Clean Energy Communities Program

The New York State Clean Energy Communities program began in 2016. Funded through the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), the program’s intent is to encourage communities to accelerate local energy saving and renewable energy projects, contributing to the state’s efforts to meet the 50X30 Clean Energy Standard (50% electricity from renewable sources by 2030).

The program requires cities, towns, villages or counties to complete 4 actions from the following list in order to obtain their certification. As of July 31, 2017, 211 communities have started the process (the number at the end of each action is the number of communities that have completed the action):

- Benchmarking - Adopt a policy to report the energy use of buildings (153)
- Clean Energy Upgrades - Achieve 10% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from buildings (9)
- LED Street Lights - Convert street lights to energy efficient LED technology (32)
- Clean Fleets - Install electric vehicle charging stations or deploy alternative fuel vehicles (67)
- Solarize - Undertake a local solarize campaign to increase the number of solar rooftops (38)
- Unified Solar Permit - Streamline the approvals process for solar (146)
- Energy Code Enforcement Training - Train compliance officers in energy code best practices (85)
- Climate Smart Communities Certification - Get certified by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (15)
- Community Choice Aggregation - Put energy supply choices in your community’s hands (6)
- Energize New York Finance - Offer energy upgrade financing to businesses and non-profits (21)

88 communities have already received designation from the state and are eligible for grants up to $250,000 (based on the size of the community), usable for conservation or renewable energy projects.

To learn more about the Clean Energy Communities program, go to www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec

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