

# Comprehensive Energy Strategy

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## Issue

This report describes statutory requirements for Connecticut's Comprehensive Energy Strategy (CES).

## Summary

State law requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) commissioner to prepare a CES every four years and adopt it through an uncontested proceeding. The law sets out the purpose of the CES, its adoption process, and required content. The [CES](#) examines future energy needs in the state; sets policy for statewide energy planning; and identifies opportunities to reduce ratepayer costs, ensure reliable energy availability, and mitigate public health and environmental impacts of Connecticut's energy use.

## CES Purpose

The law requires the CES to (1) reflect legislative findings and policies under [CGS § 16a-35k](#), which include conserving energy resources by avoiding wasteful consumption, consuming energy resources efficiently, and developing renewable energy, among other things, and (2) provide analysis and recommendations necessary to guide the state's energy policy to meet its greenhouse gas emission goals in the most cost-effective manner. It generally must plan for the state's energy needs, including electricity, heating, cooling, and transportation ([CGS § 16a-3d](#), as amended by [PA 21-181](#)). The CES is also referenced in certain energy procurement authorizations as a factor to be considered when selecting projects (e.g., the offshore wind procurement under [CGS § 16a-3n](#), as amended by [PA 21-141](#)).

## **CES Adoption Process**

[CGS § 16a-3d](#) requires the DEEP commissioner to prepare a CES every four years and, in adopting it, conduct an uncontested proceeding by:

1. holding at least one public meeting and one technical meeting, with notice of the meetings and the proposed CES published on its website before the meetings;
2. providing a 60-day period for public comment and review, beginning when the meeting notice is published;
3. considering fully all written and oral comments concerning the proposed strategy after all public meetings and technical meetings and before approving the final strategy;
4. sending emails (presumably on the process and comments) to those who request it; and
5. posting on DEEP's website the final strategy and a report on changes made in response to comments.

The law also requires the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) to comment on the CES's impact on natural gas and electric rates. The DEEP commissioner must electronically submit the final CES to the Energy and Technology and Environment committees. The law allows the DEEP commissioner to modify the CES by holding a proceeding in the same manner described above.

## **Required CES Contents**

The law requires the CES to incorporate several other planning documents, including (1) the Integrated Resources Plan, which DEEP must review and approve in consultation with the electric distribution companies (EDCs, i.e., Eversource and United Illuminating) ([CGS § 16a-3a](#)), and (2) the Conservation and Load Management Plan (C&LM), developed by the EDCs in coordination with the natural gas utilities and submitted to the Energy Efficiency Board ([CGS § 16-245m](#)). Additionally, the CES must incorporate the following:

1. an assessment and plan for the state's energy needs, including electricity, heating, cooling, and transportation;
2. an energy assurance plan, funded under federal stimulus legislation passed in 2009, or any successor plan;
3. the Green Bank's clean energy plan;
4. an assessment of current energy supplies, demand, and costs, and factors likely to affect them;

5. a progress statement on the previous CES's goals and milestones;
6. a statement of energy policies and long-range energy planning objectives and strategies to achieve the state's greenhouse gas emission goals and a sound economy with the least-cost mix of energy supply sources;
7. recommendations for administrative and legislative actions to implement the plan's policies, objectives, and strategies;
8. an assessment of the plan's potential costs savings and benefits to ratepayers;
9. the benefits, costs, obstacles, and solutions related to expanding natural gas in the state;
10. a strategy to ensure the state's energy efficiency goals are met; and
11. a consideration of low-carbon fuel blends, associated greenhouse gas reductions, and related policy considerations, including a thermal portfolio standard ([CGS § 16a-3d](#), as amended by [PA 21-181](#)).

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