



Climate Change Statutes

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

This project was undertaken in partnership with the USDA Office of the Chief Economist, The Office of Energy Policy and New Uses. For information on the full project, visit [Climate Change Statutes](#).

Current through the 2009 Legislative Session of the New Hampshire General Assembly.

§ 125-O:1. Findings and purpose

- I. The general court finds that while air quality has improved in recent years, scientific advances have demonstrated that adequate protection of public health, environmental quality, and economic well-being - the 3 cornerstones of New Hampshire's quality of life - requires additional, concerted reductions in air pollutant emissions. The general court also finds that the state's tradition of environmental leadership - setting an example for similarly feasible air pollution reductions from upwind jurisdictions - is also well served by additional emission reductions.
- II. Recent studies and scientific evidence, documented in the New Hampshire Clean Power Strategy issued in January 2001 by the department of environmental services, indicates that significant negative human health and ecosystem impacts continue to be caused by air pollution. The general court finds that the substantial quantities of several harmful air pollutants that continue to be emitted from existing fossil fuel burning steam electric power plants, despite recent reductions in the emission of certain air pollutants from some of these facilities, contribute to these harmful impacts and that additional emissions reductions from these sources are warranted.
- III. Specifically, the general court finds that aggressive further reductions in emissions of sulfur dioxide (SO₂), oxides of nitrogen (NO_x), mercury, and carbon dioxide (CO₂) must be pursued. These pollutants are primarily responsible for the human health and ecosystem impacts documented in the New Hampshire Clean Power Strategy issued in January 2001 by the department of environmental services.
- IV. The general court finds that, as demonstrated by recent analyses, a high quality-of-life environment has been, and will continue to be, essential to New Hampshire's economic well-being. The general court further finds that protecting New Hampshire's high quality-of-life environment by reducing air pollutant emissions returns substantial economic benefit to the state through avoided health care costs; greater tourism resulting from healthier lakes and improved vistas; more visits by fishermen, hunters, and wildlife viewers to wildlife ecosystems, and a more productive forest and agricultural sector.
- V. For the above reasons and others, the general court finds that substantial additional reductions in emissions of SO₂, NO_x, mercury, and CO₂ must be required of New Hampshire's existing fossil fuel burning steam electric power plants. Due to the collateral benefits and economies of scale associated with reducing multiple pollutant emissions at the same time, the general court finds that such aggressive emission reductions are both feasible and cost-effective if implemented simultaneously through a comprehensive, integrated power plant strategy.
- VI. The general court also finds that the environmental benefits of air pollutant reductions can be most cost-effectively achieved if implemented in a fashion that allows for regulatory and compliance

flexibility under a strictly limited overall emissions cap. Specifically, market-based approaches, such as trading and banking of emission reductions within a cap-and-trade system, allow sources to choose the most cost-effective ways to comply with established emission reduction requirements. This approach also provides sources with an incentive to reduce air pollutant emissions sooner and by greater amounts, promotes the development and use of innovative new emission control technologies, and specifies to the greatest extent possible performance results regarding environmental improvement rather than dictating expensive, facility-specific, command-and-control regulatory requirements. The general court acknowledges that future federal regulations may mandate some facility-specific requirements regarding mercury reductions.

VII. The general court also finds that energy conservation results in direct reductions in air pollutant emissions. Thus, incentives for energy conservation are an important component of an overall clean power strategy. The general court recognizes that energy conservation expenditures made by utilities using system benefits charge funds can benefit all citizens and ratepayers.