

Islesboro Energy Committee
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, February 10, 2026
In-Person and Zoom Meeting at 5:15 PM

APPROVED

3/10/26

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Vice Chair Bill Thomas called the meeting to order at 5:15 pm.

2. Establishment of a Quorum

Quorum was established with over 4 members

Members Present: Vice Chair Bill Thomas, Holly Fields, Janis Petzel, Kathy Kerr

Members Present via Zoom: Cressica Brazier, Monica Mullins, Ava Schlottman, Peter Rothschild, Ex Officio

Members Absent: Chair Harriet Bering, Trevor Blackford

Others Present: Island Fellow Elizabeth Dyer

Others Present via Zoom: Bob Kochan

3. Approval of minutes from previous meeting: January 13, 2026.

Motion: To approve the Minutes of January 13, 2026, as written, K. Kerr, seconded by H. Fields. No discussion. Roll Call. Motion passed, 7 yes, 0 no.

4. Project updates

a. Posters for upcoming conference

- Monica thanked Harriet, Bill, and Kathy for their input on the poster. There was a text size issue that would have caused us to need a second poster, which would have cost close to \$250 for two posters to be printed.
- Monica shared her screen to present her original poster. Cressica created a new poster based on everyone's input. Monica will email Cressica a few edits regarding the Island Fellowship.
- Monica thanked Cressica for putting it all together. When it's finalized, she will send it to the committee for any further edits.
- Someone will need to purchase. For the size we need, Staples only does delivery.

Monica left the meeting early due to personal matters.

b. Fire station

- Bill reported that things have moved slowly for the weatherizing of the generator room. He has called back Ron Gallant, Eric Tierney, Andy Staples, and Bill Schoppe. Eric and Bill have expressed interest. Bill has followed up with Eric, but he's not responding.
- Nate Spectre of Evergreen is coming here on March 3rd to look at the job.
- If anyone knows of any other island contractors, let Bill know.

c. EV chargers

- Holly reported that the EV chargers have been installed and are working. We need to get them connected to a network so we can collect charging fees.

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- Holly stated she talked with Candice at the Islesboro Community Center (ICC). What they charge customers doesn't cover the full fee that OptConnect charges ICC. The ICC is subsidizing their charger. Holly asked for feedback from the committee.
- Bill and Kathy stated that this was not the case originally at the ICC.
- Janis stated that she has tried using that charger and found OptConnect to be a hassle.
- Holly stated there are other companies we could look into. She hasn't had any problems with the charger at ICC.
- Bill stated that he's heard from some people who charge there routinely. They had no difficulty, while others were having a lot of trouble. We never figured out why.
- Kathy stated that Anne McKee did the research for that charger. Bill stated he will look at emails from her from that time. He also has the contact names of people he spoke to at that time.

d. Ground Array

- Cressica reported that she and Harriet are working on this. No update.
- Bill referred to an email from Harriet. It seems we're just deciding how to proceed.
- Kathy asked when it will be best for her to approach Don Etchison, the abutter. Cressica stated she would like to talk with Kathy and Harriet about that. We need to find a way to communicate the impacts to him. Cressica will follow up with an email.

5. ETIPP Update

- Elizabeth reported that the group met on February 5th via Zoom with Island Institute partners, Skye Butterson-Dunn and Kate Klibansky. NREL partners Bryan Mentlik, Kumar Prabakar, and Becky Meadows were also there. Becky presented about some ideas she had. From our team, we had Holly, Janis, Kathy, Trevor, and Elizabeth.
- Kumar from NREL shared a lot of ideas. We're in the scoping phase, so we need to figure out a plan. We're trying to think about what information and data is useful for developing a microgrid—the logistics of what works and what doesn't work, and what's feasible. Becky provided insights into the Homer modeling methods that she's familiar with. She suggested using data from 2021-2025 to create scenarios about where and how we would set up microgrids. There was a lot of discussion about data. Trevor emphasized some action items about determining usage data to request from CMP for the entire island, and also getting a list of buildings that have undergone weatherization, heat pumps, and/or assessment data. This will help us determine how much energy we need to generate from an island-based system.
- Kathy stated that she has learned of an IAP renter who is spending \$800/month for electricity with heat pumps. The idea was floated about a microgrid for the IAP property. That would be an interesting possible demonstration project, so the community could see the value.
- Janis added that this high cost is in one of the new modular buildings. You can see light through the corner—it wasn't put together properly.
- Bill stated that the first thing to do is fix the building. This is not an electricity issue, it's a carpentry issue. Janis will call the folks at IAP.
- Janis stated that there are many people paying a lot for electricity and oil. She likes the idea of making sure that people on the low end of the economic scale can benefit from our work.

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- Elizabeth stated that there's a non-profit organization that's donating money for other nonprofits to collect data about their issues so they can write grants. Janis sent the info to Barbara at IAP.
- Bill asked Elizabeth if we have a way to start asking who's paying these bills, and get a sense of what's possible to fix that? Elizabeth replied that there's an opportunity, and that's a larger discussion. We're now processing a lot of data from a 2024-2025 survey. We can think about doing it again or doing it a different way and honing in on some of the focus points of affordability.
- Cressica stated that, according to Maine-based studies and in general, around 6% of income or above is considered a high energy burden.

6. Island Fellow Update

- Elizabeth shared her technical report via a Power Point presentation, which highlighted key points from the Energy Survey of 2024-2025. There were 50 questions on the survey, and this presentation is a broad summary. There were 123 responses, some of them repeated, as the survey was administered in a couple different sessions. There were some minor edits made while it was live, so there were different versions of the survey. We filtered through some of these to try to standardize the responses. 116 households were used for analysis.
- Parts 1 – 5 Key themes: Insulation, weatherization, heating systems, appliances, solar power.
- Parts 6 – 8: Data for incentives people might qualify for & potential for grant writing; Additional comments.
- The majority of responses represent owners (not renting), year-round residents, 2+ occupants, with 1000-2000 sq feet living area
- 37% paying between \$500-\$2,000 annually to CMP, 34% paying over \$2,000 for electricity (18% did not receive this question).
- [See attached summary slide show for details of the presentation.]
- Bill asked if there is a way to correlate the fuel cost data with the status of the insulation and weatherization of the building. Elizabeth replied that this would be possible. Cressica added that we can include that in the regression analysis. However, peoples' responses to insulation are subjective, and there may not be a good correlation in this case.
- Discussion about cross referencing and possibly readministering the survey with more specific or rephrased questions.
- Elizabeth stated she will prepare a more refined presentation for the public.
- Bob Kochan asked what percentage of homes on the island were represented in the responses. Cressica stated there are 300 or fewer year-round houses. 30% of year-round households are represented. A lot less of the seasonal households are represented clearly. There are about 800 seasonal homes. Total housing is about 1,100.
- Janis stated it's encouraging to see how many people are interested in solar and willing to hear more about it.
- Bill added that these data show that a significant percentage of the population is struggling with energy costs. This is a collective, community issue, not just individuals in isolation. This speaks

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to the ETIPP program, which is more broadly directed, and that we need to bring this to the Select Board's notice.

- Janis asked about a way to look at the group that's eligible for public programs and below a certain income level and show what they're paying for electricity. Discussion about helping these people.

