

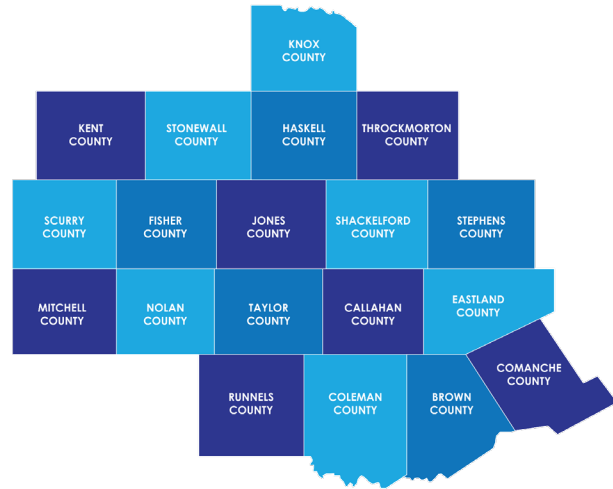
# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RURAL LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO REDUCE ENERGY CONSUMPTION.



2024

### Region Overview

The West Central Texas Council of Governments (WCTCOG) is a political subdivision or governmental unit of the State of Texas serving 19 counties, including the cities and special districts of Brown, Callahan, Coleman, Comanche, Eastland, Fisher, Haskell, Jones, Kent, Knox, Mitchell, Nolan, Runnels, Scurry, Shackelford, Stephens, Stonewall, Taylor and Throckmorton counties in a rural area encompassing 18,000 square miles. The current estimated population, based on the 2020 Census, is 332,322.



### Introduction

Energy conservation is not a new topic but a topic that is uncharted for many rural communities. Understanding the impact that even rural communities can have on an energy grid is vital to the overall health and efficiency of energy consumption statewide. In 2024, the West Central Texas Council of Governments worked with several organizations throughout the region to determine gaps and obstacles for improving energy conservation amongst regional rural communities. Conversations identified several barriers rural communities will need to overcome successfully implement a savings program. Two reoccurring barriers were,

- Funding deficiency and knowledge of grant programs
- Lack of qualified staff

The goal of these discussions were to establish achievable recommendations that rural communities could establish in order to reduce its energy consumption by five percent. The following recommendations for a 5% reduction of energy usage has taken the gaps and barriers into consideration. All recommendations are of low to no cost to implement and start reducing energy usage.

### Project Staff

#### Economic Development

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#### Hazard Mitigation

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# RECOMMENDATION 1

## Benchmark Municipal Buildings

Benchmarking is the process of gathering data to track usage and identify needs. Tracking energy utilization provides valuable information for planning purposes and identifying areas that can be mitigated. Benchmarking critical infrastructure like Police Stations, Fire Departments, and other public buildings will help you understand the energy usage of these facilities and identify your needs. This information can help you plan for disaster as well as find ways to reduce your footprint and save money by implementing energy efficient habits and equipment.

## RESOURCE



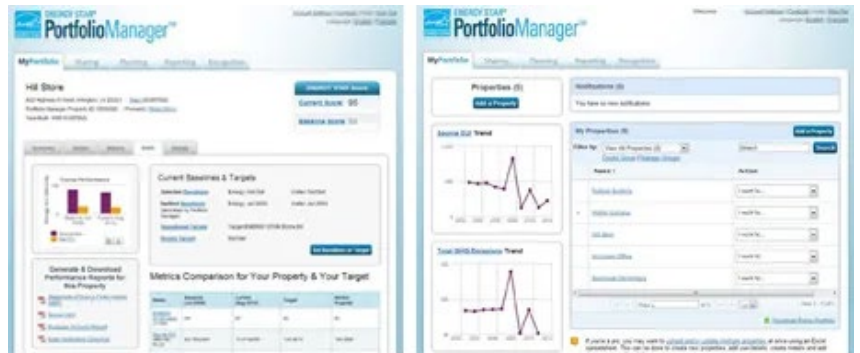
[LEARN MORE HERE](#)

### What is Energy Star Portfolio Manager?

Portfolio Manager is an interactive resource management tool that enables you to benchmark the energy use of any type of building, all in a secure online environment. Nearly 25% of U.S. commercial building space is already actively benchmarking in Portfolio Manager, making it the industry-leading benchmarking tool. It also serves as the national benchmarking tool in Canada.

