For more than 100 years, Extension has been helping rural and urban residents and businesses manage everything from fields to finances. As the local presence of the outreach arm of Colorado’s land-grant university, Extension agents, equipped with research-based expertise, tailor their educational efforts and activities to the needs of communities. Their educational outreach includes workshops, webinars, one-on-one consultations, and more.

Together with CSU’s Rural Energy Center (REC), Extension now helps residents, businesses, agricultural producers, and local governments from across the state make more informed energy decisions. This Program Guide highlights some of the energy resources we offer in the forms of:

- Group Educational Events
- Assessments
- Research
- Kits
- Individual Consultations and Electronic Resources
Energy Education and Outreach

- 1,800 participants in workshops, classes, and other group educational events
- 80,000 hits to our energy webpages
- 3,500 contacts made through newsletters and other indirect educational methods
- 200 individual consultations

Over 95% of participants evaluated in our energy programs have an increased understanding of energy options and energy issues.

Colorado State University Extension
Group Educational Events

Interested in bringing an energy expert to your organizational event or public workshop? Every year, Extension and the REC offer a variety of in-person workshops, online webinars, demonstrations, school visits, and other group events on energy. We specialize in clean energy and rural energy issues, and we can tailor events to address hot button issues and the needs of our audiences.

In-Depth: Colorado Energy Master Program

Our most structured and formal group platform, the Colorado Energy Master program has offered a mix of live webinars, in-person field trips, and group activities to provide well-rounded energy training to more than 150 Coloradans. The program has been used to educate Coloradans about both big picture and day-to-day energy opportunities and challenges. Those who have chosen to become certified Colorado Energy Masters have given back to their communities in many ways.

- Teaching 4-H and other youth about energy;
- Translating energy bill information into Spanish for use in Latino communities;
- Hosting energy block parties;
- Analyzing community solar garden feasibility.

• Conducting home energy assessments;
Assessments

Should you invest in energy efficient lighting? Is solar power right for your home, business, or public facility? One of our core goals is to give Coloradans the information they need to make their own informed decisions related to energy. We have created numerous financial calculators and decision tools that are free and publicly available. We have also conducted detailed energy assessments for agricultural producers and entire communities.

In-depth: Community Energy Assessments

Like a home energy audit for an entire town, our community energy assessments identify cost-effective opportunities for energy efficiency and renewable energy in communities under 10,000 people. We look for opportunities that can benefit the agricultural, commercial, public, and residential sectors of those communities.

In Buena Vista, for example, we identified an electric vehicle (EV) charging station as one of four “high priority” energy opportunities based on data about the number of EVs in surrounding counties, the number of charging stations in surrounding counties, median household income, grant eligibility, and other indicators. With technical assistance from the REC, the Town then successfully applied for a grant to install two multi-port stations at its River Park.
In-depth: Solar and Wind Assessments for Pivots

Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the REC is researching the economic feasibility of solar and wind energy systems on farms with center pivot sprinklers. The Solar and Wind Assessment for Pivots (SWAP) project uses utility bill data, survey questionnaires, and individual interviews to collect information. This data drives cost-benefit analyses for agricultural producers that help them decide whether making an investment in a grid-tied renewable energy system is worthwhile.

Taken as a whole, the results of these analyses present lessons about the current feasibility of renewable energy in Colorado agriculture and provide insight into the policies needed to drive adoption of these technologies.
Kits

Don’t have the resources to purchase materials such as power monitors, ballast checkers, light meters, mini-solar panels, wind turbines, or other useful and educational materials? Extension offices in various parts of Colorado offer free energy kits you can check out. Teachers, informal educators, and members of the public find they useful to assess the energy efficiency of a home or school, or as teaching tools for an entire classroom unit tied to state academic standards.

In-depth: School Energy Activity Loan Program

Our School Energy Activity Loan (SEAL) program makes large energy kits available to teachers across Colorado. Kit materials are valued at over $400 and provide enough for small groups or classes to sample different applications. The materials are connected with Extension’s ‘Clean Energy Curriculum for Colorado Middle and High Schools’, for which instructional videos, PowerPoints, and lesson plans are provided. Extension staff may also be available to guide users through the materials and related lessons.

“We are looking at saving more than $40,000 this semester and it was these (CSU Extension) tools that helped our students to understand energy and ways to reduce use! Thank you to CSU Extension Office for helping provide these meters. It was invaluable to our students’ learning!”

– Julie North, Natural and Renewable Resources Coordinator, Aurora Public Schools
Individual Consultations and Electronic Resources

In addition to our group events, assessments, research, and kits, Extension and the REC serve the public in other ways. We offer individual phone and email consultations about energy efficiency and renewable energy for the home, farm, or business. We also offer a tremendous amount of informational resources online in the form of fact sheets (20+), financial calculators, decision tools, videos, and more.

Score 60: In good shape but you can still squeeze out some energy savings.

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Back To Questions
Online Resources

Sample Fact Sheets

• Agricultural Energy Audits
• Air Sealing Colorado Homes
• Anaerobic Digestion of Animal Wastes in Colorado
• Easy and Inexpensive Home Energy Ideas
• Electric Vehicles in Colorado
• Harvesting Energy from the Sun: Solar Photovoltaics
• Wind Energy for Colorado Homeowners, Farmers and Small Businesses

Other Resources

• Energy bill analysis
• DIY Home Energy Audit
• DIY Solar Assessment
• Clean Energy Curriculum for Colorado Middle and High Schools
• Recorded webinars
• Saving Energy in My Home: coloring and activity book
• Various multimedia
Connect With Us!

Extension energy website:  
extension.colostate.edu/topicareas/energy

Rural Energy Center website:  
rec.colostate.edu

Find us on Facebook

Join our email listserv, receive our newsletter,  
ask a question, request a program:  
Cary.Weiner@colostate.edu  
(970) 491-3784

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