7. Maintenance of equipment – Bill

- Bill stated that Janet Anderson had asked for help with setting up the schedules of maintenance for the various heat pumps we have in Town buildings. There are different levels of maintenance that have to be monitored, from simple filter changing to cleaning. Janet would like a spreadsheet of what needs to be done with what frequency.
- Bill stated that he and Harriet decided to bring this to the committee for discussion on how this should be addressed. It seems to be part of a larger issue of overall maintenance of buildings.
- Holly stated that, at the ferry service, the state has service contracts for various tasks. There is someone in Rockland who monitors that. It seems the Town would have something like this, with service contracts, and a facilities department.
- Bill stated there is a service contract for the heat pumps in the fire station. Fred requested this, and it was incorporated in the process of getting that done.
- Kathy agreed with Holly and stated it doesn't seem to be an Energy Committee responsibility.
- Janis stated that the equipment was bought with money from the Energy Committee. It wouldn't hurt to develop a spreadsheet with a maintenance schedule, listing the companies we bought the equipment from. However, she doesn't think anyone from the Energy Committee should be calling the companies and arranging service.
- Cressica added that there's a lot of equipment we've been installing, and it all needs monitoring and maintenance. She referred to photos Bill sent of the solar panels covered in snow. That's been a point of frustration in the past, and we haven't moved forward with resolving that. It's part of the larger package of monitoring and maintaining energy-related equipment, and the solar maintenance contracts that were required for the Town in order to get insurance. We should revisit that issue, because they're extremely high, and somebody needs to assure that they're being executed on. When the salt shed array was purchased out of the PPA, Janet had to purchase a maintenance contract, and it was on the order of \$3,000 a year for one array, which is exorbitant. We should revisit it as a set of projects to make sure that we are getting the coverage we need in terms of maintenance, and also not overspending on the contract.
- Bill shared his photos of the solar arrays on the Town Office and the Library. Weeks after the snowfall, the arrays are still extensively covered in snow. The Town has invested a lot of money in these arrays. These two roofs are sloped, yet they are not shedding well. The salt shed is less sloped, and is probably more extensively covered. That is money the Town is missing, as we're not getting that electricity.
- Bill added that another issue at the library is the shadows on the arrays. They are not being optimized. Dealing with the trees is a maintenance issue.
- A third issue is the functionality of the library array. We're having trouble getting the reporting, and this impinges on the maintenance of the array. We have had two months of reporting from

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the website on the output of that array since August, only August and December. We do have a report from CMP because we have the bills, but CMP typically reports between 40% and 70% of what we actually produce, because of the behind-the-metering use of that electricity. We're getting a slanted view of how much electricity we're producing, which undervalues how much money we're saving for the Town.

- Bill stated that all of these come together as maintenance issues that the Town is not dealing with, that are costing the Town a lot of money. He proposes that this is not an Energy Committee task, and believes this is a task for a Town facilities manager.
- Janis referred to a website that stated cold weather boosts solar efficiency 10 to 15%. A study by NAIT found that snow coverage results in only 3% annual energy loss, far less than the industry's traditional 20% estimate, making winter solar highly viable.
- Bill stated that those arguments are designed to convince people that solar is a good idea.
- Cressica added that it's still lost money, whether it's 3% or 4%. In 2024, Cressica calculated that it was about 5% for the Town. She will be interested to calculate again after this major coverage. It's a significant amount of money.
- Bill added that arrays make a lot of electricity in February, March, and April when the arrays are cool. They are more efficient, but this competes with the fact that the insulation period is short.

Motion: To recommend to the Select Board that the Town hire a Facilities Manager to deal with maintenance of equipment in an efficient way and make the most of the investments we've made, B. Thomas, seconded by K. Kerr. Discussion as below. Roll Call. Motion passed, 5 yes, 0 no.

- Bill stated we have generated a lot more need for a manager with all the equipment we've installed.
- Janis added that it makes sense to have somebody whose job it is to keep track of this.
- Bill stated he will draft a proposal and will send it around for feedback.

8. Need for Tree Trimming – Bill

- This is in reference to the shading on the library array. Bill stated that we have to find out if those trees are on Town property or private property.
- Bill asked Cressica if she can get a detailed map of library property, like the one she got for the Town Office complex. Cressica replied that the detailed survey was from the recent Health Center project. It would be a challenge to get one for the library, but she can sketch out the boundary lines based on the tax map. Bill added we need to measure where the trunks are.

9. MAINECAN Conference Participation

- Bill, Kathy, and Elizabeth are going.

10. Event Subcommittee Update

- Next week, February 17th, Allen Cross will be speaking at the library about back-up batteries.
- Kathy reported that she made a good connection with Maine Preservation, a non-profit organization. They go out in the field a lot, and have field service specialists who look at things for people who are interested in preservation. They connected Kathy with Elaine Gallagher

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Adams, a preservation-oriented architect. Kathy will contact her about participating in the Forum Lecture Series. Once we get a slot on the forum schedule, we can plump it up and make a panel later. If this architect is interested, we should get Peter Rothschild to put her forward. Kathy would then like to keep working with Trevor on the person he suggested. Kathy also hasn't given up on Steve Phillips, who bought a big cottage and remodeled it with energy in mind. These three people would make an ideal forum panel.

- Janis asked about having a panel at the forum vs. a panel the Energy Committee hosts. She suggested getting the subcommittee back together to discuss options.

Kathy added that there were a few interesting pieces of information that came out of the ETIPP forum:

- Kartorium in Alaska designs solar arrays without going to the site by using satellite or drones. This technology is worth looking into, given that sometimes it's hard to get people to come to the island.
- Finland has a type of battery they put in a silo for backup power. Cressica stated it's a sand battery, for thermal storage. There's also a tank battery at the University of NH that does a similar thing.
- There is an organization in Maine that has half a Prius that they use for demos. You can see the guts of the car and see how it works. They are eager to take it around the state and show it off.

Bob Kochan provided feedback on the results of the November installation of his 40 solar panels.

- The panels were installed on a southwest, unobstructed roof on the back of the house.
- With the snow cover in December, the panels provided 98 kilowatts in one week compared to our usage of 318 kilowatts. In the first week of January, they produced two thirds of usage. It was relatively consistent, unless there was a lot of snow coverage. However, the panels have uncovered themselves. The last week of January, they produced 20% more than consumed, and last week through today, it's 50% more than consumed. Being uncovered helps.
- The Town needs a facilities manager, but one person isn't going to be able to do everything that is becoming required. Bill replied that one person is a start.

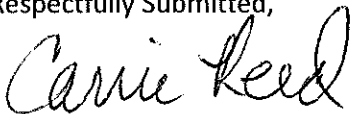
11. Next regular meeting: March 10th, 2026.

12. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn meeting at 6:38 pm, J. Petzel, seconded by K. Kerr. No Discussion. Roll Call.

Motion passed, 5 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.

