

Patrick-Murray Administration Designates 12 New Green Communities

Fourth round of cities and towns named clean energy leaders; now eligible for municipal renewable power and energy efficiency grants

[Map of Green Communities Statewide](#) 

BOSTON – Wednesday, December 21, 2011 – The Patrick-Murray Administration today named 12 cities and towns from western Massachusetts to Cape Cod as “Green Communities,” making these communities eligible for over \$2 million in grants for local renewable power and energy efficiency projects that will advance both municipal and state clean energy goals.

Ashfield, Barre, Beverly, Bridgewater, Chesterfield, Leverett, Maynard, Provincetown, Quincy, Rowe, Shirley, and Weston join 74 other Massachusetts cities and towns named in previous rounds of Green Communities designations – bringing the total number of official Green Communities to 86.

“We are making real progress in achieving a clean energy future for the Commonwealth, one community at a time,” said Governor Deval Patrick. “These investments encourage energy savings, create jobs and protect our environment – boosting our economy and improving our quality of life.”

“As our Administration continues to promote clean energy initiatives, we are proud to expand the Green Communities designation to more cities and towns across the Commonwealth,” said Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray. “These newly designated Green Communities are moving forward with renewable and efficient energy projects to help build a more sustainable and healthier environment for Massachusetts.”

The Department of Energy Resources’ (DOER) Green Communities Designation and Grant Program, which is a result of the Green Communities Act signed by Governor Patrick in 2008, rewards communities that win Green Communities designation by meeting five clean energy benchmarks:

- Adopting local zoning bylaw or ordinance that allows “as-of-right siting” – allowing a project to proceed without requiring a special permit or any type of discretionary approval – for renewable and/or alternative energy research and development facilities, manufacturing facilities or generation units;
- Adopting an expedited permitting process related to the as-of-right facilities;
- Establishing a municipal energy use baseline and a program to reduce use by 20 percent within five years;
- Purchasing only fuel-efficient vehicles for municipal use, whenever such

vehicles are commercially available and practicable; and

- Requiring all new residential construction over 3,000 square feet and all new commercial and industrial real estate construction to reduce lifecycle energy costs (i.e., adoption of an energy-saving building “stretch code”).

“We’re looking to cities and towns to help Massachusetts decrease its dependence on foreign sources of energy. This program rewards municipalities for adopting clean energy practices, which reduce municipal energy costs and create sustainable energy solutions for municipal operations,” said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Richard K. Sullivan Jr.

Massachusetts is at the end of the energy pipeline and imports all of its fossil-fuel based energy sources from other regions of the country or other parts of the world – including some which are unstable or hostile to the U.S. Of the \$22 billion Massachusetts spends annually to buy the energy that runs its power plants, buildings and vehicles, 80 percent flows out of state to purchase coal from Colombia, oil from Venezuela, and natural gas and oil from the Middle East and Canada. That’s nearly \$18 billion in lost economic opportunity that Massachusetts stands poised to reclaim through investments in home-grown renewable energy and energy efficiency such as those supported by Green Communities grants.

November 18, 2011 was the deadline for municipalities to apply for Green Community designation in order to qualify for over \$2 million in Green Communities grants. Communities designated today have until January 27, 2011 to submit applications for grants that will be awarded later next year.

“These communities are leaders in renewable energy adoption and smart energy use by using these funds to install solar arrays on town halls and energy efficient street lighting, and to purchase hybrid vehicles for municipal fleets,” DOER Commissioner Mark Sylvia said.

Using a formula that caps awards at \$1 million and provides each community with a \$125,000 base grant - plus additional amounts based on per capita income and population, and for municipalities that meet Green Communities specific criteria for energy generation, DOER notified the selected communities of their eligibility for the following funding:

Ashfield – \$141,025

Barre – \$143,575

Beverly – \$206,475

Bridgewater – \$200,800

Chesterfield – \$140,000

Leverett – \$138,750

Maynard – \$160,025

Provincetown – \$143,600

Quincy – \$370,325

Rowe – \$135,725

Shirley – \$152,975

Weston – \$138,675

In addition to grant eligibility, each Green Community designated today will also receive a certificate from the Commonwealth and four road signs identifying it as an official Green Community.

[Click here](#) for more information on DOER's Green Communities program.

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