### MANAGE ENERGY, WATER, WASTE, AND GHGS

Using ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager, you can manage energy, water, waste, and GHG emissions – all in one secure online environment. Portfolio Manager has already helped thousands of organizations benchmark energy performance, prioritize efficiency measures, and verify energy reductions in buildings. That same proven approach can be applied to water and waste and materials management.



[PORTFOLIO MANAGER 101](#)

[GET STARTED](#)

# RECOMMENDATION 2

## Utilize technology and controls

When it comes to smart technology and controls for energy reduction there are several options available to implement to help reduce your energy usage. Making gradual upgrades each year will improve your energy footprint and reduce your impact on the grid. In addition to these benefits these changes will have an economical impact for your origination. Options can include,

CONTROLS	TECHNOLOGY
<p><b>MOTION SENSORS</b> Motion sensors automatically turn lights on when they detect motion and turn them off a short while later. They are especially useful for outdoor security and utility lighting.</p>	<p><b>SMART THERMOSTATS</b> A smart thermostat is a Wi-Fi enabled device that automatically adjusts heating and cooling temperature settings in your home or building for optimal performance.</p>
<p><b>TIMERS</b> Timers can be used to turn lights on and off at specific times.</p>	<p><b>LED LIGHTING</b> Light emitting diodes (LEDs) are a type of solid-state lighting -- semiconductors that convert electricity into light.</p>
<p><b>OCCUPANCY SENSORS</b> Occupancy sensors detect indoor activity within a certain area</p>	



## SOURCES

[https://www.energystar.gov/products/smart\\_thermostats](https://www.energystar.gov/products/smart_thermostats)

[https://www.energystar.gov/products/smart\\_home\\_tips](https://www.energystar.gov/products/smart_home_tips)

<https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/lighting-controls>

<https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/lighting-choices-save-you-money>

# RECOMMENDATION 3

## Adoption of PACE program for commercial and private businesses.

The Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program provides low-cost, long-term financing for water and energy efficiency and conservation improvements to commercial and industrial properties. In 2013, the Legislature passed [Senate Bill 385 \(83R\)](#) allowing municipalities and counties to work with commercial lenders and property owners to pursue improvements using property assessments as a secure repayment mechanism.

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) collaborated with more than 30 state and local government participants to develop a [Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy \(C-PACE or Commercial PACE\) Toolkit](#). Local governments can use these resources to improve their understanding of a PACE program and help them ask the right questions when they consider implementing a program.

Source: <https://comptroller.texas.gov/programs/seco/funding/pace.php>

## IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS FOR COUNTY OR CITY

### First Meeting:

- Pass Resolution of Intent

### After First Meeting:

- Program Report must be made available to the public. (i.e. post on entities website for public review)

### Meeting #2

- Hold Public Hearing
- Adopt Resolution to Establish PACE Program
- Approve Professional Services Agreement

## PACE PROGRAMS



### CONTACT INFORMATION

Phone: 214-256-3209

Website: [www.lonestarpace.com](http://www.lonestarpace.com)



### CONTACT INFORMATION

Phone: 1-855-738-7223

Website: [www.texaspaceauthority.org](http://www.texaspaceauthority.org)

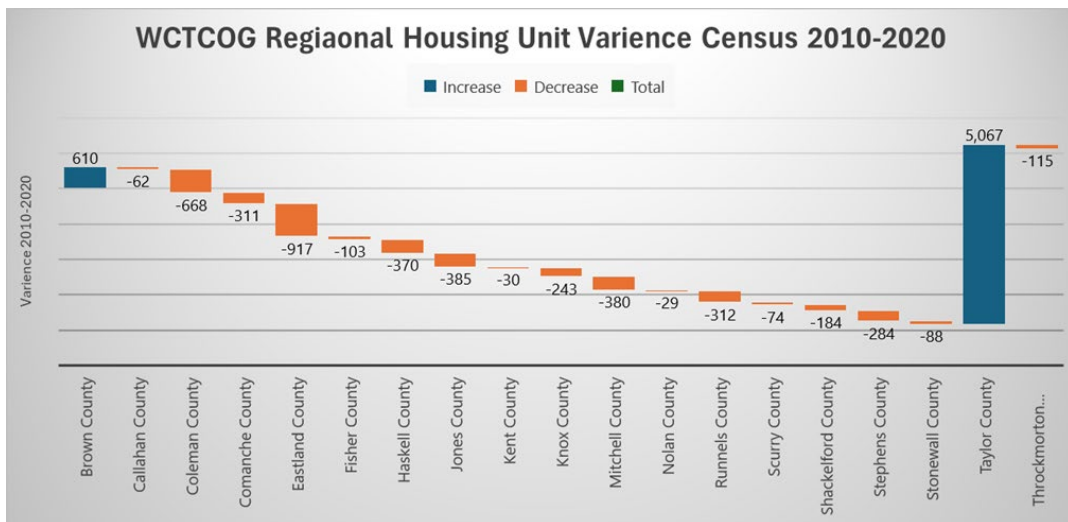
# RESIDENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