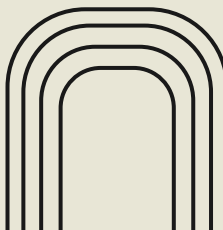
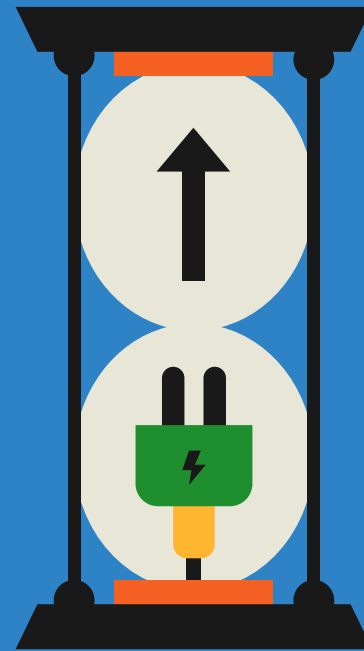
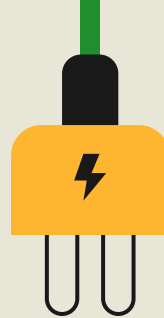
Respectfully Submitted,

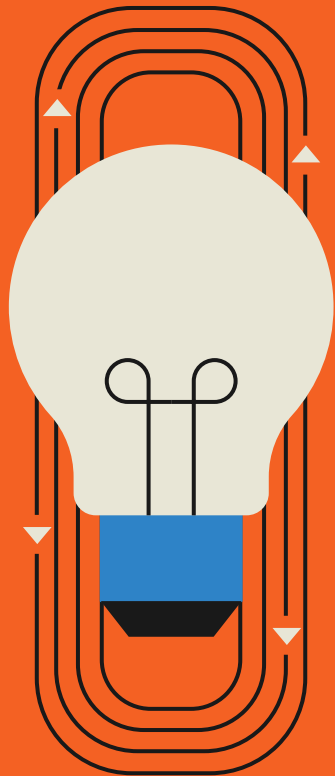


Carrie Reed, Secretary

ISLESBORO HOME ENERGY PLANNING SURVEY

Preliminary internal results summary
& implications





ANATOMY OF THE SURVEY

01

TIMEFRAME

Administered January 2024 - Sept 2025

02

RESPONSES

123 responses → filter for repeats/ invalids →
116 households for analysis

03

PARTS 1-5

Key themes: Insulation, heating systems,
appliances, solar power; Q1-35

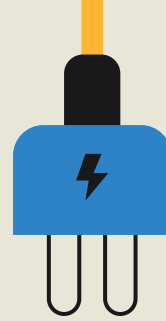
04

PARTS 6-8

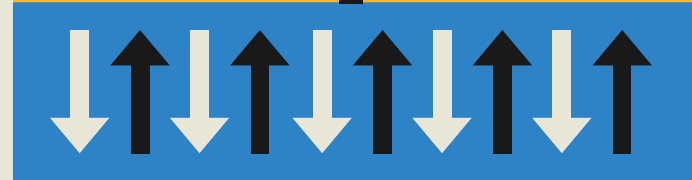
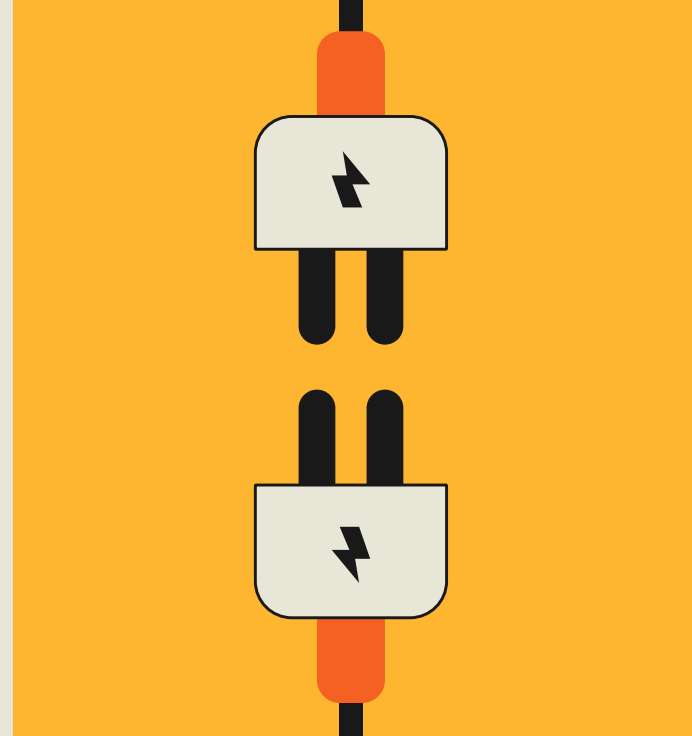
Data for incentives & grant writing; Additional
comments; Q36-Q49

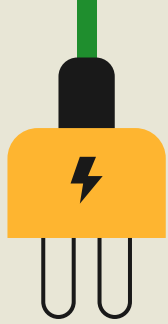


01



Part 1: General Information

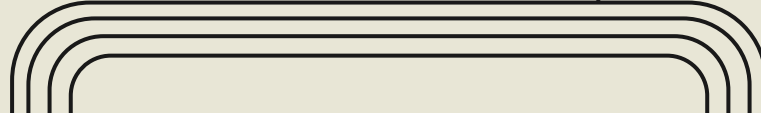
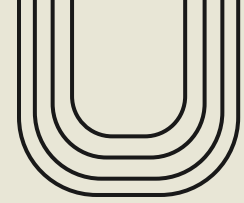
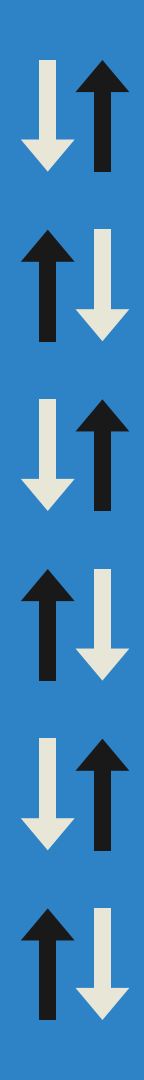




