



Chapter 2: Energy Security & Efficiency



Why this matters

Energy-related emissions are the largest contributor to global climate change. They come from utilities and electricity generation, transportation, industry, agriculture, and commercial and residential buildings. Renewable energy sources (like rooftop solar) not only reduce emissions but are also an increasingly cost-competitive and reliable alternative to support our community's energy needs. Using energy wisely also saves money and makes our power system more secure during extreme weather events.

What's happening here?

Many Alachua County residents struggle to pay their utility bills, and this is made worse by extreme heat and cold snaps. When energy is used more efficiently, people can live more comfortably in their homes, save money, and be more financially secure.

Countywide, the best opportunities to reduce both energy emissions and cost burdens are: investing in renewable energy, and improving the efficiency of our homes, buildings, and transportation systems.

The CAP prioritizes three approaches for a more resilient energy future:

Expand energy efficiency and conservation

Invest in renewables and electrification

Build climate-resilient energy infrastructure

What does the CAP include?

Guiding strategies to reduce energy demand and improve energy security include:

- **Increasing solar panel installations on County buildings**
- **Improving home energy efficiency in energy-burdened communities**
- **Building a 100% hybrid and electric County vehicle fleet**
- **Expanding local electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure**
- **Making the energy system more resilient to extreme weather**

Program Highlight

Developed in partnership with the Community Weatherization Coalition and Rebuilding Together, the Alachua County Energy Efficiency Program funds up to \$15,000 per unit for energy-efficiency improvements to low-income rental properties.

How can residents contribute?

Save energy and money at home

- Get a free home "tune-up" from the Community Weatherization Coalition
- Set thermostats to 78° in the summer and 68° in the winter

When it's time to replace...

- Choose energy-efficient appliances and electronics
- Upgrade to clean, high-efficiency heating and cooling systems like electric heat pumps

Invest in renewables and clean energy

- Consider options like rooftop solar or community solar programs
- Choose a hybrid or electric vehicle as your next car or truck