

Westchester  
Power **OUR COMMUNITY.  
OUR CHOICE.**

A PROGRAM OF **SUSTAINABLE WESTCHESTER**

**Westchester Power June 2017 Update**  
**for the**  
**Village of Hastings-on-Hudson**



**In this package:**

- ❖ Sustainable Westchester Initiatives
- ❖ Welcome to Westchester Power
- ❖ What is Community Choice Aggregation?
- ❖ Westchester Power in the media
- ❖ WP fixed rates vs. ConEd rates to date
- ❖ Recent Highlights
- ❖ Program Enhancement Initiatives
- ❖ Contact Us

***Working with and on behalf of our member local governments in Westchester County to empower communities to create a sustainable future.***

## Complete Streets



This initiative aims to make our roadways accessible to all modes of transportation—walking, biking, driving, public transit. Through planning and education, Sustainable Westchester aims to foster convenient, comfortable and safe travel for everyone.

## Westchester Power



Westchester Power is New York State's first Community Choice Aggregation (CCA), and as such, acts as a community energy advocate, negotiating rates with energy companies to bring residents competitive flat-rates and renewable energy, while boosting the local economy.

## Electric Vehicles



Sustainable Westchester's Clean Transportation Project aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and transportation costs for residents, businesses, and non-profits in Westchester County by connecting people with alternative transportation options and incentives.

## LED Street Lights Initiative



In conjunction with NYSERDA, Sustainable Westchester supports the Mid-Hudson Street Light Consortium to transition street lights to LED bulbs, which has the potential to save municipalities up to 65% of their energy costs and significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

## Solarize Westchester



Solarize Westchester works with residents and businesses to increase the usage of solar energy throughout Westchester County through incentives and education. There are approximately 1,100 solar installations in Westchester County, with over 400 resulting from Solarize campaigns.

## Municipal Solar Buyers Group



SW municipalities realize they need to lead the way in the clean energy transition. The Municipal Solar Buyers Group (MSBG) was formed to facilitate the installation of solar power on municipal facilities. Participating municipalities are receiving solar power offers from a collective RFP process.

# WELCOME TO WESTCHESTER POWER!

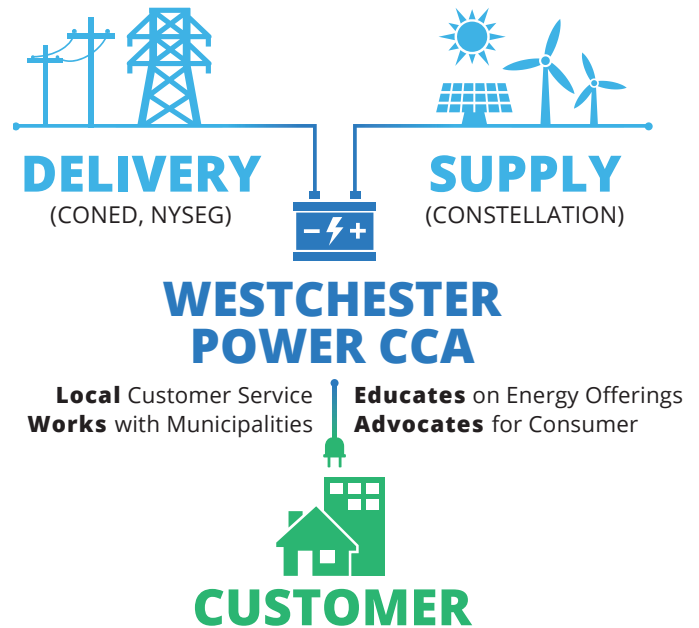
## The Basics

Westchester Power is a municipal power purchasing program administered by Sustainable Westchester.

Founded in 2016, Westchester Power is New York's first CCA (Community Choice Aggregation).

Our large group purchasing power enables us to bring you competitive rates, with the security of knowing that this is a municipal program, vetted by your legislators, not a private solicitation.

Our mission: to increase local renewable energy. We plan to reach the NYS REV goal of 50% renewable energy by 2030 ahead of schedule.



## Who's in the Know?

100,000 homeowners, renters, condos, coop owners and small businesses in:

Bedford

Larchmont

New Castle

Pelham

Somers

Greenburgh

Lewisboro

New Rochelle

Pleasantville

Tarrytown

Hasting-on-Hudson

Mamaroneck

North Salem

Rye Brook

White Plains

Irvington

Mount Kisco

Ossining

## What We've Accomplished



## At Your Service

We're LOCAL... and we are here to help!

We have a dedicated staff in our Mount Kisco office who can to explain the Program or answer any questions about CCA or sustainable energy.