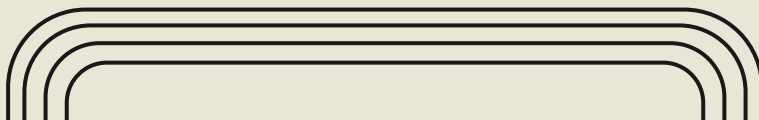
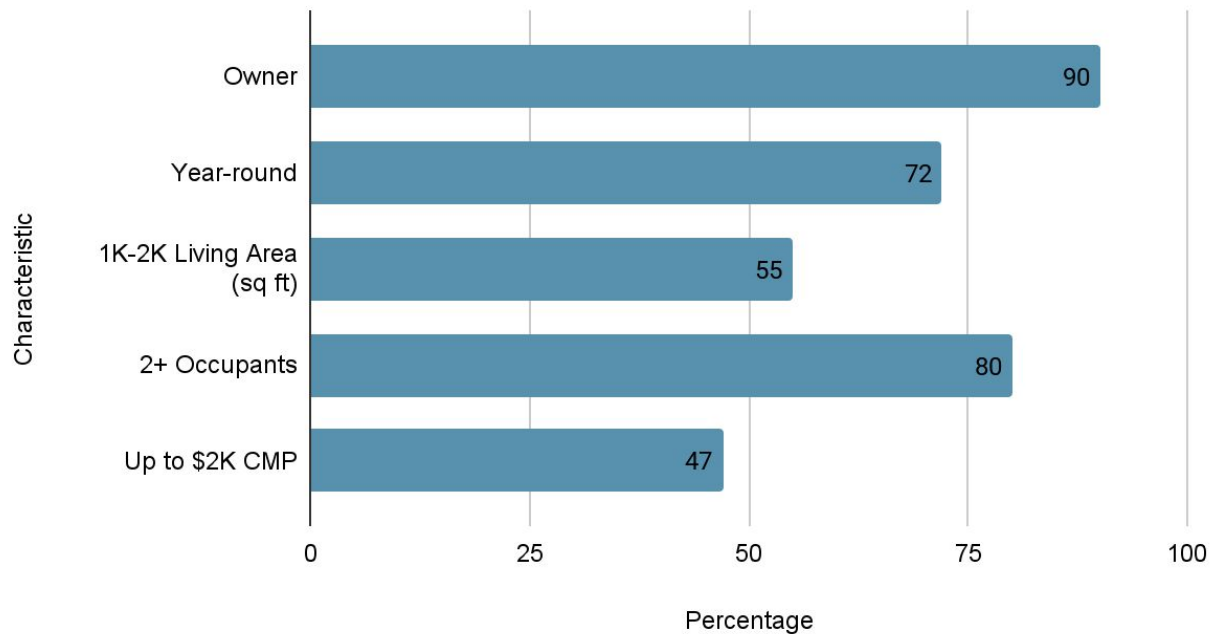
WHO IS REPRESENTED IN OUR DATA?

The majority of responses represent ...

- Owners (not renting)
- Year-round residents
- 1000-2000 sq feet living area
- 2+ occupants
- 37% paying between \$500-\$2,000 annually to CMP
 - 34% paying over \$2,000 for electricity*
 - *18% did not receive this question



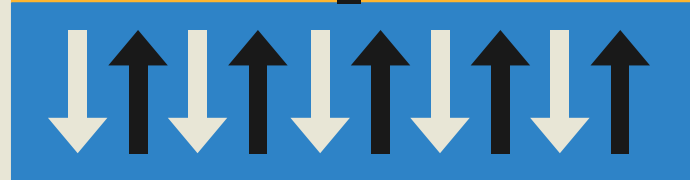
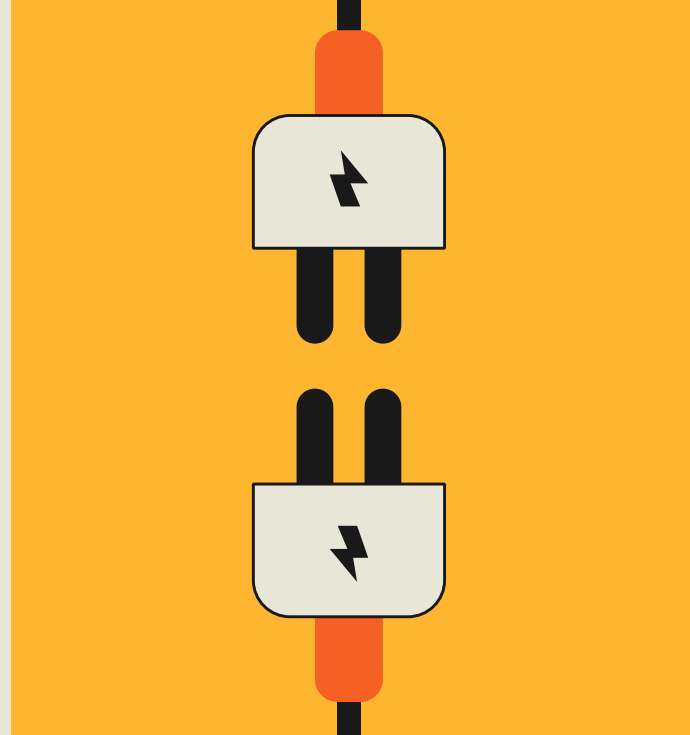
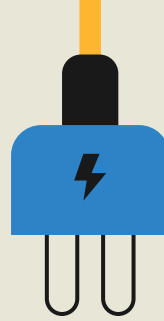
Respondent Characteristics

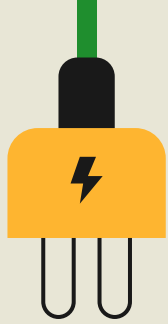




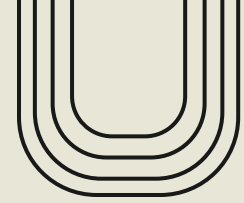
02

**Part 2:
Insulation &
Weatherization
n**





Home insulation could be improved upon.



Insulation in Islesboro homes:

30% Poor/drafty

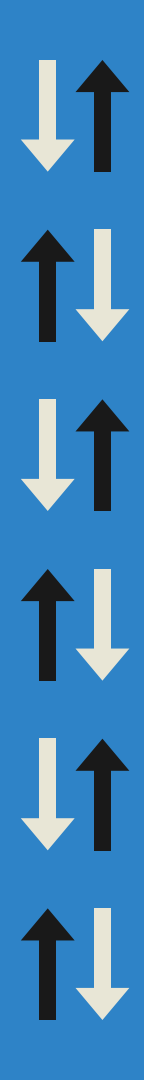
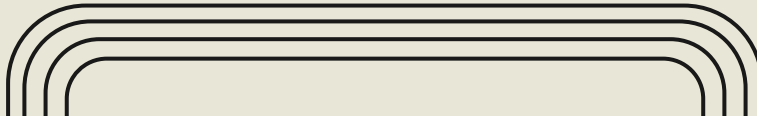


15% Cozy



55% Acceptable

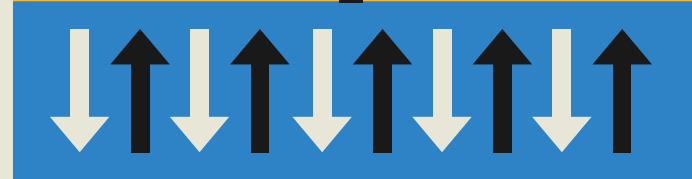
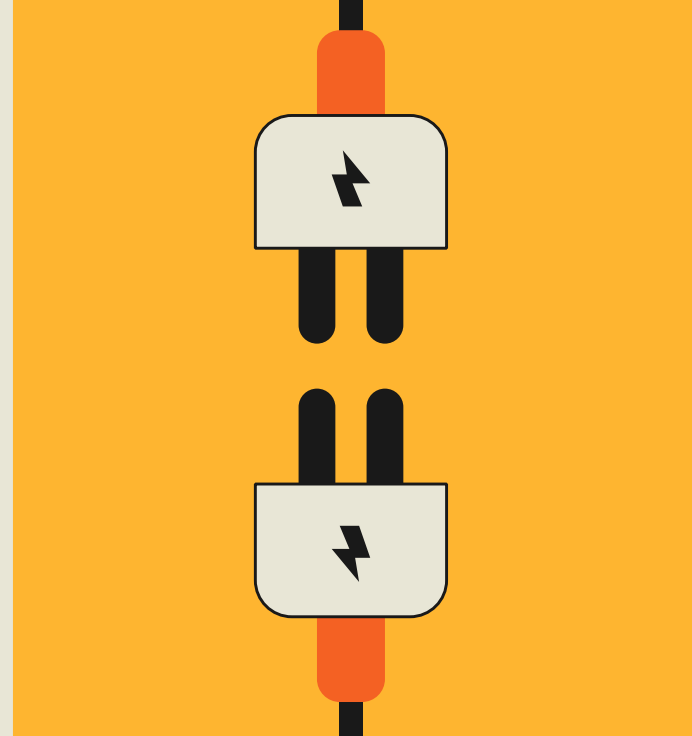
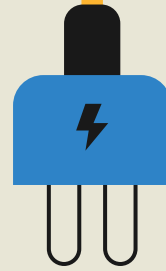
Approximately 40% expressed interest in **adding & improving** insulation/sealing in attics, basements, roofs, & walls

