



**Community
Solar NY**



For Immediate Release: 02/16/16

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Northern Dutchess Launches Solar Campaign to Support State Investment

Solarize Northern Dutchess Offers Limited-Time Discounts to Local Residents; Kick-Off Workshop on March 5th

For property owners who have been considering solar panels, Solarize Northern Dutchess offers an opportunity for education with significant discounts for solar installations. When coupled with state and federal incentives, Solarize can cut the cost of going solar by more than half.

The program, which runs from March to June, will make investing in solar power easier and more affordable for local residents and businesses. Property owners will receive at least a 10 percent discount on signed contracts for solar through the program.

“This is an incredible opportunity for homeowners wishing to participate in clean energy; assistance throughout the process, trusted installers and a 10 percent discount off market pricing. It’s a great time to go solar,” said Town of Red Hook Supervisor Robert McKeon.

Town of Rhinebeck Supervisor Elizabeth Spinzia agrees. "I am very proud and excited to be part of this initiative. Local government and dedicated volunteers working together to make solar energy installation accessible and easy for our residents," she said.

The non-profit educational campaign is focused on five towns and two villages in northern Dutchess County: Red Hook, Milan, Rhinebeck, Hyde Park and Pleasant Valley and the villages of Red Hook and Tivoli.

Village of Red Hook Mayor Ed Blundell says that his village has taken steps to smooth the way for solar adoption. “Here in the Village of Red Hook we’ve made it easier for homeowners to get solar panels installed with a streamlined Unified Solar Permit process,” said Blundell. “We’re excited that now our residents can now follow the solar pathway with trusted contractors and a strong program by working with Solarize Northern Dutchess.”

Village of Tivoli is also involved in the program. "Tivoli is excited to participate in this campaign to help bring solar power to residents and businesses in our area," said Mayor Joel Griffith.

Mark E. Figliozzi, Pleasant Valley Town Supervisor, said the program is in line with his town's desire for affordable clean energy. "Solarize Dutchess is a step forward in assisting our community's implementation of solar technologies by providing residents greater access to clean energy, in a cost-effective manner, while supporting the movement to a cleaner and greener environment."

The campaign will hinge on dedicated community volunteers reaching interested fellow residents. "The last time we got organized as a community was to promote state home energy efficiency programs through Red Hook's 10% Challenge. When the chance came along to support renewable energy with our own Solarize campaign, we jumped on it," said Laurie Husted, campaign organizer for Northern Dutchess. "Our goal is 100 solar contracts for the Northern Dutchess region. We're looking for people to come to one of our upcoming workshops if they have south-facing unshaded roofs, and are ready to get solar on their buildings in the next four months."

For many Hudson Valley communities, the campaign will build on already existing interest and commitment to solar on private and municipal properties. "The Milan Highway Garage is already powered by the sun, and we are currently in negotiations to bring solar power to Town Hall as well. The Town of Milan is pleased to endorse the Solarize Northern Dutchess campaign," said Bill Gallagher, Milan Town Supervisor.

Solarize Northern Dutchess will kick off its campaign with a community workshop on Saturday, March 5 from 12-2 pm in Rhinebeck Town Hall. Anyone in Dutchess County interested in the program can attend and learn more about the program, meet installers and rub shoulders with other local solar enthusiasts.

Hyde Park town supervisor Aileen Rohr plans to attend the launch. "Hyde Park is so pleased to join with our neighbors in the Solarize Northern Dutchess program, which will give residents the information and assistance they need as they seek ways to reduce their ecological footprint and their energy costs. I am looking forward to the kick-off in Rhinebeck," she said.

The campaign is a project of Northern Dutchess Alliance in partnership with Solarize Hudson Valley and Catskill Mountainkeeper. The goal of the three-year program is to make implementing solar easier and more affordable by supporting locally-organized community outreach. Through the program, solar installers Hudson Solar and Direct Energy can offer competitive pricing at a discount because they reach a critical mass of solar adopters through the program, which is run by volunteers. In 2015, Solarize Hudson Valley was responsible for 180 signed contracts totaling more than 1.5 MW in solar capacity.

Residents and businesses who sign up for site assessments by June 30, 2016 will be able to take advantage of group rates below market prices.

Solarize Northern Dutchess is supported by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) under Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's NY-Sun initiative. NY-Sun will invest up to \$1 billion in solar power through 2023 to significantly expand solar installations across the State, ultimately transforming New York's solar industry to become self-sustaining.

Upcoming Solarize Northern Dutchess Community Workshops:

Red Hook, 3/17 6-7:30pm, Elmendorph Inn

Pleasant Valley, 3/31 6:30-8:30pm, Pleasant Valley Library

Tivoli, 4/2 3pm, Tivoli Library

Milan, 5/7 10-11:30am, Milan Town Hall

Hyde Park, 4/21 7-8:30pm, Staatsburg Library

More information about Solarize Northern Dutchess can be found by visiting www.solarizeND.org.

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Solarize Hudson Valley is a partner in RenewableNY's effort to help New York State transition to a clean energy future. RenewableNY is a partnership including Sustainable Hudson Valley, Binghamton Regional Sustainability Coalition, Cornell Cooperative Extension-Tompkins County and Catskill Mountainkeeper, and is supported by NYSERDA under Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's NY-Sun initiative. Visit www.solarize-hudsonvalley.org and www.RenewableNY.org to learn more.

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