

Clean Energy Communities News

Moving our communities toward sustainability.



Director's Corner



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Welcome to the eighth edition of the Eastern Upstate NY Territory's Clean Energy Communities (CEC) quarterly newsletter. [The CEC program](#), funded by NYSERDA, is delivered within the Territory by the Capital District Regional Planning Commission through a unique partnership of regional agencies, which includes the Adirondack North Country Association, the Mohawk Valley Economic Development District, and the Hudson Valley Regional Council. The Team is also supported by Climate Action Associates, LLC and Courtney Strong Inc.

Communities across the Territory are receiving technical support and actively completing "High Impact Actions" in their pursuit of CEC Designation. Communities must complete four actions to achieve CEC designation. Currently, 158 communities within the Territory have completed a total of 472 actions, 83 communities are officially designated and advancing program funded projects, and many others are nearing the designation finish line.

Continue reading to learn about some of the exemplary actions local governments are taking to become sustainable and energy efficient. [Contact your regional outreach coordinator](#) if your community is interested in becoming a Clean Energy Community.

A Wave of Communities Seeking CEC Designation in the North Country

The [NYSERDA Clean Energy Communities](#) program is flourishing in the North Country as more communities continue to receive and seek designation. Local governments in New York State can use the Clean Energy Communities program to implement clean energy actions, save energy costs, create jobs, and improve the environment. In addition to providing tools, resources, and technical assistance, the program recognizes and rewards leadership for the completion of clean energy projects.

Here's a run-down of the latest communities tackling clean energy and climate issues in the North Country:

St. Lawrence County

St. Lawrence County is the most recent community to have completed four High Impact Energy Actions (HIAs) and has been named a Clean Energy Community by NYSERDA. Local governments must complete four of 10 High Impact Actions to earn a Clean Energy Community designation and qualify to apply for grant funding. At least two actions must have been completed after August 1, 2016. The County received the designation for completing the following high-impact clean energy actions:

- [Benchmarking](#) - Adopted a policy to report the energy use of buildings
- [Clean Energy Upgrades](#) - Achieved 10% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from buildings
- [Clean Fleets](#) - Purchased a plug-in hybrid and installed an electric vehicle charging station
- [Solarize](#) - Managed a Solarize marketing campaign to encourage residents to install solar installations with more than 40 units installed countywide.

"It's wonderful that we have been designated as a Clean Energy Community. We will continue to be mindful of our energy usage and will look for new ways to save energy and promote energy conservation," said Legislator John Burke, Norfolk. Burke first introduced the idea of the county becoming a Clean Energy Community in 2016.

The designation gives the County an opportunity to apply for up to \$250,000 toward additional clean energy projects, with no local cost share.

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10 Mid-Hudson Municipalities Participating in Climate Action Planning Institute



The **[Climate Smart Communities \(CSC\) Program](#)** is one of the High Impact Actions under the **[CEC Program](#)** that local governments can pursue to save money, foster a vibrant economy, improve the environment, and demonstrate clean energy leadership.

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventories and climate action plans are part of Pledge Element 2 under the CSC Program, and are key to establishing baselines and setting achievable goals.

The **[Hudson Valley Regional Council \(HVRC\)](#)**, with the support of **[Climate Action Associates \(CAA\)](#)**, has begun facilitating a Climate Action Planning working group which consists of a series of 10 monthly meetings. This project is intended for communities in Ulster County that have taken the Climate Smart Communities Pledge and have appointed their CSC Coordinator(s).

Additionally, communities that also have CSC Task Forces in place and have identified a Liaison between the local government and the Task Force, will have the greatest opportunity for success, as there is a significant amount of information-gathering and coordination that will need to occur at the local level throughout this project.

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30-Minute Webinar: Benchmarking with Energy Star Portfolio Manager, the Basics

Buildings account for more than 60% of the energy used in New York State. Adopting a benchmarking policy to measure and share data on building energy use over time allows owners and occupants to compare energy usage against other buildings and better identify opportunities to cut energy waste.

Collecting, reporting, and sharing benchmarking data regularly helps the public and government agencies make smarter investment decisions; rewards efficiency; and drives widespread, continuous improvement. Benchmarking requires the annual reporting of energy used in municipal buildings. Large communities are also required to disclose annually the amount of energy used in large private buildings.

Although the task may seem daunting, municipalities and small businesses can learn how to use Energy Star's free Portfolio Manager to input your energy data and analyze trends. Importing your data is a requirement of the "**Benchmarking**" action item for Clean Energy Communities, and this 30-minute webinar is a great way to get started with the basics for anyone looking to see their energy use trends.



NY-Sun Solar Guidebook for Local Governments



The New York Solar Guidebook has information, tools, and step-by-step instructions to support local governments managing solar energy development in their communities.

The Guidebook addresses:

- Rooftop access and ventilation requirements
- Property tax exemptions
- Landowner considerations for solar land leases
- Decommissioning ground-mounted solar installations
- The most common solar installation deficiencies in New York State
- Solar Payment-In-Lieu-of-Taxes (PILOT) toolkit and more.

[Download](#) the full New York Solar Guidebook as a PDF or [access individual chapters](#).

Designated Eastern NY Clean Energy Communities

A total of 83 communities have been named Clean Energy Communities in the Eastern NY Region. These communities have demonstrated their commitment to clean energy by participating in the Clean Energy Communities Program. For a full list of communities throughout New York State, visit the [NYSERDA website](#).



Upcoming Events

August 7th Webinar: Community Choice Aggregation

NYSERDA CLEAN ENERGY COMMUNITIES

COMMUNITY CHOICE AGGREGATION - A HIGH IMPACT ACTION

AUGUST 7, 2018 | 11:00AM - 1:00PM

Register

Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) is a municipal energy procurement model that replaces the utility as the default supplier of electricity for virtually all homes and small businesses within your jurisdiction. CCA puts control of choosing an energy supplier in local hands. By pooling demand, communities build the clout necessary to negotiate lower rates with private suppliers and are able to choose cleaner energy.

A CCA can allow whole communities to participate in the clean energy economy by ensuring that a greater percentage of electricity is coming from renewable sources. CCA has the potential to simultaneously deliver lower monthly bills and cleaner energy for your constituents.

Join NYSERDA's Clean Energy Communities (CEC) team for a statewide webinar to take a behind the scenes look at Sustainable Westchester and understand how CCA really works and how your community can get involved .

October Workshop: Large-Scale Solar in Your Community

Join the Mid-Hudson Clean Energy Communities Coordinators on October 19th for a hands-on workshop on large-scale solar in the region. You will visit three communities to learn about siting, connectivity, and financing issues. To receive the invitation and details of the event as soon as its finalized, email melissa.herreria@courtneystrong.com.

Save the Date! Clean Energy Economy Conference

October 24 & 25, 2018

POWER



owning our energy future

The Clean Energy Economy Conference is returning to The Queensbury Hotel in Glens Falls, October 24th & 25th.

This event facilitates peer-to-peer collaboration and the exchange of knowledge between clean energy marketplace participants and champions including policy makers, decision makers, project developers and community members.

This year marks the 7th Annual Clean Energy Conference, encompassing the North Country and Capital District regions of New York State.

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