

6.8 Implement a Community Energy Campaign

10 Points

Objective

Through increased guidance on energy-related issues, create opportunities for the residential, commercial, and/or industrial sectors to reduce their overall energy use and costs.

What to Do

All elements must be completed to receive credit.

1. Identify a target audience and area of efficiency on which to focus your energy campaign. Your target audience may be residents, local business owners, or multifamily property owners, and your area of focus may be solar-energy, renewable thermal, electric vehicles, renewable heating and cooling, etc. Low- to moderate-income (LMI) residents spend upwards of 10% of their income on energy costs, creating a crushing energy burden. Consider targeting LMI residents where energy efficiency and renewable energy can make a greater impact. Partnering with the CT Green Bank, the utilities, and vendors that serve LMI communities, can greatly enhance outreach efforts.

Submit: A description of your campaign's target audience and goal.

2. Select or design a campaign to educate your audience about available programs that encourage implementation of energy efficiency measures designed for that audience. Consider how useful resources or educational programs are to residents of different income and education levels. For example: hold a series of events to educate multifamily property owners on the BenchmarkCT program; undertake a thermalize campaign to encourage residents to install renewable heating and cooling technologies; run a solarize campaign to encourage residents to install solar PV; and/or an energize campaign to encourage residents to undertake energy assessments. Partner with local lenders to educate residents about the availability of energy financing options and loans that can address solar, energy efficiency and health and safety issues. Support clean energy for low-income residents by promoting subscriptions to a shared clean energy facility, like Solar For All. See examples of campaigns in the "Resources" section.

Submit: The outline of your campaign and steps taken to achieve the campaign mission.

3. Carry out the campaign.

Submit: A description of how the audience was engaged throughout the campaign, plus information about the number of participants, time period offered, impact (if possible), and lessons learned.

Potential Municipal and Community Collaborators

Depending on the campaign selected, any number of municipal department staff should be involved, as well as a local energy task force or other relevant committee.

Funding

For a complete listing of potential funding opportunities to assist with implementing Sustainable CT Actions, please visit the [Sustainable CT Grants Portal](#), which is searchable by Action. Please also visit the [Sustainable](#)

[CT Resources for Certification](#) page for opportunities for technical assistance and other supports.

