

Happy Earth Day, 2020 from...



Following these challenging times, **Sustainable Westchester** believes that the goal to create more resilient, healthy, and sustainable communities is going to be more important than ever. Clean energy is a foundation on which these communities will be built and we are continuing to do the work that helps all of our communities achieve this goal.

We are often asked, “What can we do?” There are several ways to make changes that not only support renewable energy and “green” the grid, but also result in the reduction of energy usage and cost savings.

As we celebrate the **50th Anniversary of Earth Day**, we want to share actions that can be taken now, from the comfort of our homes, to make an impact.

We invite you to share and pass this information along, in part or in its entirety, in your community newsletters, emails, social media posts or to friends and neighbors.

I. Economy & Efficiency

Understand your utility bill and energy usage

Understanding your bill can be the foundation for savings and changing usage habits. Follow this link to Sustainable Westchester’s [“HOW TO READ YOUR BILL”](#) videos for both Con Ed and NYSEG utility customers. For Spanish speaking residents, please call our office at 914-242-4725.

LED light bulbs are simple, savings solutions!

Go with nature & look for lesser expensive alternatives

Open and close blinds and curtains with the season to take advantage of the heating and cooling the daytime sun provides. Then there are fans, a less expensive alternative to air conditioning.

Turning off appliances is only 1/2 the job; unplugging means greater savings!

Even a coffee maker that is switched off is using energy. It’s called vampire power, and like a vampire, it can “drain” – in this case, your budget. A quick sweep of your house, and you are likely to find several opportunities to unplug and save.

Changing energy usage habits can make a positive impact!

Focus on full loads with all your major appliances and opt for cool water cycles which use less energy. Look for items that can be air-dried as the weather gets nicer. For some residents, dollar savings can add up if you get in the habit of running these during non-peak hours.

Like gremlins, electronics’ chargers are everywhere, sneakily stealing energy!

Did you know that the average US household has 11 personal devices? Often overlooked, these chargers are using energy even when they are not plugged into their respective devices. Unplug chargers to phones, tablets, and laptops when not in use or consolidate your charging needs into one power strip for a "one-click" switch off.

Invest in smart technology

Programmable thermostats might be the perfect solution for many busy households. You can easily set the heat or the AC around your schedule and won't spend money heating an empty house or zone.

For additional user-friendly energy tips and action items, you can visit:

- [NYSERDA Energy Saving Tips](#)
 - [Constellation NewEnergy Tips](#)
 - [Direct Energy Tips](#)
 - [ConEdison Energy Save Energy & Money](#)
 - [NYSEG Smart Energy](#)
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II. Enroll in Community Solar. It's a Short & Long-term Investment in Utility Savings & Renewable Energy

With Community Solar, you can enroll in a solar farm at no cost and with no solar installed on your property. Once the solar farm begins generating clean energy, you can save for years to come. *Enrolling takes 7 minutes, can be done from the comfort of your own home and results in savings of up to 10% on your electricity bill.*

There are no fees to join or cancel and cancellation can be done at any time. Learn more or enroll today at www.solarizewestchester.com. Opportunities are available for both Con Edison and NYSEG customers.

III. Ensure You're Getting Clean, Renewable Energy via the Westchester Power Program

The Westchester Power program is a community energy program that provides competitive fixed rates for 100% emissions-free energy supply without contracts, penalties or surprises. Twenty seven Westchester municipalities, comprising almost 1/3 of Westchester County households, are part of this program which is the first Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) in New York.

From launch in May 2016 through January 2020, participants have mitigated 605,000 metric tons of CO₂ - equivalent to taking 128,000 cars off the road for one year! Click [here](#) to see if your municipality has designated Westchester Power as the default energy supplier. You can review current rates and find additional information by visiting <https://westchesterpower.org/>. A more detailed overview and other useful information is provided in video form at the [Sustainable Westchester Media YouTube](#) channel.

If you live in a municipality that is not a participant in the Westchester Power program and would like to explore renewable electricity supply, we would suggest you begin by visiting the New York State DPS site [The Power to Choose](#) for more information.

IV. Energize & Electrify Your Home for Maximum Efficiency!

Is your home cold and drafty in the winter or hot and stuffy in the Summer? You could be losing as much as 30% of your heat and cooled air as the result of improper or outdated weatherization. **For maximum efficiency and immediate cost savings, you can conduct an energy audit of your home.**

Have you considered replacing your old fossil fuel heating system; are you familiar with the heating & cooling options that the earth and the environment itself provides? Take a look [here](#) to explore geothermal and air source heat pumps technology as clean, efficient heating and cooling options for your home.

With a little more understanding about how it works, **explore Sustainable Westchester's HeatSmart program.** Which allows you to lower your energy bills, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and make your home more comfortable year-round.

Visit www.heatsmartny.com to learn more about both energy audit availabilities and clean heating and cooling technology or call 914-242-4725.

V. Electrify; EVERYTHING – Explore Going One Step Further!

Electric Vehicles

Electric vehicle technology has come a long way. EV's are built for performance, style, and versatility with options available at almost every model car and a wide variety of price points. If you would like to learn more about the technology and options, click [here](#).

There are many incentives and rebate offers to take advantage of, including a [NYSERDA incentive](#) and an [EZ Pass discount](#) all of which can add up to meaningful savings. For more information about available EV manufacturers and models, you can find Westchester dealership information [here](#).

Electric Landscaping

By switching to electric landscaping equipment, you opt for:

- healthier options because the toxic emissions like VOCs and carbon monoxide emitted by fuel powered equipment are eliminated.
- better quality of life for you and your community - electric landscaping equipment offers a reduction in noise by 40%.
- cost-effective option as electrifying your landscaping equipment saves you recurring maintenance and potentially high fuel costs.

A comprehensive overview of the available electric landscaping technology and benefits can be found by visiting www.agza.net.

Sustainable Westchester is here to answer any questions, help you navigate your energy choices or present opportunities to communities and organizations. You can contact us at info@sustainablewestchester.org or call us at 914-242-4725.



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