

# Patrick Administration Energy Officials Present Green Communities Awards

## Ashby, Lunenburg and Westford receive Green Communities designations and more than \$446,000 in grant funds

WESTFORD— Monday, February 10, 2014 – Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Rick Sullivan today presented Ashby, Lunenburg and Westford with \$446,600 in Green Communities grants to fund municipal clean energy projects.

“These municipalities are now three of the 123 Green Communities across the Commonwealth making smart investments in clean energy,” said Governor Deval Patrick. “Community by community, we are protecting our environment, reducing municipal costs and making Massachusetts a clean energy leader.”

“It’s exciting to see these three communities count themselves among the leaders taking charge of their clean energy future,” said Secretary Sullivan. “The Patrick Administration continues to support towns that are cutting energy use, creating jobs and protecting the environment. Their efforts are critical to the Commonwealth’s clean energy revolution.”

The municipalities received a certificate from the Commonwealth and road signs identifying them as Green Communities. The Department of Energy Resources’ (DOER) Green Communities Division officially designated the towns in December, recognizing achievements in meeting five clean energy benchmarks. The grants each community received are as follows:

Ashby \$133,350

Lunenburg \$157,225

Westford \$156,025

“Massachusetts’ clean energy revolution continues its momentum in large part because of leadership at the local level,” said DOER Commissioner Mark Sylvia. “These communities continue to spread renewable energy and efficiency efforts across our Commonwealth, saving money and energy for their residents and businesses, and reducing harmful greenhouse gas emissions.”

The grants are part of more than \$2 million in funding awarded to the state’s 13 newest Green Communities. In addition to the three awarded in Westford today, Acushnet, Amesbury, Blackstone, Concord, Framingham, Longmeadow, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Plympton, Williamsburg and West Newbury will receive awards and designations.

“I congratulate the Town of Ashby for becoming a Green Community and the work it has done meeting clean energy benchmarks,” said Senator Stephen M. Brewer. “These grant funds will support projects that are not only good for the environment, but will help to lower energy costs, a great benefit to my constituents. I look forward to continuing to work on initiatives that will save municipalities money and keep Massachusetts at the forefront of the clean energy future.”

“I am impressed by Westford’s ability to distinguish itself as a leader in clean energy projects,” said Senator Eileen Donoghue. “We all have a significant role to play in promoting clean energy in Massachusetts now and for future generations. I am grateful for the Patrick Administration’s critical investments in energy saving initiatives.”

“I want to thank the Patrick Administration and Secretary Rick Sullivan for their continued support to communities that are working towards becoming Green Communities,” said Representative Jennifer Benson. “The town of Lunenburg has made significant progress in becoming a Green Community, and town officials and residents should be proud of receiving this award. This grant will certainly assist Lunenburg to continue to implement energy efficiency projects and reduce municipal costs. “

“Congratulations to Westford for taking the necessary steps as a community to become part of the Green Communities program. This designation is a clear demonstration of the leadership shown by Westford to lead at the local level in the uses of renewable energy and energy efficiency. The \$156,025 grant funding received from this designation will go towards funding clean energy projects in our town,” said Representative James Arciero.

Once designated by DOER as official Green Communities, cities and towns are eligible for awards to fund local renewable power and energy efficiency projects that advance both municipal and state clean energy goals. Grants awarded so far have funded a variety of projects across the state, including the installation of solar panels on town office buildings, weatherization at schools and municipal buildings, installation of high-efficiency street lights, and energy efficiency upgrades.

Including this seventh round of designation grants and two rounds of competitive grants, the Patrick Administration has awarded nearly \$30 million in grants to the Commonwealth’s 123 Green Communities. Available to eligible Green Communities that have successfully invested their previous Green Communities grants, applications for DOER’s third round of Green Communities Competitive Grants will be due at the end of March.

To date, the 123 Green Communities have committed to a total energy reduction equivalent to the annual energy consumption of approximately 15,000 homes. In greenhouse gas reduction terms, this commitment equates to taking approximately 34,000 cars off the road.

DOER’s Green Communities Designation and Grant Program, a result of the Green Communities Act signed by Governor Patrick in 2008, is funded through auctions of carbon emissions permits under the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, as well as Alternative Compliance Payments made by electricity suppliers under the state’s Renewable Portfolio Standard.

The Patrick Administration’s aggressive clean energy initiatives have made Massachusetts a leader in energy efficiency, renewable energy and emissions reductions. The American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy has named Massachusetts number one for three years running. This year, Governor Patrick set a new solar goal after reaching the previous goal of 250 megawatts four years early. The Commonwealth now aims to install 1,600 megawatts of solar capacity by 2020. The clean energy revolution is yielding economic benefits as well, with 11.8 percent job growth in the last year; nearly 80,000 people are employed in the cleantech industry in Massachusetts.

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*100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02114-2119*  
*617-626-1000 (office) / 617-626-1181 (fax)*