Resources

Toolkits, Calculators, Guidance Documents

- [Benchmark CT](#) - Connecticut Green Bank has partnered with WegoWise and the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority to offer Benchmark CT, a free assessment tool to help multifamily property owners understand their property's energy use and identify energy savings opportunities. Property owners can compare their property's energy and water consumption against similar buildings in the area and identify potential energy savings.
- [Pre-development financing](#) for energy & health & safety measures. The Connecticut Green Bank offers two pre-development loan products for multifamily buildings that provide property owners an affordable, low-risk, solution to analyze, design and arrange financing for green energy upgrades.
- [Term Financing](#) in the form of several different financial products are available for multifamily property owners interested in making energy efficiency, clean energy and health and safety upgrades to their buildings.
- [GoSolar CT](#). GoSolarCT is an excellent resource for homeowners looking to go solar, from finding a contractor to learning about the process - this website is a one stop shop for educating residents all about solar.
- [Smart-E loans](#) for residential clean energy and energy efficiency improvements. Through participating local lenders, the Smart-E loan is a multi-measure loan that finances clean energy and energy efficiency improvements for single family residences including natural gas conversion, renewable heating & cooling, solar, electrical vehicle chargers and storage. Customers that bundle certain technologies receive discounted rates. There is also a credit challenged version of the loan for credit-challenged customers.
- [Energize CT Financing](#) - Energize CT loans finance a wide range of measures, including home heating equipment and energy conservation measures including rates as low as 0% for some products.
- [Posigen Solar for All](#) - Posigen Solar Solutions is one of the only solar contractors in Connecticut specifically focused on bringing solar to low-and moderate- income communities. By using alternative underwriting strategies, community-based marketing and offering energy savings agreements in addition to solar, they are able to make a significant dent in low income energy burdens. Consider partnering with Posigen on a Solar for All campaign in your community.
- [Energize Connecticut™ campaign](#) - Work with utility to promote Energize Connecticut™ program offerings to homeowners and businesses throughout the community. Home Energy Solutions (HES) is a subsidized energy assessment program for homeowners that can lead to savings on upgrading homes with energy saving measures.
- [Solarize CT](#) - Implement an 18 week Solarize campaign to increase residential solar within a town/city. Campaign includes participation in choosing a solar installer and working with non-profit Smart Power to provide educational opportunities and outreach to the community members. It offers discounted pricing, too.
- [C-PACE](#) - C-PACE allows building owners to finance qualifying energy efficiency and clean energy improvements through a voluntary assessment on their property tax bill. Property owners pay for the improvements over time through this additional charge on their property tax bill, and the repayment obligation transfers automatically to the next owner if the property is sold. Capital provided under the C-PACE program is secured by a lien on the property, so low-interest capital can be raised from the private sector.
- [Green Bank PPA](#) - The Green Bank Solar Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) allows building owners to experience the benefits of solar energy without the responsibility of owning or maintaining a solar PV system. With Connecticut Green Bank's Solar PPA program, you buy the energy you need with no monthly fee.
- [Small Business Energy Advantage \(SBEA\) and New Construction](#) program offerings provide businesses, developers, and other key community groups with access to financing, incentives and technical resources as they pertain to energy efficiency and conservation.
- [EESmarts Curriculum Development for Schools](#) - Work with local teachers to implement an EESmarts curriculum in local schools. Eesmarts is an energy efficiency and clean, renewable energy learning initiative funded by the Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund. Each eesmarts lesson features materials for

students, hands-on activities, detailed teacher guidebooks, extensions and evaluation tools. The lessons are flexible and interdisciplinary and the program fits seamlessly into any class curriculum.

- Acadia Center, "[Community Energy Vision, Action Guide for Connecticut](#)"
- [CT Green Bank](#): No-cost technical support

Organizations and Relevant Programs

- [EnergizeCT](#)
- [eeSmarts](#)
- [SolarizeCT](#)
- [Operation Fuel](#)
- [The Solarize Guidebook](#)
- [Enterprise Green Communities](#)
- [Stamford 2030 District](#)
- [Connecticut Green Building Council](#)

Why This Matters

Achieving sustainability in your community is possible when you engage all sectors in meeting your energy use reduction goals and implementing actions. As members of local government, you have the power to bring stakeholders together to educate each other and build awareness of sustainability goals and opportunities in the community. You can help residents and businesses take advantage of programs that can reduce their environmental impact. Numerous existing programs are intended to reduce energy costs in various segments of the community, and a municipality often can participate in these programs at little to no cost.

Community resilience stems from healthy citizens. While, you, as a municipality, cannot afford to help every home or business owner reduce costs and become energy efficient, you can provide programs that assist residents without costing your city or town.

Benefits

Energy efficiency and conservation programs result in cleaner air, more affordable energy bills, and access to many financing, incentive, and technical resources.

Programs that help residents go solar decrease the burden on the electrical grid and help prevent brown-outs during peak demand. Providing residents with programs that help them save money and energy increases their satisfaction with their community and increases civic participation.

CT Success Stories

- Norwich, CT: [Energize Norwich](#) – Energize Norwich was a two-year campaign supported by a partnership between the Connecticut Green Bank, Norwich (CT) Public Utilities, Core Plus Federal Credit Union, Eastern Savings Bank and SmartPower. The “Energize Norwich” campaign encouraged Norwich residents to save money by adopting energy savings measures for their home. Norwich residents were given access to preselected contractors, discount and tiered pricing, and a clear program end date. Partnerships with local banks provide residents with access to no money down financing for affordable energy efficiency measures that will lower their monthly utility bills.

Credit for Past Action

- The community energy campaign must have been completed within 3 years prior to application submission.