## Residential resources

According to U.S. Census housing units across the WCTCOG region have declined significantly between 2010 and 2020. The data below shows the changes for each county over that span. However, promoting energy conservation and enrolling qualifying homes into weatherization programs can have significant benefits to communities and energy reduction.

	2010 Total Housing Units	2020 Total Housing Units	Variance	% Change
Brown County	18,287	18,897	610	3.23%
Callahan County	6,549	6,487	-62	-0.96%
Coleman County	5,543	4,875	-668	-13.70%
Comanche County	7,223	6,912	-311	-4.50%
Eastland County	10,258	9,341	-917	-9.82%
Fisher County	2,212	2,109	-103	-4.88%
Haskell County	3,443	3,073	-370	-12.04%
Jones County	7,422	7,037	-385	-5.47%
Kent County	552	522	-30	-5.75%
Knox County	2,044	1,801	-243	-13.49%
Mitchell County	4,064	3,684	-380	-10.31%
Nolan County	7,152	7,123	-29	-0.41%
Runnels County	5,298	4,986	-312	-6.26%
Scurry County	6,963	6,889	-74	-1.07%
Shackelford County	1,754	1,570	-184	-11.72%
Stephens County	4,938	4,654	-284	-6.10%
Stonewall County	928	840	-88	-10.48%
Taylor County	55,750	60,817	5,067	8.33%
Throckmorton County	1,079	964	-115	-11.93%

Census: <https://data.census.gov/table/DECENNIALPL2020.H1?q=H1>





# RESIDENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

## Residential resources

Many of the family units in the WCTCOG region are below the poverty line and should qualify for weatherization assistance from one of the programs in the region. These programs perform test to determine areas for improvement and offer services to correct and reduce energy waste. Programs vary between counties, but services can include,

- General caulking
- Attic, floor and wall insulation
- Skirting/underpinning exposed floors
- Repair/replace doors
- Patching holes in the floor, ceiling, and outside walls
- Repair/replace/retrofit heat/cool equipment
- Address health and safety issues.
- Air Sealing

## REGIONAL WEATHERIZATION PROGRAMS

### ROLLING PLAINS MANAGEMENT CORPORATION



COUNTIES SERVED: Brown, Callahan, Comanche, Eastland, Haskell, Jones, Kent, Knox, Shackelford, Stephens, Stonewall, Taylor, Throckmorton

PHONE: 325-672-3969

WEBSITE: <https://rollingplains.org/>

### CONCHO VALLEY COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY



COUNTIES SERVED: Coleman, Runnels

PHONE: 325-653-2411

WEBSITE: <https://cvcaa.org/index.php>

### WEST TEXAS OPPORTUNITIES INC.



COUNTIES SERVED: Fisher, Mitchell, Nolan, Scurry

PHONE: 806-872-8354

WEBSITE: <https://www.gowto.org/index.cfm>



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
**ENERGY**

## Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant

The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) Program is a \$550 million grant program funded through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. It is designed to assist states, local governments, and Tribes in implementing strategies to reduce energy use, to reduce fossil fuel emissions, and to improve energy efficiency.

Website: <https://www.energy.gov/scep/energy-efficiency-and-conservation-block-grant-program>



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
**ENERGY**

## Financing and Incentives

Consumers can find financial incentives and assistance for energy efficient and renewable energy products and improvements in the form of rebates, tax credits, or financing programs.

Website: <https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/financing-and-incentives>



## Local Government Energy Program

The Local Government Energy Program provides a number of integrated services to assist municipalities in setting up and maintaining effective energy efficiency programs. The program assists city officials through energy-efficient partnerships, technical support, preliminary energy assessment services and training workshops.

Website: <https://comptroller.texas.gov/programs/seco/programs/local/>



## Regional Energy Management Assistance Project

Keep up to date with local regional webinars, roundtables and trainings presented in the West Central Texas Council of Governments Region.

Website: <https://www.wctcog.org/seco-2/>