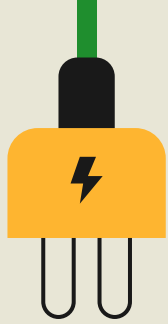




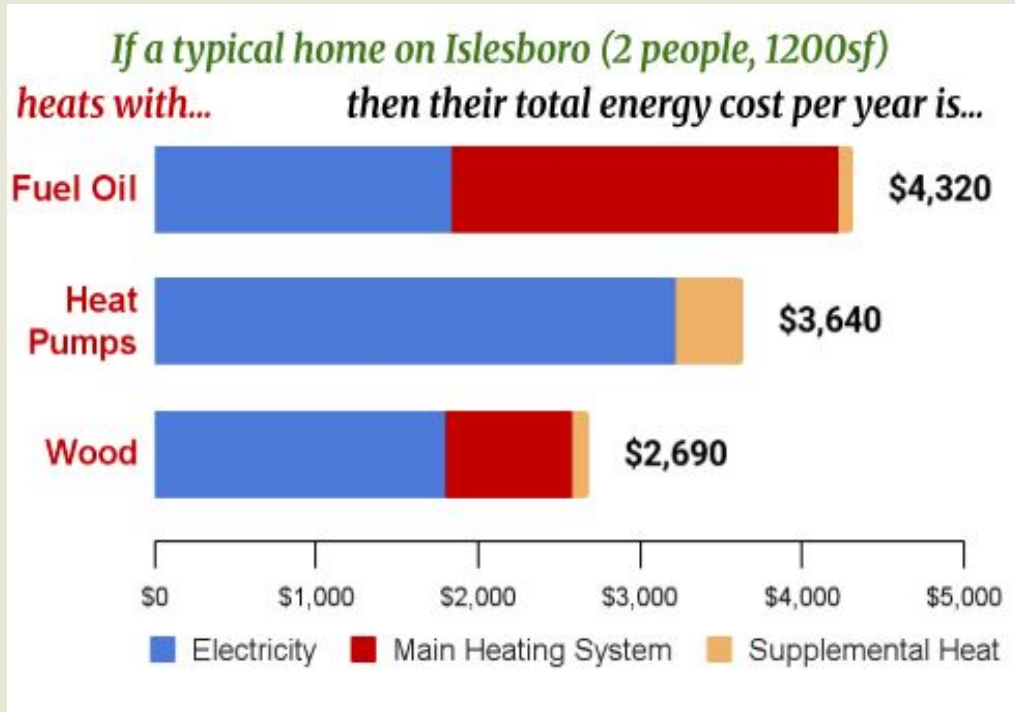
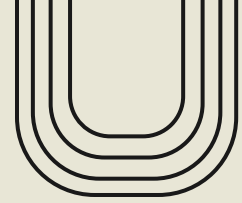
03

Part 3: Heating



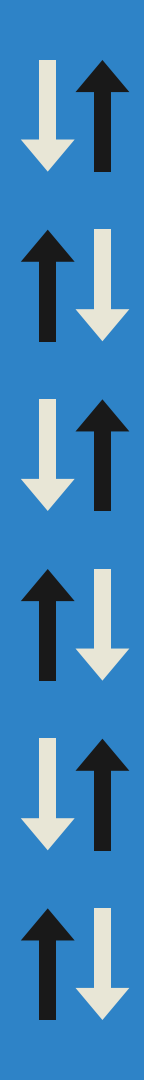


Fossil fuels – while the most common heating source – is also the most expensive.



Other key details:

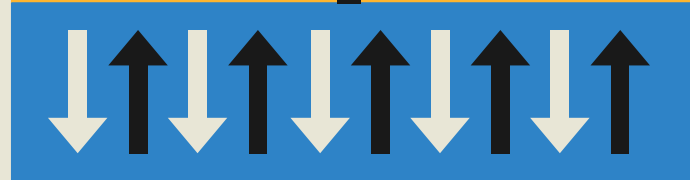
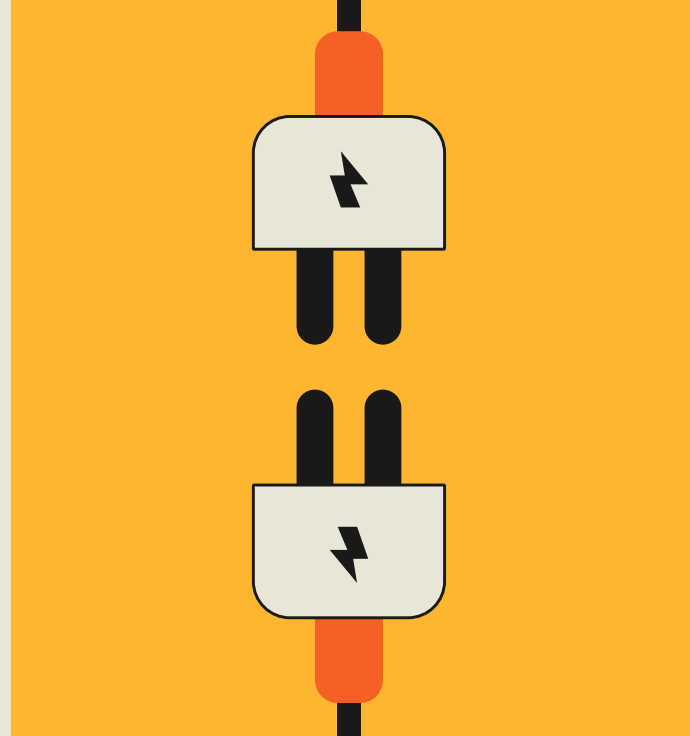
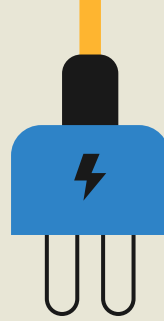
- 75% have supplemental heating system(s)
- Approximately 25% interested in getting heat pumps
- 34% have heat pumps



