



PE4 Action: Wood Pellet Installation

6 Points

11 Points

14 Points

16 Points

17 Points

A. Why is this action important?

For communities that do not have access to the natural gas grid, many buildings use fossil heating fuels, such as oil or propane, for space heating. These fuels are often expensive, unstable in pricing, and produce high levels of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Biomass fuels can be a viable alternative that are local and renewable. Biomass is any biological material that can be used as fuel—including grass, corn, wood, and biogas as well as other forestry and agricultural residues. Wood pellets are a common type of biomass and are currently the only form of biomass recommended by NYSERDA for commercial and non-residential systems.

B. How to implement this action

The first step in this process is to contact [NYSERDA's Renewable Heat NY](#) program to learn about any incentives or guidance the state has around wood pellet heating systems. This is an evolving technology and NYSERDA is conducting ongoing research.

A feasibility study is recommended to determine if a wood pellet heating installation is appropriate as an energy source for the local government's operations. This feasibility study should consider possible locations, available materials, proximity to the wood pellet source, costs, permitting and other restrictions, and other related factors to implementing the system. Local governments are advised to consult their municipal attorneys to ensure that all issues related to this use on public lands, including effects on resources held in the public trust are resolved. Such assessments may be part of implementing [PE4 Action: Renewable Energy Feasibility Studies](#).

If the study concludes that a wood pellet installation is feasible, the local government should select a suitable site for the installation along with a contractor to develop and implement the system.

PLEASE NOTE: Bulk wood pellets in storage may release dangerous levels of carbon monoxide. Outdoor storage is strongly advised. Under the Renewable Heat NY program, NYSERDA requires all bulk pellet storage to be located outside of the building, due to concerns regarding carbon monoxide exposure and the absence of a documented effective ventilation strategy for pellet storage. For more information from the New York State Department of Health, please see [Carbon Monoxide Hazards from Wood Pellet Storage](#).

Points for Climate Smart Communities (CSC) action are awarded for installing solar technology at new or existing facilities owned by the local government. As long as the system is currently in use, the installation may have been completed at any time to be eligible for points.

To be eligible for CSC points, for each installation, local governments must display signage describing the installation and must announce the installation(s) to help build awareness in the community of the benefits of wood pellet technology. The signage can be a simple, low-cost poster that describes the technology and informs visitors that the facility utilizes that technology. At minimum, a press release announcing the installation must be issued as part of the effort to educate the community about the local government's investment in renewable energy.

C. Time frame, project costs, and resource needs

Installing a wood pellet system involves securing a source for the wood pellets and installing the system, which can take around two to three months. The costs depend on the price of the wood pellets at the time, and the price of the traditional

fuel source that would otherwise be used, such as heating oil or natural gas. In many cases, wood pellets can offer a significant saving over fossil heating fuels.

D. Which local governments implement this action? Which departments within the local government are most likely to have responsibility for this?

This action is applicable to any local government that owns and operates property where a wood pellet installation is feasible. Environmental departments, or departments of facilities or public works would likely implement this action.

E. How to obtain points for this action

Points for this action are tiered based on the number of wood pellet installations at facilities owned by the local government and implemented in a manner consistent with the requirements described above.

	POSSIBLE POINTS
Install a wood pellet heating system at 1 new or existing public facility or public property	6
Install wood pellet heating systems at 2 new or existing public facilities or public properties	11
Install wood pellet heating systems at 3 new or existing public facilities or public properties	14
Install wood pellet heating systems at 4 new or existing public facilities or public properties	16
Install wood pellet heating systems at 5 new or existing public facilities or public properties	17

F. What to submit

Submit a brief description of the wood pellet installation(s), including location, installation date, size, specification or purchase documents, and, if available, estimates of energy savings. Provide evidence that a qualified installer was employed. Show that the installation is actively in use at the time of application.

For each installation, submit one photograph of posted educational signage and a description of activities announcing the installation for public education.

All CSC action documentation is available for public viewing after an action is approved. Action submittals should not include any information or documents that are not intended to be viewed by the public.

G. Links to additional resources or best practices

- [NYSERDA Renewable Heat NY](#) : This webpage describes the available incentives, as well as information on qualified installers/contractors.
- [Massachusetts Division of Energy Resources, Wood Pellet Heating Guidebook](#)
- [Biomass Energy Resource Center Case Studies](#)
- [US EPA Combined Heat and Power](#)
- [US EPA Biomass CHP Catalog of Technologies](#)

H. Recertification requirements

The recertification requirements are the same as the initial certification requirements.