

**NEW YORK GEOTHERMAL ENERGY ORGANIZATION**

July 26, 2024

Kevin Duerr-Clark

Assistant Director for Code Development

Division of Building Standards & Codes

NYS Dept. of State

99 Washington Ave.

Albany, NY 12231-0001

**Re: Notice of Rule in Development: Part 1229 and Part 1240**

Dear Mr. Duerr-Clark:

The New York Geothermal Energy Organization (NY-GEO) appreciates the opportunity to comment on rules currently in development that would amend Part 1229 and Part 1240 of Title 19 of the New York Codes, Rules and Regulations.NY-GEO members include many independently owned small businesses, comprised of geothermal heat pump (GHP)installers, manufacturers, distributors, drillers, consultants and industry stakeholders from across NY State serving urban, suburban and rural areas.

These rules wouldestablish requirements for the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code (Uniform Code) and State Energy Conservation Construction Code (Energy Code). Specifically, we would like consideration given toward two aspects of requirements which foster the accelerated implementation of prohibiting the installation of fossil-fuel equipment and building systems in new buildings, including any future repair, alteration, addition, relocation, or change of occupancy or use of such new buildings, and any building for which a substantially complete building permit application is submitted after December 31, 2028.

**Aspect #1 Operational savings for system owners**

Codes and standards updates are intended to improve many aspects of future structures, including future operating costs. As electrification of buildings grows, the number of gas system customers will decrease and they will be burdened with the increased operating costs of long-lived gas infrastructure assets, (i.e. higher rates). Electrification (i.e. heat pumps, solar panels etc.) gives customers an option for lower operating costs.

Additionally, based on the multi-year, multi-installation experience of our NY-GEO member experts, the unanimous consensus is that the average cost for fully installed residential home GHP heating/cooling systems, which includes ground loops/thermal storage, is at parity with non GHP systems. Therefore, energy and building codes that strongly promote electrification and GHP’s for new and retrofitted structures can only be seen as a “win-win” for NYS residents, the building industry, utility ratepayers and state entities that would be asked for funding to achieve decarbonization goals.

**Aspect #2 The geothermal heating and cooling industry in New York State is ready and capable.**

NY-GEO Board and members are excited to see positive action/interest from legislators, regulators, developers and the general public. Trade schools and labor organizations are incorporating geothermal programs to include with their HVAC training to prepare a workforce that is ready to install geothermal systems.  State legislators, regulators, real estate developers and the public are eager to visit geothermal sites to learn about the technology that will work for them. The transferability of current experience and skills in existing industries, including but not limited to HVAV, plumbing and electrical, to geothermal means that these workers can easily transition to the tasks of all-electric construction and there should be no shortage of skilled workers. We’re anxious to see the time getting nearer when there is a level playing field for our industry/members, especially with codes and standards entities recognizing our industry’s capacity to meet economic, reliability/performance demands, continue growing our workforce with good paying employment and create a healthier environment in homes and places of work.

NY-GEO strongly encourages electrification.  We are in a climate crisis. The time to add an all electric heat pump, which provides both heating and cooling is when the building is being built.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments.

John Rath

Director of Operations

NY-GEO

New York Geothermal Energy Organization, Inc. (NY-GEO)

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**The New York Geothermal Energy Organization (NY-GEO) is a non-profit trade organization representing geothermal heat pump (GHP) installers, manufacturers, distributors, drillers, consultants and industry stakeholders from throughout New York State and beyond.**