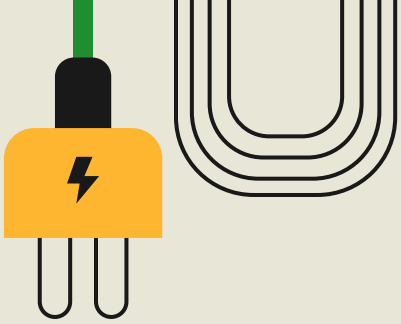


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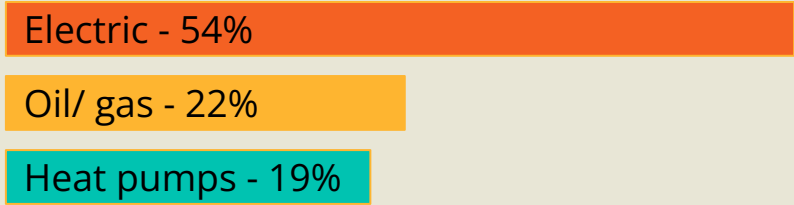
**Part 4:
Appliances &
Vehicles**



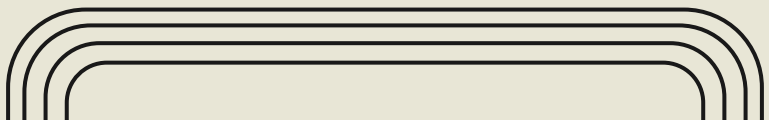
Fossil fuels hold onto the lead for appliances & vehicles.



Water heaters

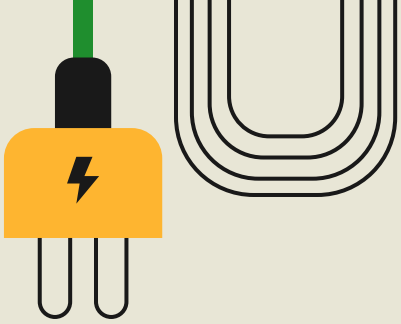


Stovetops

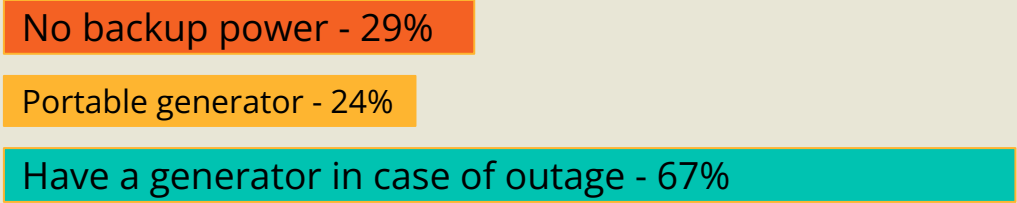


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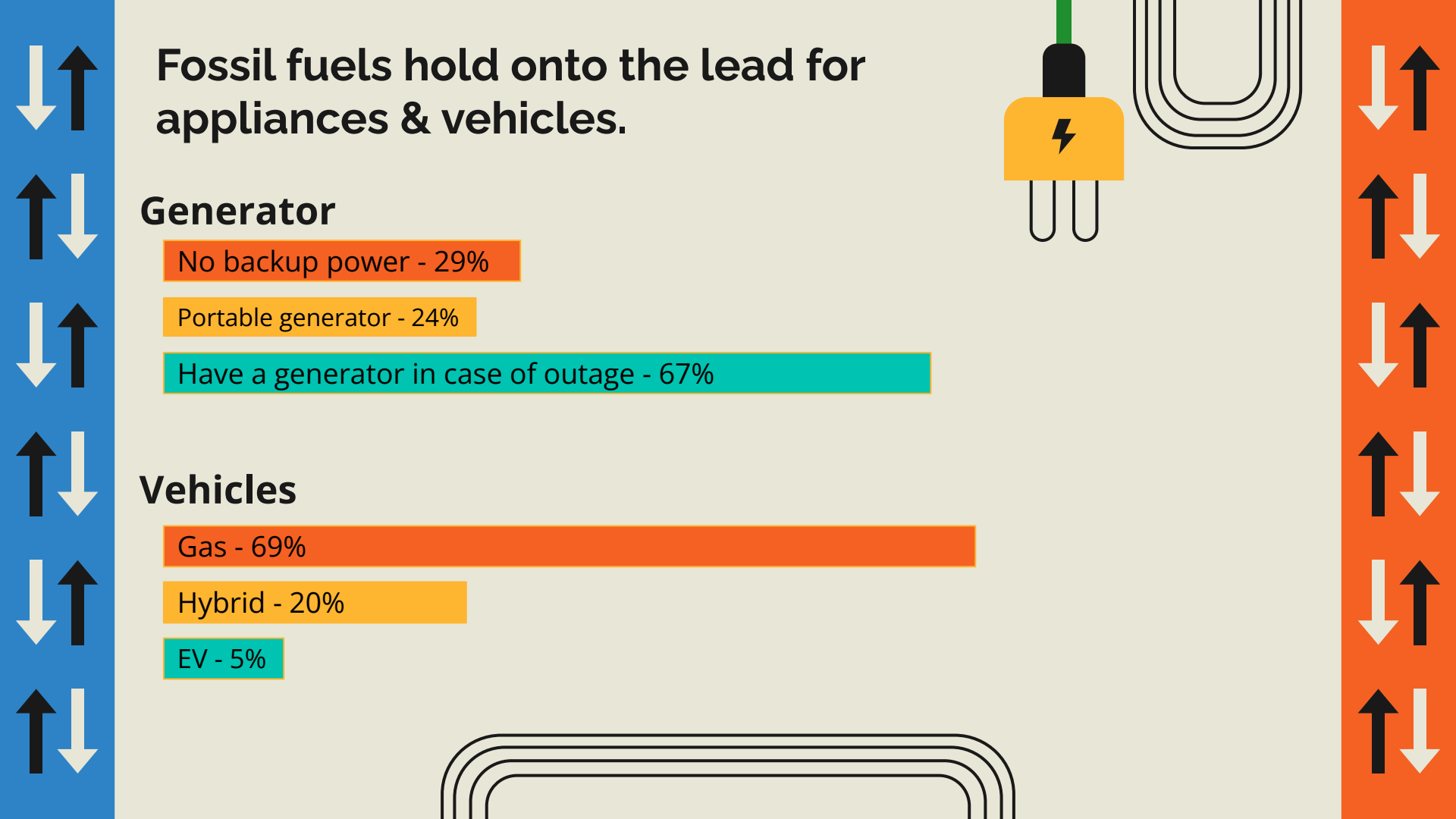
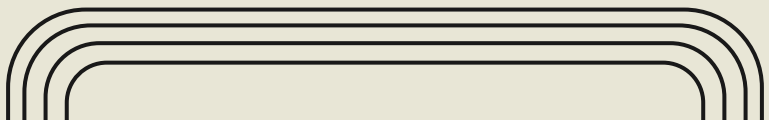
Fossil fuels hold onto the lead for appliances & vehicles.



