

Patrick-Murray Administration Selects 10 Communities to Participate in Massachusetts Solar Incentive Program

Communities from Williamstown to Bourne will participate in Solarize Mass (Solarize Mass®); program contracted hundreds of solar energy systems in 2012

NORTHAMPTON— April 5, 2013 – Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Rick Sullivan today announced the 10 communities that will participate in the first round of the 2013 Solarize Massachusetts program (Solarize Mass), a grassroots clean energy marketing, education and group-buying program.

The program – run by the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) and the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) – is designed to increase the adoption of solar energy and further reduce the overall cost of solar power, and offers residents and businesses discounted pricing for solar. The more people in a particular community who participate, the greater the savings for everyone in that city or town.

“This year’s program will build on the success of the last two years, saving residents and businesses money while creating local jobs,” said Secretary Sullivan.

Participating in the first round of the 2013 Solarize Mass program are Bourne, Brookline, Carlisle, Chelmsford, Lee, Medford, Medway, Newton, Northampton and Williamstown. Carlisle and Chelmsford will be participating in the program as a group.

“This program brings together residents, local and state officials, and solar industry workers to form a truly grassroots effort,” said MassCEC CEO Alicia Barton. “With everyone at the table, we can spread the word about the economic and environmental benefits of solar power across ten communities.”

“This new round of Solarize Mass continues to build on the clean energy leadership we’ve seen over and over again at the community level,” said DOER Commissioner Mark Sylvia. “When neighbors encourage neighbors, it creates local excitement and greater participation. This grassroots commitment is fueling Massachusetts leadership in energy efficiency, clean energy jobs growth, and renewable energy adoption.”

MassCEC and DOER will work with community volunteers and municipal representatives in each community to select a designated installer through a competitive bidding process. Eight of the communities participating in this round (Brookline, Carlisle, Chelmsford, Medford, Medway, Newton, Northampton and Williamstown) are Green Communities, a designation made by DOER to cities and towns that meet five clean energy requirements,

including a commitment to reduce their energy use by 20 percent and to streamline the responsible siting of renewable energy such as solar photovoltaics. Bourne and Lee are the first non-Green Communities to participate in Solarize Mass since it first launched as a pilot program in 2011.

Last year, 17 cities and towns participated in Solarize Mass, with 749 residents and businesses signing contracts to install solar electricity systems with the capacity to generate 4.8 megawatts of clean, renewable energy – enough to power the equivalent of 719 average Massachusetts homes annually. During the 2012 Solarize Mass program, participating customers were able to purchase solar electricity systems for 20 percent less than the statewide average price at the beginning of the program. The program last year also created at least 32 new jobs.

Due to state renewable energy incentive programs like Solarize Mass, residential solar electricity prices dropped 28 percent in Massachusetts in 2012, according to a report issued by the Solar Energy Industries Association in March 2013. This was the second biggest drop in the nation last year.

Under the leadership of Governor Deval Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray, Massachusetts set a goal of achieving 250 megawatts of solar PV by 2017. As a result of the Solarize Mass program and other incentives, the state is close to reaching its goal – with 243 megawatts of solar electricity installed to date, the equivalent of powering 38,000 homes for a year.

Massachusetts sits at the end of the energy pipeline, spending billions of dollars annually to import all of its fossil fuel based energy sources from places like South America, Canada, and the Middle East. That is lost economic opportunity that Massachusetts stands poised to reclaim through investments in home-grown renewable energy programs like Solarize.

About Solarize Mass

[Solarize Mass](#), which is a partnership between MassCEC and DOER's [Green Communities Division](#), is a grassroots model that encourages the adoption of small scale solar projects. Follow the Twitter hash tag #SolarizeMass for more information.