

Government

What government energy, facilities, and finance leaders are prioritizing, and where they're facing challenges, based on [EnergyCAP's comprehensive survey of nearly 200 organizations](#) and four decades of experience serving the public sector.

Utility management in the public sector

Government organizations managing utility costs face a distinct set of pressures: budgets set months in advance, procurement processes that slow tool adoption, and public accountability for every dollar spent on energy. Rising costs are testing these structures, yet even with the smallest average team size of any sector we surveyed, resilient government energy management teams are still finding ways to deliver on their goals.

66%

of gov organizations saw utility budgets increase in the past year

50%

of gov respondents are not fully confident in their utility budget accuracy

1 in 5

gov organizations rely on a single person to handle every aspect of energy management

The government dilemma

Two-thirds of government organizations are seeing energy prices rise, but fixed annual budgets, thin staffing, and reactive practices limit how quickly they can respond. At the same time, billing accuracy has emerged as a distinctly public-sector pressure point: government respondents prioritize it at nearly double the cross-industry rate, reflecting the accountability demands of public spending and the unique complexity of state and local government utility billing.

1/3rd

describe their energy management approach as reactive and manual

58%

feel confident in meeting their energy management goals

1 in 5

are planning to increase staffing. 61% are keeping teams steady, 7% plan to cut resources

53%

aren't planning to add new tools, but 1 in 5 want to add software in the next 12 months

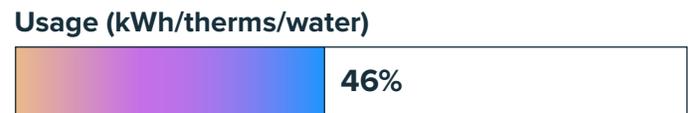
Top 2026 goals for government

- 1 Control or reduce total utility spend**
61% of government respondents
Given rising prices, this isn't a surprise. Controlling or reducing spend to keep budgets in check is the top goal across every industry we surveyed, including governments.
- 2 Reduce usage intensity**
48% of government respondents
State clean energy mandates and executive orders make consumption reduction a compliance driver, not just a cost lever.
- 3 Improve budget and forecast accuracy**
46% of government respondents
Budget cycles run 12–18 months ahead of execution. Energy teams need defensible numbers well before costs are known.
- 4 Improve billing accuracy and reduce rework**
46%—vs. 31% cross-industry
Complex portfolios mean billing errors compound silently, and stagnant team sizes for governments means help isn't on the way. Fewer errors and less rework is top of mind for squeezed teams.
- 5 Strengthen visibility and reporting for leadership**
42% of government respondents
Elected officials and oversight bodies increasingly expect energy KPIs alongside other operational metrics.

Top government blockers to progress



How success is measured



Where government energy management is heading in 2026

State and local governments manage some of the largest and most complex utility portfolios in the country: courthouses, transit systems, water treatment, and public spaces, with energy teams approximately half the size of the other industries we surveyed. These are the trends shaping what's changing, and what's not.



Budget cycles don't move as fast as utility prices

State and local budgets are often set 12–18 months in advance. When energy prices spike, governments have limited flexibility to respond, making accurate forecasting a necessity.



Aging infrastructure is a cost multiplier

Many government facilities operate in aging building stock with deferred maintenance. Energy waste is embedded in the infrastructure, but with no data to quantify it, making the capital case for improvements remains politically and financially difficult.



State reporting mandates are creating new compliance pressure

State and city sustainability goals, benchmarking mandates, and building performance standards are multiplying, and usually begin with government buildings—adding reporting and reduction obligations for government energy teams long before other building owners must comply.



Energy management is often a secondary function

In many municipalities, energy management is handled by the same team managing maintenance, capital projects, and vendor relationships. With 39% of government respondents citing staff bandwidth as their top blocker—the highest rate of any sector—the function is structurally under resourced.



Utility bill auditing is untapped savings

Government organizations rarely have the staff or systems to systematically audit utility bills for errors, unusual charges, or use anomalies. Yet 1 in 5 utility bills processed by EnergyCAP contain errors. Even if errors add just 1% to your annual utility spend, that's leaving thousands, or even millions, of dollars on the table.



Public accountability is raising the bar on transparency

Elected officials and city managers increasingly face questions about utility spending from the public, auditors, and oversight bodies. Energy teams that can produce clear, audit-ready reports are better positioned to defend their budgets and programs.

The opportunity ahead

Three things EnergyCAP consistently sees that work for government energy teams, regardless of team size or tooling.

Three years beats one

Use at least three years of historical data when building utility budgets. Single-year baselines miss seasonal variation and long-term trends.

Benchmarking lights the way

Do a simple comparison to find your highest-spend facilities per square foot, and focus conservation efforts there.

Check your bills

Even if you can't check every line item, check that rate schedules on your bills match what was negotiated; utilities misapply rates more often than you think.

How EnergyCAP helps

Designed for the complexity and accountability of the public sector

EnergyCAP has been serving state and local governments for four decades—longer than any other energy management software provider. We understand procurement constraints, public accountability requirements, and the operational realities of managing diverse public portfolios on lean teams and budgets.

Utility Bill Management

Automatically process utility invoices, flag issues and errors, and get out of spreadsheets, turning an error-prone process into a reliable cost-savings engine that pays for itself.

Budget forecasting and variance

Generate reliable, sophisticated utility budgets based on more than just last year's numbers, then track spend vs. budget in real time—a top goal for almost half of government respondents.

Portfolio-wide visibility

Centralize data across every facility: courthouses, fire stations, transit centers, and parks, and surface the consumption and cost trends that inform capital planning and efficiency investments.

Meet your #1 goal: Control costs

EnergyCAP customers achieve an average of 10% year-over-year bill savings. For government organizations managing millions in annual utility spend across dozens of facilities, that's a meaningful return.

What this looks like in practice

In **Coral Gables, FL**, EnergyCAP helped centralize utility and sustainability data and connect it to the city's Smart City Hub and Digital Twin. That gave the city a stronger foundation for tracking progress and communicating results, alongside measurable reductions of 20% in electricity use, 22% in water use, and 20% in greenhouse gas emissions.

[Read Coral Gable's EnergyCAP success story →](#)