Generator



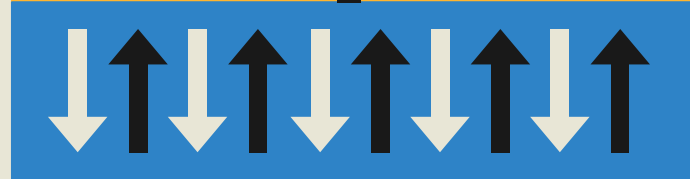
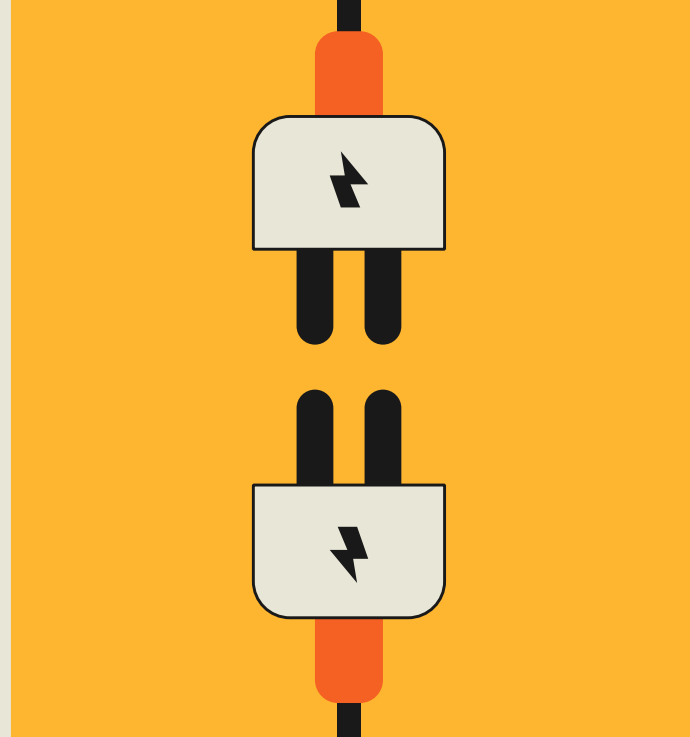
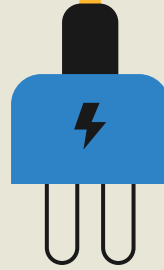
Vehicles





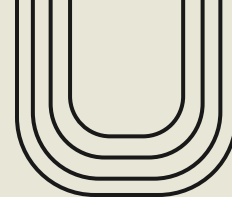
05

Part 5: Solar Power



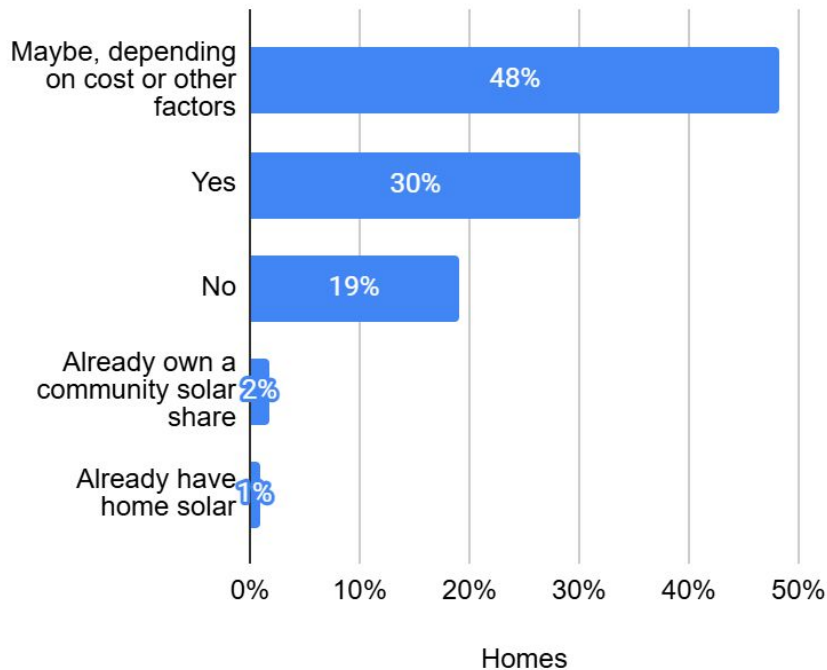


While most respondents don't have solar, they are interested in its potential.



Responses in this section represent optimism, curiosity.

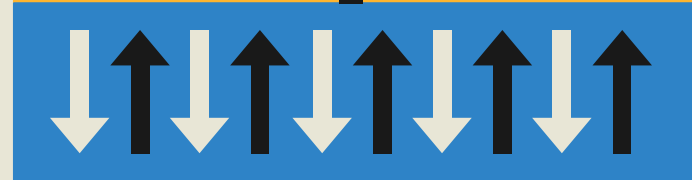
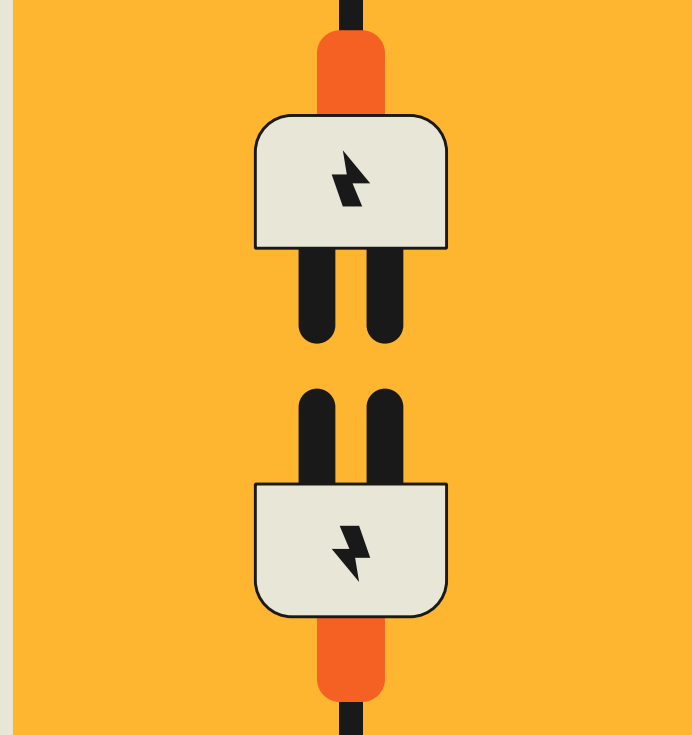
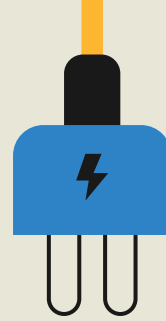
Would you be interested in owning a share in a cooperative solar farm on Islesboro? (Q34)





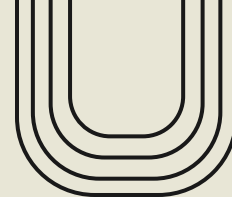
06

Part 6: Incentive Eligibility





More people qualify for incentives based on AGI than government assistance programs.

