

# 1000 HOME CHALLENGE ANNOUNCES MAINE INITIATIVE

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The Thousand Home Challenge is excited to announce that a new initiative has been launched in Maine. We look forward to highlighting Maine champions who are committed to demonstrating that deep reductions in energy use and carbon emissions in existing homes are practical now.

## **Why Maine?**

Maine is an intriguing place for this initiative to take hold: deep energy reductions among Maine's existing housing stock offer particular benefits given the cold winters, old homes, expensive (oil/propane) and polluting (wood) heating fuels, as well as health and indoor air quality issues associated with wet basements and radon.

We have the opportunity to build on Maine's leadership and dedication in implementing strategies for deep energy reductions, from upgrading homes and reducing energy use, to incorporating renewables. We will demonstrate successes and lessons learned by sharing the stories of local champions. This can be a catalyst for deeper energy investments in Maine as well as inspiring action elsewhere.

## **What is the 1000 Home Challenge? What do we hope to accomplish?**

The 1000 Home Challenge promotes deep energy reductions in North American homes by setting an ambitious but achievable goal for reducing existing home energy use (beyond 70%), helping participants to reach their specific goal, and recognizing projects that achieve 1000 Home Challenge benchmarks.

Most importantly, the 1000 Home Challenge builds the foundation of experience that is needed to accelerate deep energy reductions in a region. Collectively, 1000 Home Challenge projects serve as a catalyst to inspire and accelerate innovation, knowledge, and experience, in part through cataloging case studies and building a network of clean energy experts and resources.

A new addition to the 1000 Home Challenge is to include recognition for participants who have demonstrated impressive energy performance/reductions but have not met the 1000 Home Challenge. This new category will represent meeting/exceeding the halfway mark to their threshold allowance. Much can be learned from these exceptional projects.

It is through the integration of home improvements, investments in healthier homes, reductions of energy use, and increased adaptability and resilience that we help homeowners clarify their value proposition. Each project reflects each homeowner's unique opportunities and values.

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## **What kind of projects are we seeking?**

Participation in the 1000 Home Challenge is initiated by a homeowner or contractor/remodeler, or designer working with a motivated homeowner or tenant. Occupants can be anonymous – re name or address, but transparency in terms of energy use, actions taken, and lessons learned are essential.

The focus is on existing homes from three to three hundred years old. Projects can participate at any phase of development – early planning, in progress, or completed.

Projects vary widely – some are gut remodels, others involve tweaking a home that already has an impressively good energy performance. Some projects represent significant investments of money; others are by do-it-yourselfers with more ingenuity than cash.

Understanding that not all households can reduce their energy use to 1000 Home Challenge levels at once, a key aspect of the initiative is to support staged projects that develop pathways to deep energy reductions by identifying improvements that can be taken over time without creating barriers or lost opportunities for further reductions.

## **How much does it cost to participate? What can I gain from participation?**

There is no fee for participating in the 1000 Home Challenge. The 1000 Home Challenge does not provide funding for retrofit activities or renewable energy installations. Instead, it provides teams with the framework to develop a plan to improve their success at meeting their energy reduction goals. Obtaining third-party verification of exceptional energy performance is an asset for many projects. Contractors, designers, and homeowners value recognition and want their actions to lead to greater impact.

## **What are the proposed outcomes of the Maine 1000 Home Challenge initiative this year?**

1. *Identify one hundred* completed and/or in-progress deep energy reduction projects in Maine. The project lead will be either the homeowner, or the professional directly involved in the project. Each project will compare their performance with 1000 Home Challenge benchmarks.
2. Convey the variety of ways Maine homeowners have achieved significant reductions in energy use in existing homes through *twenty case studies*. Their stories will include their levels of success, lessons learned, and additional steps (if any) needed to meet the 1000 Home Challenge.

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3. ***Engage twenty projects*** in the process of participating in the 1000 Home Challenge. These are not necessarily the same projects as those sharing case studies. Project-specific support for the planning process will help track progress as projects move toward 1000 Home Challenge goals.
4. ***Contribute to a technical foundation*** with the compilation of information resources targeted to existing Maine housing stock, including archived webinars, access to resources documents, links to research reports, and 1000 Home Challenge case studies.
5. Where possible, we will collaborate with project leads to ***monitor and document energy and IAQ-related interactions***, such as changes in radon, basement humidity, and air quality.

### **How will we accomplish these outcomes?**

A network of partners (including initiatives, energy consultants, remodelers, designers, and contractors) are providing feedback and helping to engage participants. Meetings, events, and webinars will provide opportunities to support, promote, and publicize 1000 Home Challenge projects. The 1000 Home Challenge website and a Maine 1000 Home Challenge Facebook page will chart progress and provide access to resources and case studies.

### **How to Join**

If you have leads on a homeowner, energy professional, or contractor who may be interested in participating in the 1000 Home Challenge, please contact Linda Wigington, [lwigington1@outlook.com](mailto:lwigington1@outlook.com), 724-852-3085.