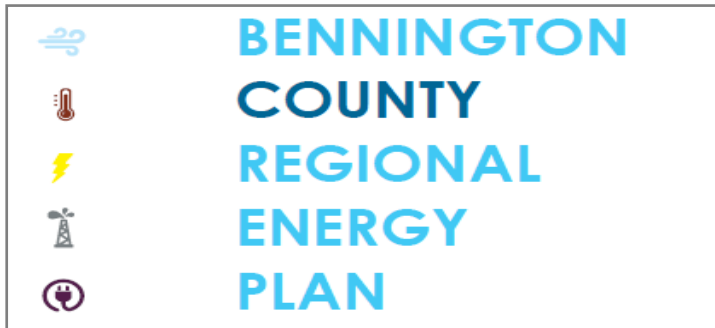


**H.518 Testimony—Jim Sullivan, Director
Bennington County Regional Commission**



Regional planning commissions have been working on local and regional energy plans and projects for many years (ARRA, Act 174 plans and standards, siting analyses, implementation efforts funded by EVT and Legislature).

Regional Plans contain extensive information on current and project energy usage, strategies for thermal, transportation/land use, and electrical efficiency and renewables.

Each RPC has increased capacity with funding for full or part-time regional energy coordinator, allowing for greater assistance and coordination with municipalities and local energy committees.

Arlington Fuel Consumption and Cost for Town Government. Source: Town of Arlington, 2018.

Location	Energy Source	Quantity Used	Cost Factor	Total Cost
Town Hall, Highway Barn, Rec Park, Fire Dept and Town Vehicles	Heating Oil	4,244 gallons	\$2.75/gallon	\$11,672
	Diesel Fuel	11,241 gallons	\$2.75/gallon	\$30,914
	Gasoline	3,680 gallons	\$2.50/gallon	\$9,201
	Electricity	54,750 kWh	\$0.15/kWh	\$8,200
Water Dept.	Heating Oil	440 gallons	\$2.75/gallon	\$1,210
	Electricity	80,400kWh	\$0.15/kWh	\$12,060
Schools and Buses	Heating Oil	25,558 gallons	\$2.75/gallon	\$70,285
	Gasoline	767 gallons	\$2.50/gallon	\$1,918
	Electricity	556,700 kWh	\$0.15/kWh	\$83,504
Street Lights	Electricity	119,500 kWh	\$0.15/kWh	\$17,926
	Total Cost			\$246,890



- Municipal Energy Improvements:**
- 2007 Town Office Energy Audit:
- Serviced the boiler
 - Improved ventilation
 - Installed programmable thermostats
 - Upgraded to efficient lighting and office equipment
 - Air-sealed the building
 - Installed cellulose insulation in the knee wall and attic
 - Improved the water heater
 - Sprayed foam insulation in the basement and box sills
- Other Initiatives:
- Replaced all streetlights with efficient LED fixtures
 - Purchased 2 bike racks and encouraging businesses to do the same
 - Restoring marble sidewalks throughout town to encourage walking
- Historical Society:
- Interior lighting upgraded to LED and timed light controls
 - 2006 Building Renovations: double-pane window installation and rigid foam, fiberglass and blown-in cellulose insulation in walls, attic, and cellar
- Dorset Library:
- Energy audit completed, heat pumps & new windows
- Dorset and East Dorset Fire Houses:
- Energy audits completed, grant-funded weatherization work at both sites and a new boiler at East Dorset Fire House

In the Bennington Region, 12 of 17 towns and villages have enhanced energy plans. Over 85 local energy plans statewide.

Plans contain much more than just renewable generation siting maps and guidelines; include detailed assessments of energy usage and efficiency strategies across all sectors, including thermal.

Most plans contain a detailed accounting of current energy usage by municipal governments, including heating fuels and transportation, lighting, equipment, and process energy demand. High priorities for projects that would reduce fossil fuel use and save money are identified.

Buildings include municipal offices, highway garages, public safety buildings, libraries, community centers, etc. (not all of which are owned by the municipality—some are separate municipalities, like fire districts, some nonprofits...differs by town).

Leading by Example is specifically called out in Act 174 energy plan standards. Need and opportunity to use municipal projects to inform and drive residential and commercial transition.

Key Considerations....

Audits - critical to determine most efficient system/fuel and optimal sizing, and to identify needed weatherization and related structural improvements.

Weatherization - will greatly enhance energy and cost savings—and reduce ongoing use of fossil fuels if existing systems are retained as backup (an expected course of action for many municipalities, especially when converting to electrical heat pump systems).

Challenges and Opportunities - will vary around the state, but availability of energy auditors and weatherization/building contractors needs to be addressed. Opportunities for economies of scale through larger multi-town contracts coordinated regionally. Potential to support growth in businesses supplying and servicing new heating systems and fuels, as well as diversification of existing fuel supply and energy service companies.