

**Energy Efficiency and
Renewable Energy Standards
for
New Houses and Buildings**

**A Toolkit for
Community Governments in the NWT**



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1. Introduction

This toolkit has information about how communities can use standards so that new houses and other buildings use less energy. It offers some basic information about:

- What standards are and why they're important.
- Existing energy efficiency standards for buildings.
- Existing standards for appliances and equipment.
- Renewable energy standards.
- How communities can use energy efficiency and renewable energy standards.

Northern homes and other buildings use a lot of energy and people want to take action to use less energy and save money.

Who should use this toolkit?

The Arctic Energy Alliance developed this toolkit for community decision makers and other people involved with designing and constructing new houses and other buildings. The toolkit explains some of the things you need to consider to use energy efficiency and renewable energy standards. It includes some useful tools to help find the right standards for your community

If your community has an energy plan it may recommend that new houses and other buildings be more energy efficient or use more renewable energy. Standards can help you reach that goal.

If your community has no energy plan you can still use this toolkit to help save energy and money.

2. Word definitions

Architect

Architects are professional men and women that help design homes and other buildings. In the NWT only registered members of the NWT Architectural Association can design buildings larger than 600 m² or public assembly buildings as defined by the National Building Code. Their Code of Ethics says registered architects are responsible to serve and protect the public interest.

Building footprint

Building footprint is the area of the first floor of a building – the amount of ground in square meters that the first floor covers.

Co-generation

Co-generation is when a community recovers the waste heat from a diesel generator to heat a building or hot water. The community gets both heat and electricity from the generator.

Energy efficient

Energy efficient means to use less energy and still do the same amount of work. An energy efficient building uses less fuel than an energy inefficient building, to heat it to the same temperature.

Energy efficient wood stove - EPA approved

EPA approved means a wood stove meets the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) emissions regulations. An energy efficient wood stove uses less wood than an inefficient stove to produce the same heat.

Engineer

In this context engineers are professional women and men that help design the basic structure and different systems for new buildings. In the NWT only registered members of the Association of Professional Engineers, Geologists, and Geophysicists of the NWT and Nunavut (NAPEGG) can do engineering work. Their Code of Ethics says engineers are responsible to serve and protect the public interest.

Fossil fuels

Fossil fuels include oil, coal, propane, natural gas, and other fuels made from hydrocarbons.

Good building practice for northern facilities (GBP)

The GBP gives architects, engineers, building contractors, and facility administrators and operators a set of northern guidelines for public buildings in the NWT. The Department of Public Works, Government of the NWT produced the GBP. Buildings that follow the GBP usually meet the MNECB+25 energy efficiency standard.

All buildings must also meet mandatory codes or regulations such as the National Building Code of Canada.

Integrated design process

The integrated design process happens when architects, engineers, and other people work closely together when they design and construct new buildings. They wisely integrate the mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and heating systems with the building design to maximize energy efficiency.

LEED® Standard

LEED® is a recognized standard for large, new buildings. The LEED® standard applies five principles:

- Sustainable site.
- Water efficiency.
- Energy and atmosphere.
- Materials and resources.
- Interior environmental quality.

LEED® certified buildings use at least 25% less energy than a Model National Energy Code for Buildings (MNECB) reference building.

Model National Energy Code for Buildings

The Model National Energy Code of Canada for Buildings (MNECB) identifies minimum energy efficiency standards for buildings. It takes into account regional issues such as construction costs, heating fuel types and costs, and climatic differences. Various sections of the code have information about major energy savings related to:

- Building envelope.
- Water heating.
- Lighting.
- HVAC systems – heating, ventilation, air conditioning.
- Electrical power.

Model National Energy Code for Buildings + 25%

MNECB + 25 identifies energy efficiency standards for buildings that use 25% less energy than an MNECB reference building.

National Building Code standards

All new homes and other buildings in Canada must meet National Building Code standards. The National Building Code does not include any standards related to energy efficiency or renewable energy.

