

Energy efficiency performance decreased or stalled in 2020, due to both policy choices and the pandemic. Overall provincial program energy savings fell by 38% in 2020 from 2017, and only British Columbia is committed to a net zero energy building code.

The following federal policy changes can enable and accelerate provincial energy efficiency:

1. TAKE LEADERSHIP TO STOP THE STALLING OF BUILDING CODES

The Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change calls for all provinces to adopt a “net-zero energy ready” building code by 2030. However, the 2020 versions of the model national codes are yet to be released at the end of 2021 and the volunteer committee responsible for developing a model retrofit code by 2022 plans to delay it until 2030.

To put building code development back on track, the federal government must take leadership by defining building standards required to meet net-zero emissions, combined with a funded strategy to accelerate provincial and municipal code adoption.

2. TRANSFORM BUILDING RETROFITS

Provincial and utility energy efficiency portfolios need to go after deeper savings, as “low hanging fruit” opportunities in areas such as lighting diminish. The federal government should take a mission-oriented approach to making the retrofit process lower cost, faster, and better by creating market development teams focused creating economies of scale and new business models.

3. EXPAND SCALE AND SCOPE OF LOW-INCOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Current levels of provincial investment in low-income programs are far below what is required to retrofit the 20% of households that find themselves in energy poverty. Recent federal government programs are inaccessible to low-income Canadians, who are most vulnerable to energy price increases and unhealthy homes.

The federal government can define national priorities to reduce energy poverty and emissions, and leverage existing provincial programs to meet these objectives through deeper retrofits and switching to zero-carbon fuel sources.

4. PROMOTE ENERGY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN INDUSTRY

Most provinces have comprehensive industrial efficiency programs, but do not require certification under recognized standards such as ISO-50001. The existing federal initiative to support ISO-50001 certification should be significantly expanded to enable partnerships with provincial programs.

READ THE FULL REPORT: www.scorecard.energycanada.org