

NY Cannabis Office Unveils Tool for Sustainability, Climate Goals

New York State Introduces PowerScore Platform for Cannabis Energy and Water Reporting

The New York State [Office of Cannabis Management \(OCM\)](#) is excited to announce the launch of PowerScore, a state-specific platform designed to help licensed cannabis cultivators meet energy and water reporting regulations. This tool plays a pivotal role in the OCM's strategy to minimize the environmental impact of the cannabis industry under the Marijuana Regulation & Taxation Act (MRTA), aligning with the broader climate objectives set forth in New York's Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA).

The platform is part of a broader set of environmental sustainability measures aimed at reducing the carbon footprint of both medical and adult-use cannabis operations while supporting the State's commitment to economic, environmental, and social equity. These efforts represent a significant step toward fostering a sustainable and responsible cannabis industry in New York.

PowerScore: A Resource Management Tool for Cannabis Cultivators

Licensees authorized for cannabis cultivation in New York will now use PowerScore, a platform that offers in-depth insights into energy and water use, waste generation, and overall resource consumption. Hosted by the non-profit organization Resource Innovation Institute, PowerScore helps cultivators understand the relationship between their operating costs and crop yield, offering them the tools needed to optimize their operations.

Importantly, PowerScore is available at no cost to licensed cultivators. The platform's ability to track resource use and environmental impact is designed to lower operational costs and assist cannabis businesses in complying with New York's strict environmental standards. The first required report for licensees—detailing energy, water use, and waste generation—is due on August 31, 2025, giving growers ample time to familiarize themselves with the system.

PowerScore and New York's Climate Goals

“Utilizing PowerScore for resource tracking is a pivotal step in aligning the legal cannabis industry with New York's climate goals,” said Felicia A.B. Reid, Acting Executive Director of the New York State Office of Cannabis Management. “This initiative represents a major advancement in building a more sustainable and resilient cannabis industry. By streamlining processes to limit environmental impact and removing historical economic barriers, we are not only saving licensees time and money but also empowering them to focus on innovation and growth.”

The PowerScore platform is part of the state's broader environmental sustainability initiatives, contributing to New York's climate strategy outlined in the CLCPA. These initiatives focus on reducing energy consumption, cutting greenhouse gas emissions, minimizing waste, and protecting vital natural resources. By promoting sustainable practices in the cannabis industry, New York is setting a national standard for environmentally responsible cannabis cultivation.

Driving Compliance and Innovation in the Cannabis Industry

Derek Smith, Executive Director of Resource Innovation Institute, emphasized the dual benefits of compliance and innovation provided by PowerScore. "With the launch of Cannabis PowerScore in New York, we're providing cultivators with a powerful tool to drive both compliance and innovation. PowerScore equips growers with essential insights into their resource consumption, empowering them to optimize their operations and reduce costs while contributing to a more sustainable cannabis industry."

This focus on sustainability will not only help cannabis operators meet regulatory requirements but also encourage innovation in resource management, leading to more efficient operations and reduced operational expenses over time.

Energy and Environmental Regulations for a Sustainable Future

The OCM's Energy & Environmental Sustainability Initiatives Regulations are comprehensive, targeting energy use, greenhouse gas emissions, and waste generation. Key components include:

Energy Use Plans: Cannabis cultivators are required to implement energy use plans, which must include the installation of energy meters and adherence to strict efficiency standards for lighting and HVAC systems. The use of fossil fuel combustion as a primary energy source is prohibited, further promoting sustainable practices.

Waste Minimization: Operators are also required to adopt waste minimization practices, including sustainable cultivation techniques and environmentally friendly packaging that promotes recycling and reduces landfill waste.

Water Use Reporting: The tracking of water consumption is equally important in these regulations. By reporting and managing water use efficiently, cultivators will contribute to preserving New York's vital water resources.

Tailored Approaches for Smaller Cultivators

Recognizing the diverse scale of cannabis operations in New York, the OCM has tailored certain regulations for smaller licensees. Smaller-scale cultivators, including legacy growers, are held to less stringent standards and are granted two licensing periods to comply with specific energy and environmental regulations. This consideration ensures that all cannabis operators, regardless of size or capital, can thrive while contributing to a more sustainable industry.

These efforts demonstrate New York's commitment to fostering a cannabis industry that is both equitable and environmentally responsible. By providing support to legacy growers and less capitalized operators, the state is ensuring that sustainability does not become a barrier to entry for smaller businesses.

Looking Ahead: Research and Development for a Greener Cannabis Industry

The OCM is also investing in research and development to explore innovative ways to further reduce the environmental footprint of cannabis production. This includes the development of sustainable packaging solutions, improved waste management practices, and resource-efficient cultivation techniques. These initiatives are designed not only to help the cannabis industry meet current environmental standards but also to push the boundaries of sustainability.

“By fostering research and equity-focused strategies, the Office aims to build a cannabis market that not only meets the state’s environmental goals but also serves as a model for sustainability and social responsibility,” said Reid. The continued investment in research will allow New York to refine its cannabis regulations, ensuring that they remain effective and forward-thinking.

Getting Started with PowerScore

On September 3, PowerScore account setup emails were sent to licensees, providing step-by-step instructions on how to set up accounts and start tracking resource consumption. Licensees can follow the prompts to begin reporting on their cultivation activities, ensuring that they are in compliance with New York’s sustainability regulations.

A More Sustainable and Equitable Cannabis Industry

The implementation of PowerScore and the broader energy and environmental sustainability measures are a testament to New York’s dedication to creating an environmentally responsible and socially equitable cannabis industry. By reducing resource consumption, cutting operational costs, and promoting innovation, the OCM is laying the foundation for a cannabis market that is both sustainable and profitable.

As New York continues to lead the way in cannabis regulation, these initiatives serve as a national model for creating an industry that values environmental stewardship, social equity, and economic resilience. With the help of tools like PowerScore, New York’s cannabis cultivators are well-positioned to thrive in this new era of sustainability.

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