Passive solar

Passive solar means that a building uses heat and light from the sun without any technology. Buildings face south so they are exposed to the best sunlight. South-facing windows let the heat of the sun warm the building. Increased sunlight also provides more natural lighting.

Plans and specifications

Plans and specifications are the written descriptions that go with the drawings for a house or other building. Plans usually include different drawings that show floor plans, elevations, sections, and details.

RETScreen

RETScreen is a software program that can analyse which renewable energy technology is best for a home or other building. RETScreen can compare the cost to buy and operate a renewable energy system with that of a fossil fuel based system. RETScreen calculates how many tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions the renewable energy system can save.

The Arctic Energy Alliance offers training sessions for anyone interested in learning how to use RETScreen.

www.retscreen.net

Renewable energy

Renewable energy comes from things that last forever. Some examples of renewable energy sources include the sun, wind, rivers, and wood.

Renewable energy technology

Renewable energy technology is anything that uses renewable energy to do work. Some examples include wood stoves or wood pellet boilers, wind turbines, solar electric or hot water panels, and hydroelectric systems.

Revolving loan funds

Revolving loan funds start with a grant. A person or business borrows money to invest in projects that save money. They pay back the loan from the savings.

People set up the fund so that it grows over time and supports more projects. Some community governments set up a similar system to always invest savings in their own buildings and operations.

Water saving devices

A water saving device uses about half the water that a non-water saving device uses. Energy efficiency includes water saving devices because it takes energy to build and operate water and sewer infrastructure – especially if the community uses trucked water and sewer.

3. Basic information about standards

What are energy efficiency and renewable energy standards?

Standards are criteria that set out specific ways to clearly define and measure something. Energy efficiency standards clearly define what it means to build energy efficient houses or other buildings.

Renewable energy standards clearly define what it means to build a home or other building that uses renewable energy.

It is important to have clear and specific definitions or standards. It is not enough to say “we want to build an energy efficient building” or “we want to build houses that use renewable energy”. Standards give clear direction to the people that design and build a home or other building. Standards give you something to measure, to make sure new homes and other buildings use less energy.

Each community decides what is a good standard and how to use it. And you don't have to start from scratch. Standards already exist that you can combine and use in a way that is right for your community.

Why do we need standards?

Energy efficiency and renewable energy standards are one of many tools you can use to help save energy in your community.

Standards help make sure that new houses and other buildings are energy efficient and use renewable energy as much as possible. This means that people use less fossil fuel. Benefits include:

- Lower costs for heating and electricity.
- Less greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollution.
- Less risk of fuel spills.
- More comfortable homes and other buildings.

Energy efficient buildings and those that use renewable energy may also be cheaper to build. When building designers, architects, and engineers use an integrated process they work together to design a building that will be cheaper to build, more energy efficient, and that may use renewable energy.

4. Energy efficiency standards for buildings

This section has information about existing Canadian energy efficiency standards for buildings. Energy efficiency standards define the minimum level of energy efficiency required so that the savings pay for any extra investment in a reasonable length of time.

EnerGuide for New Houses (EGNH-80)



The EnerGuide for New Houses (EGNH) offers expert advice and standards to help design and build an energy efficient house. The EGNH system rates energy use. An excellent rating for a new house is 80 or higher.

Type of House	EGNH Rating
Older house not upgraded.	0 to 50
Upgraded old house.	51 to 65
Energy-efficient upgraded old house or usual new house.	66 to 74

Type of House	EGNH Rating
Energy efficient new house.	75 to 79
Highly energy efficient new house.	80 to 90
'Advanced house' - uses little or no energy that people have to buy from someone else.	91 to 100

A certified EGNH advisor uses a computer program called HOT2000 to evaluate the plans for a new home, to see if it reaches the EGNH-80 standard. The advisor can recommend changes to the plans so the house meets the standards. Changes may include things such as:

- ✓ Add more insulation to walls, ceiling, and floor.
- ✓ Use fewer windows or better windows with higher insulation value.
- ✓ Use more energy efficient heating appliances.

