Accelerating Climate Action Through Collaboration

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Who We Are

Sustainable Westchester is a not-for-profit, consortium of Westchester County local governments that facilitates effective, innovative collaboration on sustainability initiatives.

Our goal is to bring socially responsible, environmentally sound, and economically viable solutions that create healthy, vibrant, sustainable communities.
Key to Success: Countywide Scale + Deep Community Relationships

Members represent 1 million people.

Relationships of 10+ years with most municipalities. Elected officials, municipal staff and sustainability advocates.

Allows us to leverage scale (aggregated purchasing, securing grants and contracts) while still going deep with individual municipalities.
Key Programs:

**Westchester Power** (Community Choice Aggregation) – 115,000+ households in 27 municipalities. 24 opted for green/renewable power.

**Community Solar** – green the local grid and offer solar savings to more Westchester residents and businesses.

**HeatSmart** – Displace fossil fuels for heating homes and commercial properties through use of heat pumps – and energy efficiency.

**Clean Transportation** – discounts on EVs, assistance securing charging infrastructure.

**Zero Waste** – support for municipalities to improve recycling and provide composting resources including Recycle Right App (12 munis).
Multiple programs, many munis builds capacity, leverages learning.

Many members have participated in multiple programs.
- Each success builds capacity and increases confidence and appetite for more action.
- Each program provides opportunity for engagement with community on additional offerings and deepens understanding.

Participation in SW solidifies reputation for pragmatic environmental leadership and provides continuity through changes in elected leadership.
SW’s work across municipalities leverages learning and experience.

SW has opportunity to optimize programs design and management through launches in many municipalities. Learnings from Solarize reflected in HeatSmart, and in Community Solar.

Range of programs allows us to serve municipalities with different priorities.

Munis opt into programs that suit them.
Countywide scale allows access to bigger picture

SW can work on plans and tackle opportunities at County scale with focus on NYS context. Help municipalities participate effectively in this broader context (trainings, sharing of best practices, participation in planning for energy future).
Revenue Sources

**Earned income** – Westchester Power administration fee, Community Solar customer enrollment contracts, Solarize and HeatSmart success fees, Recycle Right subscriptions.

**Grants** – HeatSmart, EVs

**Member Dues.**

Mandate for programs to be financially self-sufficient more challenging in some areas (water, planning, etc).
Westchester Power
(Community Choice Aggregation)
OVERVIEW

First program of its kind in NYS. Participating Westchester municipalities substitute Westchester Power’s fixed rate electricity supply as the designated default supply based on the program’s ability to deliver green power, offer access and choice at competitive fixed market rates.

• The single most impactful measure a community can take to reduce its carbon footprint
• Establishes a dialogue about energy with the entire community, and serves as stepping stone for deeper engagement.
Historical context – proven program

- 2015: Public Service Commission Approval of SW pilot, 1st in NYS
- 2016: Launch with 20 municipalities
- Today: 27 municipalities (other similar programs forming around NYS)
Westchester Power
Supply only - delivery still by Con Ed / NYSEG
Key elements of program

- Bulk purchasing = competitive fixed rates for energy supply via open bidding process
- Opt-out format: all residents and small businesses (EL1 & EL2 rate classes) are enrolled unless they opt-out (or are already with an ESCO supply).
- Larger demand accounts are not included but can opt in with supplier assent (talk to us if interested).
- SW administers on behalf of municipalities - provides customer service, enhanced program development.
Scale = IMPACT

500,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide. That’s equivalent to:

106,157 cars taken off the road for a year

OR

8.2 million tree seedlings grown for 10 years
Summary: BENEFITS

▪ Creates opportunity for residents/ businesses to contribute and be part of community effort to transition to renewable energy
▪ Fixed rates = controlling costs, insurance against market fluctuations and spikes
▪ Increasing consumer choice via a vetted program
▪ Easy, safe participation - no contracts, hidden fees and price ‘slamming’
▪ Opportunity to narrow the small business and residential electricity rate differential
Solar Programs
Solar Programs

Original version of Solarize Westchester = rooftop.

- 22 Munis, 600 installations
- 4,000 inquiries. 85% didn’t proceed – economics, roof condition, etc.
Community Solar

Solar electric panels are installed off site in sunny locations to produce renewable energy for subscribers.

Any utility customer (home or business) in the area can subscribe.

Each subscriber’s utility bill is credited accordingly. Subscriber pays owner of solar farm a discounted amount for the credits.

Image credit: NYSERDA
Community Solar

Benefits for Subscribers:
• Financial savings (up to 10% of electricity bill)
• No upfront cost
• No solar installation
• Opportunity to support local clean energy
Community Solar

Benefits for Hosts:
• Generate revenue through roof/property lease (approx. $50K/year for 100-120K sq. ft, 25-year lease)
• No investment
• Create opportunity for more renewable energy generation, tailored enrollment opportunity for employees or members of community (SW can customize).
Westchester Power:
• Integration of Community Solar
• Time of Use offering
• Beyond RECs – Direct Supply

Driving transition from fossil fuels through expanded HeatSmart program.
Solar acceleration/aggregation for municipalities and commercial properties.
Concept tests: Sunshine-to-EV, Sub-municipal CCA for low income residents, Pay-as-You-Throw…

Ensuring access, equity and environmental justice are woven through programs.

Our greatest asset: our ever-deepening relationship with our communities.

What’s Next?
Programs, policies, partners & persistence
Leveraging all available tools to create a path to a clean economy
Thank you!

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