



Robert P. Astorino, Westchester County Executive

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **COUNTY JOINS SUSTAINABLE WESTCHESTER CONSORTIUM Consortium of local governments facilitates green initiatives like solarize campaigns and pooling residents and municipalities together to negotiate power sources and electric rates**

Westchester County Executive Robert P. Astorino today joined a bipartisan group of elected officials and environmental leaders to announce that the county has entered into an official partnership with Sustainable Westchester, a consortium of local governments that facilitates green initiatives like Solarize Westchester, Community Choice Aggregation and the Municipal Solar Buyers Group.

“Westchester has long had a bipartisan tradition of protecting our environment and I’m proud to have built upon this legacy,” Astorino said. “With the county joining Sustainable Westchester, we have new partners and collaborators, and the initiatives we’ll be undertaking will continue to conserve and strengthen our natural resources and environment for current and future generations.”

Solarize Westchester provides residents and small businesses in select municipalities with discounted solar panels and installation. Through programs like Solarize Westchester and the county’s sales tax exemption for solar panels, installations in the county have dramatically risen from around 100 in 2010 to just over 1,200 last year. Astorino touted those stats, in addition to record recycling rates and initiatives that encourage sustainable development, invest in open space and conservation, and promote a spirit of stewardship over our county’s natural environment.

“I look forward to working with Westchester County Executive Astorino, Chairman Mike Kaplowitz and all of our municipal partners,” said Bob Elliott, executive director of Sustainable Westchester. “This partnership signifies an important milestone in Sustainable Westchester's development. With the ability to tap into the rich experience and expertise of many Westchester County departments, our capacities and scope will be significantly expanded. We are very appreciative of the county's interest and shared desire to maintain Westchester's reputation as a leader in environmental issues.”

Nina Orville, principal of Abundant Efficiency and the administrator of Sustainable Westchester’s Solarize campaign, said the county’s partnership will help drive future Solarize efforts.

“We’re pleased to continue to offer the opportunity for communities to participate in Solarize Westchester and grateful for Westchester County's support for solar and other clean energy technologies,” Orville said. “Solarize has catalyzed growth in the number of solar installations in Westchester County, saving property owners up to 70 percent on energy costs, adding solar jobs to the local economy, and accelerating Westchester’s transition to clean renewable energy.”

In the second round of the Solarize Westchester campaign, residents and small businesses in Peekskill, Greenburgh, Pound Ridge and Lewisboro have until June 5th to sign up at [SolarizeWestchester.com](http://SolarizeWestchester.com).

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