For more information about EGNH-80:

<http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/residential/energuguide-new-houses.cfm?attr=0>

Model National Energy Code (MNECB) and MNECB+25

The MNECB is a good standard for small buildings – buildings with a footprint less than 600 m². The building footprint is the area of the first floor or the amount of space the first floor covers in square meters.

Natural Resources Canada (NRCAN) developed the MNECB as an energy efficiency standard for commercial and institutional

buildings - not homes. The MNECB standard outlines recommended insulation values, lighting levels, ventilation rates, and other things that make an energy efficient building.

The MNECB+25 standard outlines similar factors so that buildings use 25% less energy than an MNECB reference building.

NRCan offers a screening tool online that people can use to see if a building meets the standard. The Arctic Energy Alliance can help you use this tool.

For more information about the screening tool:

<http://screen.nrcan.gc.ca>

LEED® Canada

LEED® is short for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. It is the best standard for new construction and major renovations for large buildings – buildings with a footprint more than 600 m². The building footprint is the area of the first floor or the amount of space the first floor covers in square meters.

The Canada Green Building Council certifies the LEED® standard. The standard has four levels:

- Certified.
- Silver.
- Gold.
- Platinum.

A LEED® certified building must be at least 25% more efficient than the MNECB standard. Silver, gold, and platinum buildings are more efficient than certified buildings. The Greenstone Building in Yellowknife uses 65% less energy than the MNECB standard.



The Canada Green Building Council rates each building project. They organize prerequisites and credits into five categories:

- Sustainable site.
- Water efficiency.
- Energy and atmosphere.
- Materials and resources.
- Indoor environmental quality.

The Council independently reviews the building plans and other documents from the design and constructions team. They rate and certify each project based on a total point score.

For more information about LEED®: <http://www.cagbc.org>

5. Standards for appliances and equipment

This section has information about existing Canadian energy efficiency standards for appliances and equipment.

Energy Star®

Consumers can use the Energy Star® symbol to find energy efficient products. Depending on the product an Energy Star® model will be 10% to 50% more efficient than another model. Products must meet Energy Star® standards before manufacturers and retailers can use the label on their products.



For more information about Energy Star®:

<http://www.oeenrncan.gc.ca/energystar>

Domestic hot water

Many northern communities produce electricity with a diesel generator. In those communities electric water heaters are only 30% to 35% efficient because the generator is that efficient. Oil-fired water heaters can be more than 70% efficient.



In communities with diesel generators oil-fired water heaters can:

- Greatly reduce the amount of diesel people use.
- Reduce the community's greenhouse gas emissions.
- Save everyone money, year after year.

Communities with hydroelectric power can use either electric or oil-fired water heaters. All communities can consider solar powered hot water.

Water-saving devices

Water-saving devices are called that because they use about half the water of regular products. Some examples of water-saving devices include:

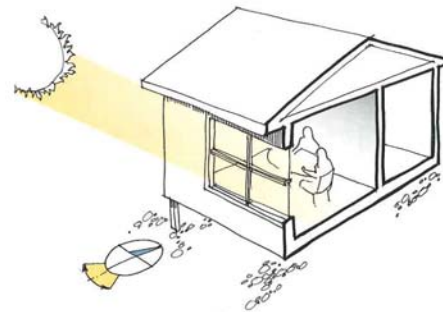
- Water-saving toilets - use 6 litres or less per flush.
- Low-flow showerheads - use 9.8 litres or less per minute.
- Low-flow bathroom and kitchen faucets - use 8.3 litres or less per minute.

Passive solar design

Passive solar means a house or building uses heat or light from the sun without technology. Passive solar design means that homes or other buildings face south and most of the windows face south, east, and west. South-facing windows let the sun's light and heat enter the building.

