

Memphremagog Rentals & Essential Energy Solutions

Multiunit Charging and Workforce Development in the Northeast Kingdom



Overview

Memphremagog Rentals prides itself in providing quality affordable rental housing in the Northeast Kingdom. Essential Energy Solutions, also based out of the Northeast Kingdom, provides energy consulting services. The two paired up to install an EV charger that would serve the tenants living at a newly redeveloped multiunit property tucked into a residential neighborhood just outside of Newport's designated downtown.

Cost: \$28,360
Year Installed: 2024
Type: One Dual Port Level II Charging Station
Network: Blink
Availability: Public

Opportunity

Hazen Converse of Essential Energy Solutions heard a radio spot about a State grant program that could fund electric vehicle charging equipment in multiunit affordable housing. Hazen recognized that electric vehicles are part of the future of transportation, and knew that multiunit property owners might need some help figuring out how to provide home charging access for their tenants. So he reached out to the owner of Memphremagog Rentals, Doug Spates, who also recognized that EV charging would increasingly become an important amenity for residents, and makes the rental property more attractive to prospective tenants. Together, they applied for a State grant to test out EV charging in an underutilized corner of one of the parking lots. They were also able to use customer EVSE incentives offered by Vermont Electric Coop, which reduced their reliance on grant funds.

For more information, please contact:

Bronwyn Cooke: bronwyn.cooke@vermont.gov or 802.636.7126

or visit: <https://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/electric-vehicle-supply-equipment-evse-grant-program>

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“We appreciate the grant, because there was no way the investment would happen otherwise. The state is helping these projects and infrastructure get off the ground.”

*Hazen Converse,
Essential Energy Solutions*

Impact

The installation of this charging station in Newport has helped increase access to and awareness of EV charging in an area that has not seen as much investment in EVs and EV charging. The project has also helped to tackle a tough barrier to installing EV chargers – the availability of workforce that is experienced with this new technology. Hazen Converse has been considering next steps for furthering the project, which includes helping to train the next generation of skilled tradespeople. He is exploring opportunities to provide career training and education opportunities focused on Renewable Energy and Electrical Systems at the high school career and technical center he teaches at. Additionally, he sees the value in fostering strong relationships between contractors, electricians, and property owners to ensure the continued success of these types of projects.

Lessons Learned And Best Practices

The funding and incentives offered by the State and Vermont Electric Coop were instrumental in making this project happen. However, one lesson that was highlighted in this project was the need for more flexible funding sources. The grant was critical in making this project happen, and the project team was able to complete the project with the promise of future reimbursement from the grant award. However, having to secure the upfront capital needed to complete a project can be challenging for smaller property owners, and may limit who is able to participate in the funding incentives to expand EV charging availability. More flexible funding sources can help ensure more equitable access to funding opportunities, and more rapid roll out EV chargers. During construction, the project team also decided to install extra conduit to support additional chargers in the future. While it was an extra cost not needed for the chargers being installed, the team decided it would be less costly and disruptive than having to retrofit in the future.

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