We're happy to meet with local groups to present in person.

Call us with any questions about your utility bill - Westchester Power-related or not.

**QUESTIONS?** Visit [westchesterpower.org](http://westchesterpower.org) or call our Mount Kisco office at 914-242-4725!



# WHAT IS COMMUNITY CHOICE AGGREGATION (CCA)?



## What is Community Choice Aggregation (CCA)?

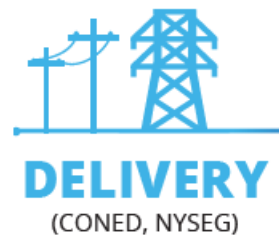
Community Choice Aggregation is a program enacted in seven states, which allows municipalities to buy their electrical power as a group. In doing so, the CCA partners with the utilities and communities to buy and supply power, while the utility continues to deliver the power and maintain the power grid. The CCA gives participating communities increased leverage to negotiate and design an electricity supply program to benefit its residents.

## What are the benefits of CCA?

By purchasing power as a group, municipalities, their residents and small businesses enrolled in CCA benefit in several ways:

- Receive competitively priced flat-rates through 2018/2019.
- Boost the local economy by bringing green jobs to communities and localizing energy sourcing decision-making.
- Meet climate goals by transitioning to clean energy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

## What changes and what remains the same?



Customers keep their utility company (i.e. ConEd, NYSEG). The utility continues to bill customers and maintains responsibility over the infrastructure: the power lines, poles, meters, and the transmission of energy.



Before CCAs, if you wanted to purchase electricity from the market, you would have to navigate and select from offerings from dozens of “ESCOs” (energy service companies).

**WESTCHESTER  
POWER CCA**

Now, the CCA acts as an administrator and advocate on behalf of participating municipalities, negotiating better prices, contract enhancements and sustainable energy options.



Customers don't have to do anything to participate, and can take advantage of new programs that are designed to benefit them and advance community goals.

**QUESTIONS?** Visit [westchesterpower.org](http://westchesterpower.org) or call our Mount Kisco office at 914-242-4725!

# One year in, Westchester Power pushes a new era of clean energy

BY RYAN DEFFENBAUGH

rdeffenbaugh@westfairinc.com

New York's Clean Energy Standard mandates the state power itself with 50 percent renewable energy by 2030. Dan Welsh, the program director for Westchester Power, thinks Westchester can do even better.

"We want to move much faster than that," Welsh told the Business Journal from the nonprofit's office in Mount Kisco. "We just need a nice, catchy, 'Something by Something' title."

Helping push Westchester's power supply toward increased use of renewable, locally produced energy is the next part of the mission for Westchester Power, according to the energy consortium's leaders.

The group was launched in March 2016 by Sustainable Westchester Inc., a nonprofit organization that includes more than 40 municipalities in the county, including now the county itself. Westchester Power started as the state's first community choice aggregation (CCA) program. CCA programs allow municipalities to band together to negotiate directly with energy suppliers on a fixed, bulk discount rate.



Dan Welsh, program director at Westchester Power

Westchester Power includes 20 municipalities in the county. Last year, the group considered bids to supply electricity to residents in its consortium and awarded two contracts. ConEdison Solutions, a subsidiary of Consolidated Edison Inc., will supply the 90,000 homes and businesses in ConEd service territory with

electricity at a fixed rate over a two-year period. A parallel deal with Constellation Energy Group, a division of Exelon Corp., supplies fixed-rate electricity to 20,000 homes in the northern part of the county, which is served by New York State Electric and Gas Corp.

Welsh, who has a background in information tech-

nology and most recently worked as a database manager for the Harrison Central School District, was hired to direct Westchester Power in September. He heads up a small staff with two other full-time employees, two part-timers and three consultants that help guide the group.

While similar programs exist in states such as California, Illinois and Massachusetts, Westchester Power is the pilot program for community choice aggregation in New York.

"We're still here after a year, right?" Welsh said. "All the basics have worked."

There were bumps along the way – such as customer confusion and low NYSEG rates that cut into savings – but Welsh described Westchester Power as an organization past its "infancy stage" and ready to expand its reach. "We're just scratching the surface right now," he said.

The group has a tagline for its next effort: "emPowering Green Energy." With Sustainable Westchester's backing, Westchester Power will attempt to position itself as a leader for a range of efforts to boost renewable energy production in the county.

With a team of self-professed "energy geeks," Welsh

said Westchester Power can help introduce communities to energy technologies that may be too complicated for people to pursue on their own. "Part of our role is to go out there, vet these technologies and facilitate ways for people to get in without having to go through all that struggle," he said.