A floor plan based on passive solar design includes features such as:

- Bedrooms face east. The sun's heat and light enter the rooms in the morning when people get up.
- Living and dining areas face west. This may reduce the amount of artificial light you need in the evening when people are home.

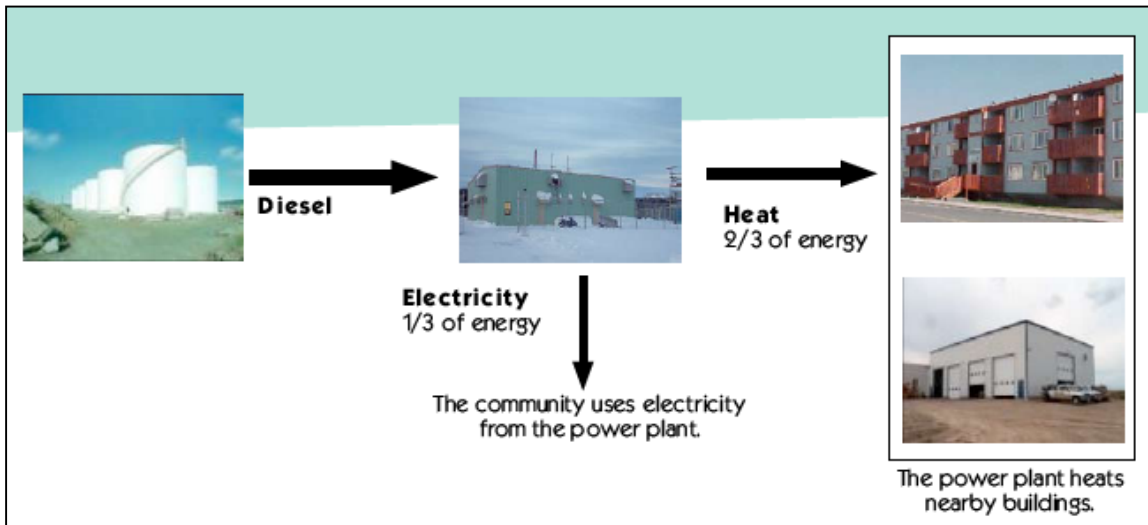


Co-generation

Many NWT communities get electricity from a diesel generator. Co-generation happens when a community also recovers heat from the generator and uses it to heat a nearby building.

About 30% to 35% of the energy that a diesel generator produces is electricity. The rest is heat energy and it often gets wasted.

Communities can recover the waste heat and use it to heat nearby homes or other buildings, or to produce hot water. Sometimes a single building has its own generator and you can use co-generation to recover the heat for heating or hot water.



Diesel generators are most efficient when they work at or near their rated load. The Arctic Energy Alliance recommends that communities look at using co-generation when a building or group of buildings has a base electricity load of 10 kW or more.

6. Renewable energy standards

Canada has no national standards for using renewable energy in houses and other buildings. Renewable energy sources include things such as the sun, wind, rivers and other moving water, and wood. Technology that uses renewable energy sources includes solar panels for electricity and hot water, wind turbines, a hydroelectric system, and wood and pellet stoves.

Renewable energy building standards

Many governments and organizations have 'green power' or 'green heat' standards. These standards say that a certain percent of electricity or heat that a building uses must come from renewable energy sources.

Toronto has a 'Green building standard'. Five percent to 10% of a building's energy should come from renewable energy.¹

NWT communities may decide to define their own renewable energy standard. Depending on location each community has its own potential supply of renewable energy sources.



RETScreen

RETScreen is a free software program from Natural Resources Canada (NRCan). You use RETScreen to figure out what renewable energy technology is best for your home or other building. RETScreen compares the cost to buy and operate a renewable energy system with the cost to buy and operate a fossil fuel based system. It

¹ <http://www.toronto.ca/environment/greendevlopment.htm>

also calculates how many tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions the renewable energy system saves.