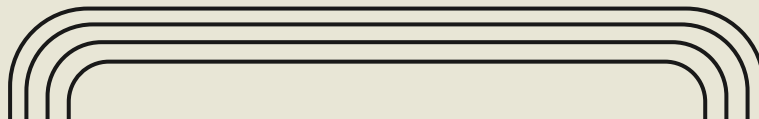


Eligibility for **enhanced** Efficiency Maine Incentives via: Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), MaineCare

9% - YES
59% - NO

Eligibility for elevated Efficiency Maine incentives through qualifying Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) (up to \$70k for individual/ married filing separately or up to \$100k for married filing jointly):

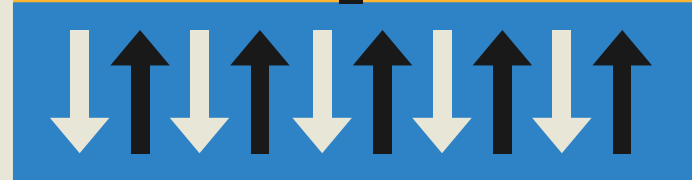
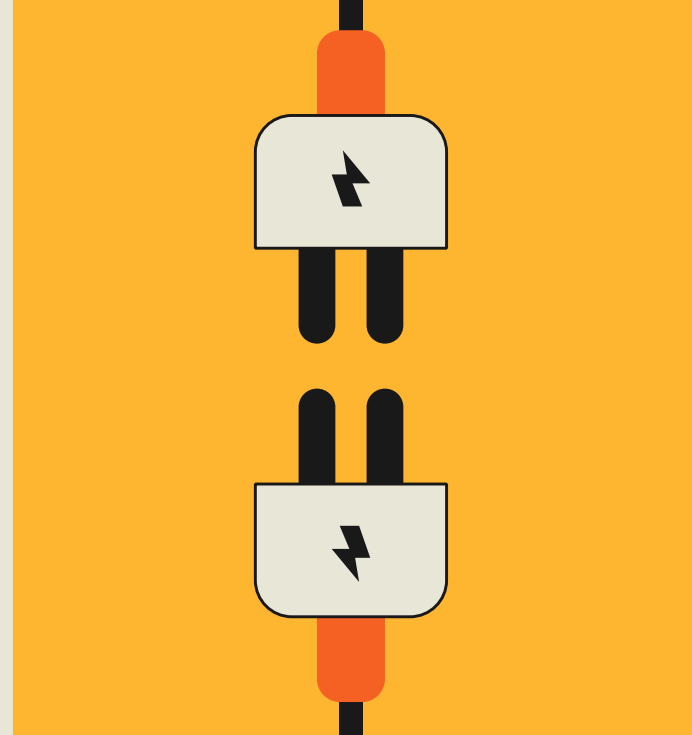
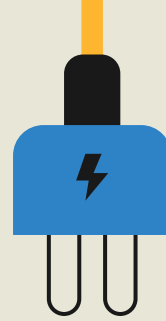
27% - YES
41% - NO

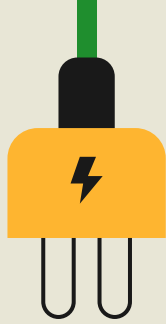




07

**Part 7:
Challenges
/ Grant data**





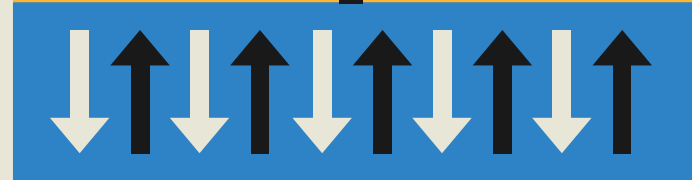
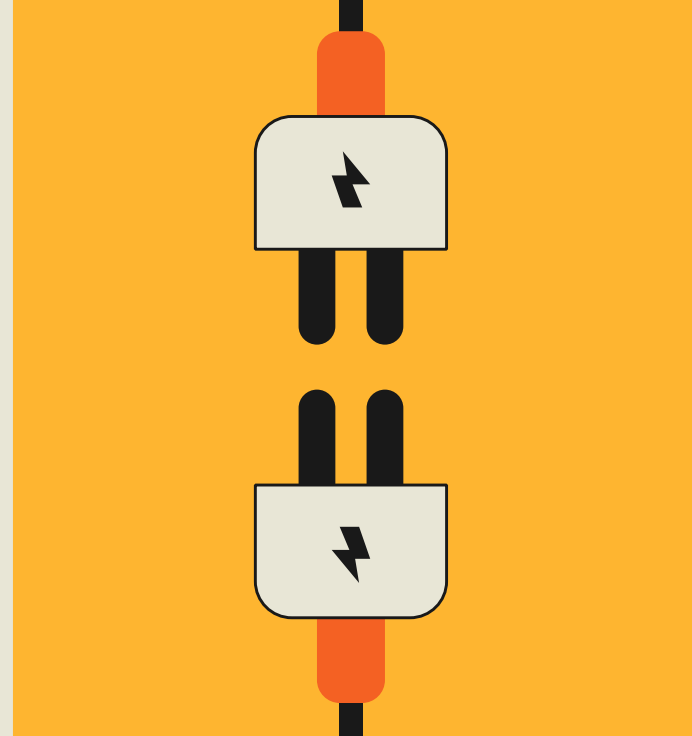
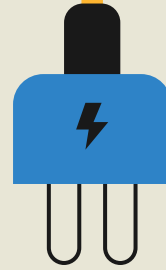
Respondents answered various questions regarding their financial and energy-related comfortability on Islesboro.

KEY QUESTIONS	KEY THEMES / RESPONSES
Energy Costs	High, but possible; Have to trade comfort for cost at times
Affordability (overall)	High, but possible
Outages	Food losses/ goes to waste; Loss of working hours



08

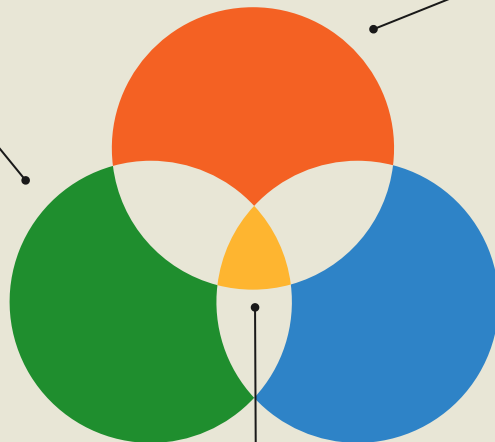
Part 8: Additional Comments



“Anything Else?”

INTERESTS

- New heating systems for home
- Solar installations
- Wind energy
- Community solar
- Battery backup/ generator options
- Geothermal energy
- Energy audits
- Energy resilience



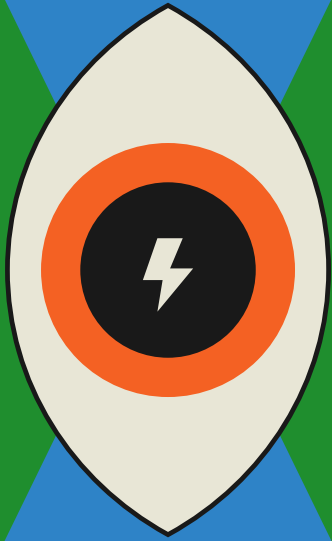
CONCERNS

- Heating costs
- Public infrastructure capacity
- Cost of living
- Infrastructure issues at home

ONGOING WORK

- Building energy efficiency at home
- Installing generators
- Home electrification

**RESIDENTIAL
ENERGY LANDSCAPE
of ISLESBORO**



Looking Ahead: Implications & Next Steps

- Modify for internal and external data use & sharing
 - Create public/ publishable version of this presentation and related Technical Report
- Inform education + outreach programs
- Inform ETIPP scoping process/ data gathering & project work