Westchester Power has contracted with a company to help it build a platform that will handle customer data and create an interface that offers customers a range of options for renewable energy and efficiency projects to potentially participate in.

The group sees community solar as an especially promising option for the county. That refers to solar installations that don't have a single user. Instead, multiple customers can pay to subscribe to the energy credits from the solar array's power production, offsetting their individual bills. The projects open up solar power to people who can't develop such systems of their own, including renters or homeowners with rooftops not suited for panels. The concept is still new to New York. The state's first project launched last year in Tompkins County.

Westchester Power can act

as a go-between for landowners and solar developers to help facilitate projects in the county while also offering its wide customer base as possible subscribers to new community solar developments.

Customers in Westchester Power already have the option to pay slightly more for a 100-percent renewable energy supply. Of Westchester Power's 20 member communities, 14 opted to offer the renewable option.

Westchester Power thinks it can facilitate increased renewable energy production within the county. That supply could then be used to replace energy the consortium currently receives through its two aggregation contracts, Welsh said.

"There's a whole lot of entrepreneurial energy," he said of the renewable energy sector in Westchester. "So we want to release that and go 100 percent local and 100 percent green here."

Community outreach is part of the "emPowering" program. The group plans to meet with municipal boards, sustainability committees and environmental groups to organize green initiatives. That includes workshops and

lectures on sustainable energy and the environment.

The group will also work on expanding the county's demand response technology, energy storage capacity and constructing more electric vehicle charging stations.

"As we go do our community outreach, we'll have all these different offerings for people to participate in," Welsh said. "This is what we are starting to think of as the new energy ecosystem for Westchester."

Meanwhile, community choice aggregation is cleared to expand beyond Westchester. The Public Service Commission approved the programs for municipalities statewide in April 2016, one month after Westchester Power officially launched.

Brad Tito, a program manager for the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, said NYSERDA has found more than 100 communities that expressed varying levels of interest in developing a CCA program during the agency's outreach efforts.

Westchester Power is still the only active program in the state, however. Launching a community choice aggregation program takes time.

They require new local laws, a fully developed plan from the municipalities and approval from the Public Service Commission.

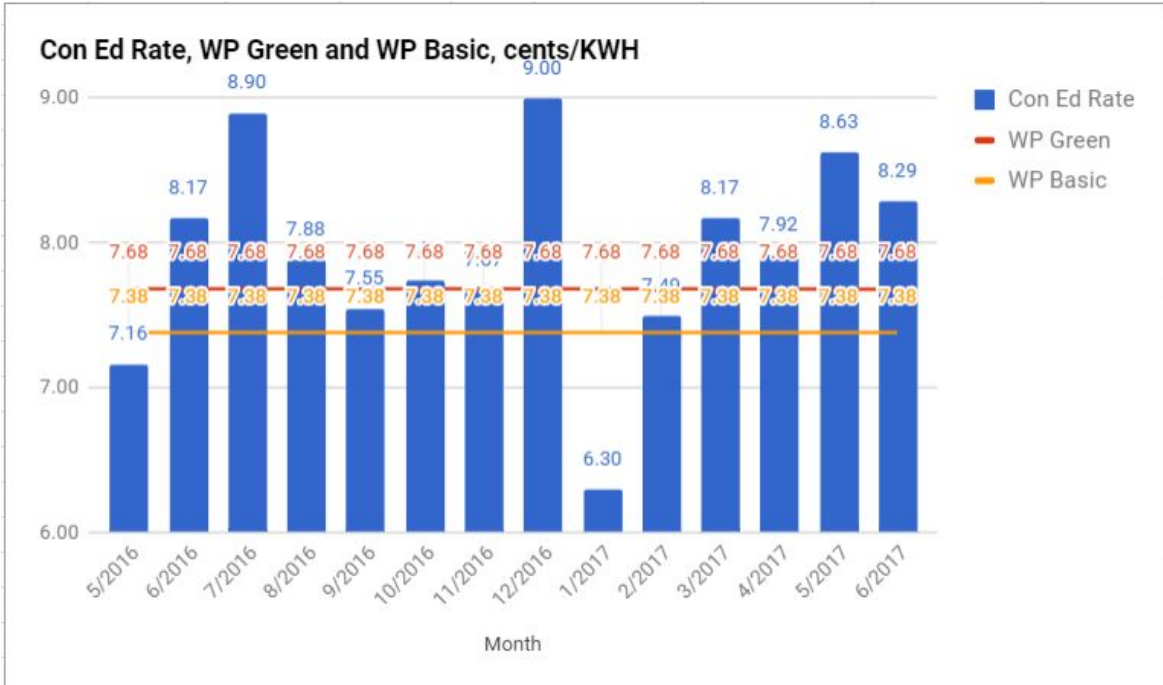
Tito said that while a negotiated fixed electric rate can help customers in a CCA program save money, there are benefits beyond the potential savings. "What we are hearing (communities) are very much interested in is, 'How do we use a CCA to help develop local renewable projects?'" .