A building designer can do a RETScreen analysis and implement economically feasible technologies to achieve a standard.

For more information about RETScreen: www.restscreen.net

Wood and pellets

Wood is a renewable energy source that many NWT residents already use for heat. The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) certifies efficient wood stoves that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other pollution from smoke particles. Any new home or other building with a wood stove should have an 'EPA approved' stove.

Wood is a renewable energy source only when and if we manage the forest in a sustainable way – planting as many trees as we cut, cutting trees at the same rate as they grow.




For more information about EPA approved stoves:

<http://www.epa.gov/woodstoves/efficiently.html>

Wood pellets are another renewable energy source of heat. Pellets are made from wood waste and can be used in homes – in a stove, furnace, or boiler; or larger buildings – in a large-scale boiler.



7. Summary of standards

Summary of standards for different types of new buildings		
<p>Large buildings – footprint more than 600 m²</p> <p>✓ LEED® standard.</p>	<p>Small buildings – footprint less than 600 m², not a house</p> <p>✓ MNECB+25% standard.</p>	<p>Houses</p> <p>✓ EGNH-80 standard</p>
 <p>Stores, hotels, office buildings, restaurants, schools, warehouses, health care facilities, maintenance shops, churches, large apartment buildings.</p>	 <p>Stores, offices, repair shops, garages, mid-sized apartment buildings.</p>	 <p>Homes, small apartment buildings, triplexes, bed and breakfast places.</p>
ALL new houses and other buildings		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Energy Star appliances and equipment. ✓ Oil-fired water heaters in communities with a diesel generator. ✓ Low-flow water saving devices. ✓ South facing to maximize passive solar gain. ✓ Co-generation. ✓ 'x'% of building's energy comes from renewable sources. 		

Enforcing standards

When you decide to use energy efficiency or renewable energy standards someone has to make sure that houses and other buildings meet the standards. This should happen at least at two basic stages:

- Building design stage.
- Construction completed stage.

Building design stage

The design stage is the best time to make sure that a new building will be energy efficient or use renewable energy according to standards. Architects, engineers, certified energy advisors, or other qualified staff people can review the plans and specifications. If something needs to change this can happen before it's too late. Use independent professionals to review the plans – different people than the professionals that made the plans and specifications in the first place.

Construction completed stage

You need to inspect newly constructed buildings to make sure they follow the design and meet the standards. The GNWT has inspectors that look at fire safety, electrical systems, and mechanical systems. You may need to hire other inspectors to confirm that the building meets energy efficiency or renewable energy standards.

8. Sample energy efficiency and renewable energy standards

Here is a sample northern energy efficiency and renewable energy standard.

These standards apply to all new houses and other buildings:

- a) Design and construct new buildings according to the 'Good Building Practice for Northern Facilities' (GBP).
- b) Use an integrated design process to ensure that people bring together the mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and heating systems with the building design, to maximize energy efficiency.
- c) Design and construct new buildings to meet the following energy standards:
 - i) Homes must have an 80 rating with the EnerGuide for New Houses (EGNH) evaluation process.
 - ii) Large buildings with a footprint more than 600 m² must meet LEED® Certified, Silver, Gold, or Platinum standards.
 - iii) Small buildings with a footprint less than 600 m² must meet the MNECB+25% standard, confirmed with the NRCan Building Screening tool.
- d) Use only Energy Star® rated appliances and equipment.
- e) Use only oil-fired water heaters if the community's electricity supply comes from a diesel generator.
- f) Use only low-flow water-saving devices for all plumbing fixtures including toilets, showerheads, and faucets.

