

Renewable Highlands

Community Choice Aggregation

Frequently Asked Questions

WHAT IS COMMUNITY CHOICE AGGREGATION (CCA)?

In April, 2016 the Public Service Commission (PSC) authorized CCA statewide, joining six other states in the nation. CCA allows a municipality or groups of municipalities to pool electric utility accounts of residents and small businesses to negotiate better energy deals that save consumers money and give them the choice of greener energy.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF CCA?

The first pilot CCA in Westchester County is demonstrating that it works¹: The Westchester CCA program has already saved homeowners and small businesses millions of dollars while successfully enrolling 60,000 out of 90,000 customers into a 100% renewable energy credit option. Fourteen of the 20 participating municipalities have selected 100% renewable energy as the default option.

In Westchester, over 10,000 small businesses were eligible to take part in the program and businesses located in the NYSEG utility service territory have secured a fixed electric supply rate [17% below the average 2015 utility rate](#). In addition, those CCA rates are locked in for three years, giving small businesses cost certainty and allowing them to better budget for energy costs and allocate saved money to business growth.

HOW DOES CCA WORK?

The CCA organizes municipalities and solicits proposals from qualified energy supply companies on behalf of their residents and small businesses. Municipalities select amongst bids that meet criteria determined by the participating municipalities (such as price savings and/or the sourcing of renewable energy), and award the supply contract to a new default electricity supplier.

HOW WILL IT AFFECT ME?

If a new default electricity supplier is selected, all homeowners and small businesses that don't already have a contract with an alternative supplier nor are in a large energy use class, are automatically enrolled in the program. The only thing that will change on your electricity bill will be the electricity supplier; Central Hudson will

¹ De Avila, Joseph. "For Westchester Towns, a New Type of Energy Contract". [The Wall Street Journal](#). (March 8, 2016).

continue to deliver energy to your home, bill you, and repair service interruptions. If you want to opt-out of the program, you can do so at any time without any fees.

WHAT DOES IT COST?

Renewable Highlands is organizing local municipalities and supporting the creation of a CCA program at no cost to municipalities or CCA participants. Once the program is running, a small portion of the savings on electricity supply will support the operation of the program and implementation of additional local energy initiatives, such as community solar and efficiency programs.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

A CCA estimates savings to residents and small business owners by comparing the fixed CCA rate to the historical average electricity rate for customers in participating municipalities. While the CCA initiative only moves forward if customers save money, electricity rates fluctuate month-to-month and year-to-year, and reflect trends in fuel prices. It is possible, therefore, for utility rates to sit below the fixed CCA rate for several months in a row. Customers are free, however, to leave the program and go back to Central Hudson at any time, for any reason, with no penalty.

WHAT AREA WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE CCA?

Renewable Highlands is organizing support for a local CCA in the mid-Hudson Valley within the Central Hudson service territory. Currently, the Village of Cold Spring, City of Beacon, Town of Fishkill, Town of Philipstown, and Village of Wappingers Falls are actively exploring participation in the Renewable Highlands CCA, but all cities, towns, or villages in Central Hudson service territory are eligible to participate.



The Ecological Citizen's Project is a partner organization to the Renewable Highlands CCA project. We work to grow citizen-led campaigns to produce a more just, healthy and sustainable way-of-life.