Welsh noted that Westchester Power's renewable energy push comes at an interesting time for the county. The planned 2021 closure of the Indian Point Energy Center in Buchanan has created anxiety about how the power produced by the 2,000-megawatt nuclear plant can be replaced.

Welsh said anytime more people are thinking about how they get their energy, it creates an opportunity to spread awareness about Westchester Power.

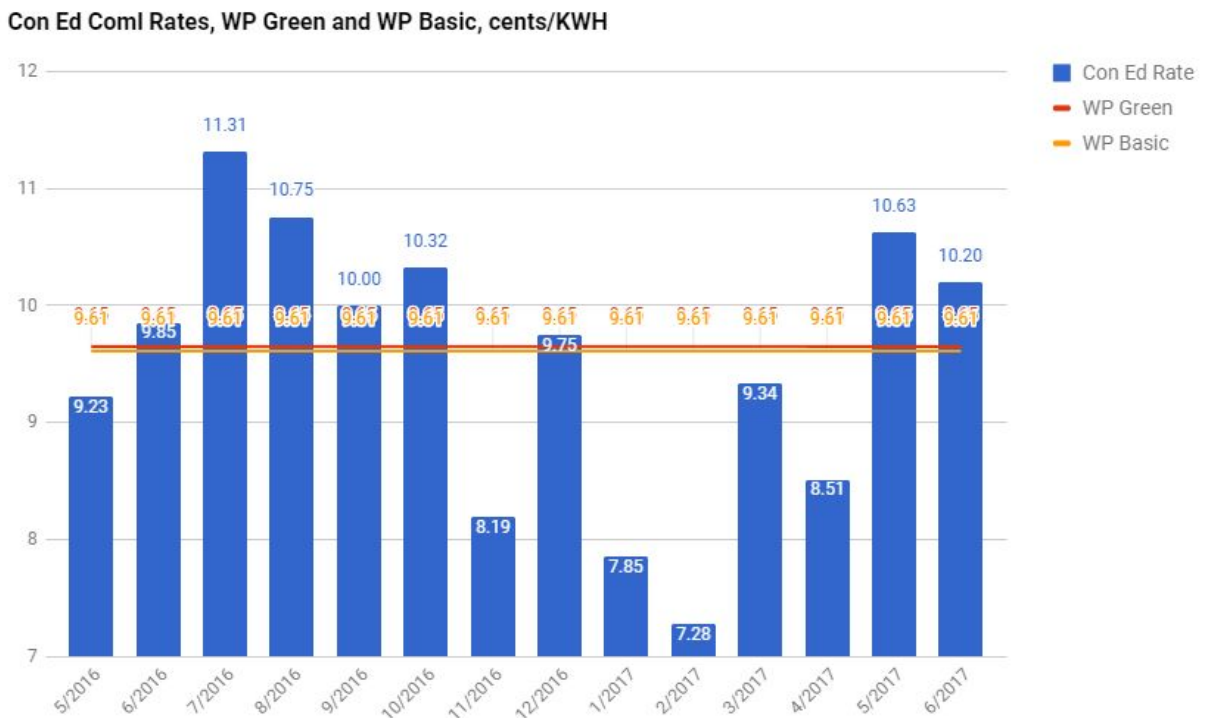
"We want people to feel good about the fact that there is an active effort here. There is a group with a cutting-edge, groundbreaking program making great strides. And we intend to chip a big piece off that concern."

## Residential Rates: Westchester Power vs. ConEd



Average savings over this year has been approximately 0.3 cents per kWh for standard supply, 0.15 for 100% renewable, or 3 and 1.5 dollars respectively for a 1000 kWh bill. For Hastings' estimated 3,000 households, there has been approx. \$78,000 in savings.