- g) Design and orient new buildings to take maximum advantage of passive solar heat and light.
- h) Consider co-generation if the base electrical load of the building or group of buildings and homes is 10 kW or more.
- i) Meet 25%² of the total heating and electrical energy needs from a renewable energy source, or from waste heat from electricity generation. Use a RETScreen analysis to show that the building meets the standard. Potential energy sources include, but are not limited to the following:
 - ✓ Renewable source of electricity such as wind, solar, or hydro.
 - ✓ Co-generation.
 - ✓ Passive solar heat.
 - ✓ Solar wall for air heating.
 - ✓ Solar water heating.
 - ✓ Certified wood pellet boiler, furnace, or stove.
 - ✓ EPA approved efficient wood stove.

² Recommended value. Your community's renewable energy standard can be more or less than 25%

9. How can your community use energy efficiency and renewable energy standards?

A community government can use energy efficiency and renewable energy standards in many ways. It is up to the council and other community leaders to decide what standards to use and how to use them.

Public education

You can promote energy efficiency and renewable energy standards and increase awareness in many different ways:

- ✓ Advertise benefits and give people information about what they can do.
- ✓ Hold a public meeting to share information and answer questions.
- ✓ Do a public demonstration to show what the standards are and how they work.
- ✓ Help people learn about grants or loans they can use to increase energy efficiency or use renewable energy.
- ✓ Prepare a Community Energy Plan.

Incentives

Communities can offer incentives to people who build houses or other buildings that meet energy efficiency or renewable energy standards. Incentives include things such as:

- ✓ Reduce taxes.
- ✓ Reduce fees for things such as sewage or water.
- ✓ Give awards or prizes.

- ✓ Offer grants to help people buy energy efficient appliances.

Larger communities may set up a revolving loan fund to help people cover the initial costs to buy the technology to increase energy efficiency or to use renewable energy. People pay back the loan from their energy savings.

Lead by example

One of the best ways a community government can support energy efficiency and renewable energy standards is to lead by example. When you build a new community building make sure it meets the standards. And make sure that people know what standards it meets, and how and why.

Community bylaw

NWT communities can create their own building standards bylaw for new houses and other buildings. New houses and other buildings must also follow national and territorial standards that apply.

A bylaw outlines things such as:

- What are the standards?
- What do the standards apply to?
- When and how do the standards apply?
- Who is responsible to meet the standards?
- Who is responsible to enforce the standards?
- What happens if new houses and other building don't meet the standards?

Council members may find it helpful to have lots of public discussion about a bylaw before they define and adopt it.

Community members are more likely to participate and support the bylaw if they help to define the standards and understand how they work.

Ownership and other factors that affect community standards

Different people are responsible for different buildings in your community. Various factors affect this such as:

- What type of building is it?
- Who is the owner?
- Who designed it?
- Who built it?

Houses

Community governments can set standards for new homes in the community. For example a community standard might say:

- All new homes must meet the EGNH-80 standard.
- All people who build new homes must submit their plans before they begin construction and have the Arctic Energy Alliance (AEA) or other approved professional confirm that the plans meet the EGNH-80 standard.

The Arctic Energy Alliance (AEA) or another specialist reviews the house plans to make sure that they meet the standards. They recommend changes if the plans fall short of the EGNH-80 standard. An EGNH-80 evaluation costs about \$400 per house with the AEA.

Public buildings such as schools and health centres

In many communities the Government of the NWT (GNWT) builds and owns many public buildings such as schools and health centres.

Right now the GNWT has no renewable energy standards for buildings. They follow some good practices to make sure that these public buildings meet energy efficiency standards:

- Since 2007 new buildings must meet the MNECB+25 standard.
- Architects and engineers must follow Good Building Practices for Northern Facilities when they design buildings.
- GNWT staff people make sure buildings get inspected during construction.
- GNWT pays contractors in full only after the architect confirms that the building was completed as planned.

Community buildings

Local community governments usually own buildings such as the fire hall, arena, garage, and an office building. Community governments can use standards to make sure their new buildings meet energy efficiency and renewable energy standards.

