How Marbletown Switched to Renewable Energy

Joining "100% Committed"

On February 20, 2018, Marbletown passed a resolution to join the Climate Reality Project's 100% Committed campaign. This campaign encourages a shift to 100% renewable energy.

About CRP

From the CRP website:
The Climate Reality Project is a non-profit organization focused on climate change education and countering climate change denial campaigns worldwide. The organization was established following the consolidation of two environmental organizations, the Alliance for Climate Protection and The Climate Project, which were both founded in 2006 by former Vice President Al Gore. Gore has described the group as bipartisan.
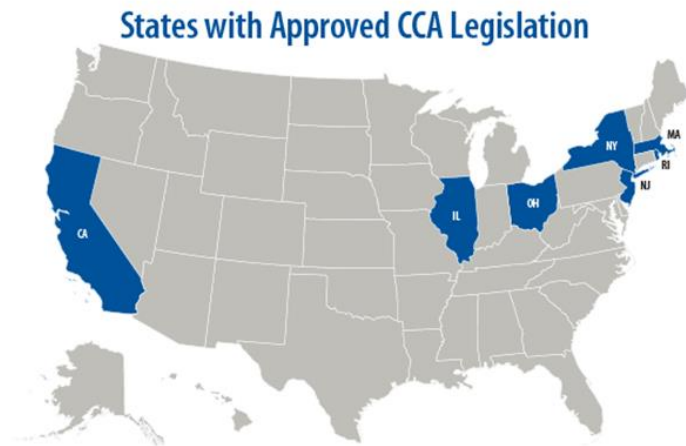
Gore currently serves as chairman of the board of directors. Ken Berlin is The Climate Reality Project's president and CEO. Operation of The Climate Reality Project is overseen by a board of directors whose members include Sherwood Boehlert, James Gustave Speth, Cindy Horn, Larry Schweiger, and Theodore Roosevelt IV, in addition to chairman Gore.

Since its establishment, The Climate Reality Project has trained over 7,800 individuals representing 126 countries as volunteer Climate Leaders for the project. As of 2015, the organization operated 10 branches worldwide and is active in over 30 countries.

Climate change reality maintains a list of the top green countries on its website which includes high carbon emitting Germany and Austria but excludes France, Lithuania and Ukraine with much lower carbon emissions.

Teaming Up With Other Towns

Also in 2018, Marbletown joined Renewable Highlands CCA in an effort to boost bargaining power for its renewable energy purchases. Renewable Highlands was later rebranded as a similar CCA, Hudson Valley Community Power; the official announcement was released on January 16, 2019. At the time, six communities had signed up: Marbletown, Beacon, Cold Spring, Philipstown, Fishkill and the City of Poughkeepsie.

States with Approved CCA Legislation

About HVCP and CCAs

Hudson Valley Community Power was created through a partnership between Hudson Valley Energy and administrator Joule Community Power.

Like Renewable Highlands before it, HVCP is a CCA, which stands for Community Choice Aggregation. CCAs allow municipalities to choose what type of electricity they receive for their residents, businesses and government buildings. CCAs have been adopted by multiple states, including New York.

Communities in a CCA enter into collective bargaining and accept bids from energy suppliers. The financial goals are cheaper prices and a more long-term stability in rates. The environmental goal is to make sure the energy comes renewable resources and not fossil fuels. Residents can even opt-out without penalty.

Marbletown's CCA Announcement

In May of 2019, Marbletown mailed all its residents a letter explaining the CCA and the automatic enrollment to 100% renewable energy. HVCP made opt-out available online and by mail or phone. Residents who already had a alternate supplier were among those who did not receive the letter.

The included rate chart added Central Hudson's average prices. The posted savings after switching are estimated at approximately 7.5% when compared to Central Hudson's average supply rate. A second option given to residents was an HVCP fixed rate which did not include 100% renewable energy. Savings for that were estimated at 11.5%.

The CCA "Flips the Switch"

From Hudson Valley Community Power's [main page](#):

As of July 1, 2019, the default energy supply to homes and small businesses in the participating communities is 100% renewable.

Savings on Top of the CCA

HVCP gets state-wide renewable energy. On top of that, there are companies investing in local solar projects and they need people living nearby to use the electricity.

These local projects are known as "community solar," "shared solar" or "CDG," which stands for Community Distributed Generation. They're authorized and regulated by the state.

The benefits are:
--You will pay less for electricity. Savings could be anywhere from 5%-15% of your entire power bill. This is on top of the CCA savings.
--You will be using renewable/clean energy.
--You will be helping fund the growing shift away from fossil fuels.

The possible drawbacks are:
--You need sign a contract.
--You will have to continue checking your Central Hudson account every month, in case you use more electricity than normal and owe them a little extra.
--Learning how the electricity and money changes hands can be confusing; similar to what might happen when you look into the larger national power grid as a whole. Answers to your questions might just lead to more questions.

Progress Timeline

2017
--Completed: Initial research and discussion.

2017 and 2018
--Completed: Sign up all government facilities for community renewable generation (this does not count as Renewable per the state for technical reasons, but it's still a useful part of the plan.)

2018
--Completed: Pass CCA enabling legislation which requires that the default electricity supply be 100% renewable. This will take care of all facilities except streetlights and demand-charge buildings (Highway Dept and RMC).

2019
--Completed: All of the CCA's participating municipalities, including Marbletown, sent a "Welcome Letter" to its residents.
--Completed: On July 1, residents begin receiving 100% renewable power through the CCA.
--In Progress: The town is exploring community solar options through leasing land/rooftops at the High Falls Water District, the Rondout Municipal Center and the Highway Department.

Links

[Climate Reality Project: Main Page](#)

[Climate Reality Project: Email for Annual Updates](#)

[100% Committed: Main Page](#)

[100% Committed: Secondary page with Marbletown logo included](#)

[Renewable Highlands CCA: Main Page](#)

[Hudson Valley Community Power: Main Page](#)

[Hudson Valley Community Power: Welcome Letters.](#) Marbletown's letter is also [here](#).

[Joule Community Power: Main Page](#)

[Joule Community: Press Release on HVCP](#)

[EPA: Info on Community Choice Aggregation](#)

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