## Commercial Rates: Westchester Power vs. ConEd







## Westchester Power

### *Recent highlights*

June 28, 2017

#### **Notable Media**

The “emPowering Green Energy,” led by our Virginia Steinberg and Co-Communications has successfully raised WP profile with exposure in area media. This consumer education campaign to help residents and muni leaders understand and take advantage of new energy options has connected us with some interested reporters - who knew there was a Westchester “energy beat”? Media which have featured Westchester Power include:

- Westchester Biz Journal (three times)--2/17, 6/5/17, 6/12/17
- The Gazette (Croton)--4/6/17
- References in The Bedford/Pound Ridge Record Review for ZEC case--4/7/17
- The Examiner News--4/20/17
- 914 INC (Westchester Mag), 4/25/17
- White Plains Week-public TV interview--4/22/17
- Rivertowns Enterprise - Post Ardsley Board presentation interview

#### **Thought Leadership--driving ideas and engagement**

Workshops and events that probe the cutting edge of energy development and policy are a way of highlighting SW/WP’s leadership role and attracting natural supporters. Here’s what’s happening:

- Microgrid workshop in March 2017 - WP hosted a workshop at our offices, which stirred up some valuable people and projects.
- One result of our workshop was solidifying a relationship with the newest of our SW stable of valuable consulting project leaders - Michel Delafontaine. Michel is helping munis look at storage as a way to increase the performance and value of CDG projects.
- We’re organizing forums on the concept of a carbon tax (Tarrytown 6/29, New Rochelle July 19 and Bedford July 26. We won’t be lobbying for it, but as a topic out there which connects with what we’re doing, we thought it a nice medium to keep the engagement flow going.
- American Lung Association - we had a great phone meeting with staff from the American Lung Association and believe we might generate another event which highlights the clean energy - health connection.

## **Other Outreach**

Ongoing!

- Clearwater Festival--We were thrilled to be part of this environmental festival. Over the course of two days, many visitors engaged us in thought-provoking conversations about the future of energy and sustainability at the Green Living Expo tent.
- Recent visits to Town Boards: Ardsley and Bedford. Meeting with the Sustainability Advisory Board of New Castle tonight (6/28/17.)
- Local community events and organizations--Identifying community groups and venues and events .

## **Operations**

- Customer service continues to be the beating heart of things. We have had several “new customer” refreshes with the accompanying peaks of calls, and enjoyed every minute of it!
- Enhanced staff - We are here and local! With a mix of full and part-time workers, and a complement of project managers, we are well-positioned to meet all aspects of customer service and build programs to meet Westchester’s sustainability and clean energy needs.
- Data systems contract - implementation launching this week. This will bring a high level of security and professionalism to the back office data, and importantly, facilitate more effective and timely reporting.

## **CCA enhancements**

- Community Solar- Soft launch for signups.
- Storage - Michel Delafontaine assisting us to look at using storage to improve solar project outcomes (MSBG, community solar)
- Building DER into CCA services RFP

## **Training**

- Lunchtime online energy industry training
- Webinars with Ampion on the new stack valuation



## **Westchester Power CCA - Program Enhancement Update**

*June 2017*

Under the governing order from the PSC, CCA's are encouraged to find ways to promote "Distributed Energy Resources" – generation, demand response and efficiency measures. Westchester Power has pursued several avenues to bring additional value in this area, current of which include:

### **Community Solar**

Community solar is a subgenre of the community distributed generation (CDG) category enabled in 2015 by the PSC. It allows for people to participate in a remote solar energy facility as long as it is in the same utility zone. This is a great enabler for multi-family situations and homeowners who have too much shade or other physical obstacle.

Westchester Power has completed solicitations and identified a technology platform provider with which to partner for Community Solar. The intent is to use their tool to create projects by gathering signups from interested residents as we engage in outreach. The Community Solar platform is the connectivity for all participants – subscribers, hosts, utilities and developer and must perform many complex duties. As signups reach critical mass, we would then be in a position to attract potential host site owners, and eventually to get bids from developers.

### **Microgrids & Storage**

These technologies can contribute to resiliency and improved economics for communities. As a follow-up to the work done under the NY Prize grants from NYSERDA, Westchester Power held a workshop in March. SW's Michele Delafontaine gave a presentation on storage at that event, and is reaching out to communities to help them sort through the opportunities. The addition of storage, and perhaps CDG or other elements, some of these projects may achieve more positive returns and become attractive enough to put out for interest from developers.

### **Energy Efficiency**

Westchester Power is beginning to explore collaboration with Energize NY. The Energize NY residential energy efficiency program dovetails perfect with our other offerings, since it offers the most fundamental way of saving on a resident's power bill – via conservation.



## Contact Us!

Dan Welsh, Program Director

Jenna Amundsen, Outreach Coordinator

Virginia Steinberg, Outreach Coordinator

Cathy Gobliewski, Outreach Support

Jasmine Graham, Field Staff

Phone: (914) 242 - 4725

Email: first name + @westchesterpower.org