For example a community standard might say:

- New buildings must meet LEED® certification criteria. The community government must include the details of the standard in the request for proposals to design and build the building.
- All building designers and contractors must show how they plan to meet the standard in their proposal.
- The community government must include the standards in the contract and identify what penalties they plan to impose if the contractors don't meet the standards.

- The community government reviews the project at two stages at least, to enforce the standards: design stage and construction completed stage. They hire independent professionals to make sure the plans and the completed building meet the standards.

Large commercial buildings or large multi-family housing

People that want to build a large building must hire architects and engineers to design it. Large buildings have a footprint more than 600 m². Examples include hotels, office buildings, stores, and multi-family housing.

Community governments can use standards to make sure large buildings meet energy efficiency and renewable energy standards. For example a community standard might say:

- The building owner must have an architect confirm that the building meets the LEED® standard.

OR

- The building owner must have the Canadian Green Building Council certify the building to the LEED® standard.

In many cases the architect or builder must hire a LEED® Accredited Professional (AP) to guide them through the process. The AP can help prepare the documents that the Canadian Green Building Council needs to certify the building.

It costs less than 1% of the total construction cost to hire a LEED® AP consultant. The building owner or contractor may pay extra for travel depending on how many times the AP consultant has to visit the building site. The Canadian Green Building Council charges

about \$6,000 for registration and certification fees. Energy savings can quickly pay back this investment.

Small buildings

People that want to build a small commercial building don't necessarily have to hire architects or engineers to design their building. Small buildings have a footprint less than 600 m². Examples include a store, office, repair shop, garage, or mid sized apartment building.

Community governments can use standards to make sure small commercial buildings meet energy efficiency and renewable energy standards. For example a community standard might say:

- The designer must confirm with the Arctic Energy Alliance (AEA) or other approved and independent professional that the building meets the MNECB+25 standard for small buildings.

The owner or contractor pays about \$3,000 per building for the AEA to verify the building design.

10. Community planning process for energy efficiency and renewable energy standards

Use a community planning process to help decide what you want to do and how you want to do it. For example:

- 1) **Develop a goal and objectives.** The goal is your long-term vision – what do you want to achieve? Objectives are the steps you take to reach your goal. You might have one objective or many.
- 2) **Know the environment.** How does your community feel about energy efficiency and renewable energy standards? What do people already know about saving energy? What resources do you have and what resources do you need – people, money, and other things?
- 3) **Identify the target group.** What do you want to focus on – energy efficiency or renewable energy or both? Large or small buildings, commercial buildings or homes, community-owned buildings or buildings owned by other people, or all buildings?
- 4) **Develop a work plan.** Work plan activities describe what you must do, who is responsible, and how to do it - to complete your objectives. A schedule defines when.
- 5) **Develop a budget.** Do you need funding to complete your objective? If yes, how much and where does the money come from? Can you do things with in-kind support instead of money?

- 6) **Take action and evaluate your plan.** People take action and things start to happen. You may have volunteers, staff, and/or consultants working on things.

Evaluate along the way. What works well and what doesn't? What needs to happen more or less? What needs to change? What can stay the same? Did you stay on schedule – why or why not?

11. Resources

Find the resources you need to help you reach your objectives in the toolkit appendices and from the Arctic Energy Alliance (AEA). See some examples in the list below.

Sample objective	Resources
Do public education.	<p>Brochures, posters, and other public education materials about saving energy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Energy efficiency. ✓ Renewable energy. ✓ Grants. <p>Contact AEA or go to their website.</p>

Sample objective	Resources
Influence other governments and agencies.	Policy / Resolution Template. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sample resolution that all new NWT Housing Corp houses and GNWT buildings meet energy efficiency and renewable energy standards.
Manage construction projects.	Request for Proposals (RFP) Template. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sample RFP for contractors to design and build new houses and other buildings that meet energy efficiency and renewable energy standards.
Develop a bylaw.	Bylaw Template. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sample bylaw that says houses and other buildings must meet energy efficiency and renewable energy standards.