

Climate Smart Communities Profile

March 2013



Albany County

Program Overview

The Climate Smart Communities (CSC) program is a New York State initiative to help local communities reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, prepare for effects of climate change and save taxpayers money. The program is designed to address 10 focus areas, or “pledge elements,” outlined in the CSC Pledge: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/53013.html>.

New York State is offering technical support to communities that have adopted the CSC Pledge. This profile provides a stepping stone for identifying a technical support service package to help Albany County progress through the 10 pledge elements (see below).

Detailed information on actions completed, in progress, and identified for future action is provided in the tables on the following pages. If a table is missing for a particular pledge element, it means that the CSC program does not have a record of actions taken to address that element.

Local Government Facts:

Adopted Climate Smart Communities (CSC) Pledge: 2009

CSC Pledge Elements Addressed: 6 out of 10

Total Actions Completed: 10

Government Type: County

County: Capital District CSC

Region: Capital District

Population: 304,204

Climate Smart Communities Pledge Elements:

1. *Pledge to Combat Climate Change by Becoming a Climate Smart Community*
2. *Set Goals, Inventory Emissions, Move to Action*
3. *Decrease Energy Demand for Local Government Operations*
4. *Encourage Renewable Energy for Local Government Operations*
5. *Realize Benefits of Recycling and Other Climate Smart Solid Waste Management Practices*
6. *Promote Climate Protection Through Community Land Use Tools*
7. *Plan for Adaptation to Unavoidable Climate Change*
8. *Support a Green Innovation Economy*
9. *Inform and Inspire the Public*
10. *Commit to an Evolving Process*

Pledge Element 1: Pledge to Combat Climate Change by Becoming a Climate Smart Community

Action	Status	Description
Adopted CSC Pledge	Completed	Albany County adopted the Climate Smart Communities Pledge in 2009.
Formed an Internal Energy Group	Completed	Albany County formed an internal energy group that includes the Commissioner of Management and Budget, Commissioner of General Services, and the Executive Director of the Sewer District. The group is focused on routine operations and conducts a capital project review.

Pledge Element 2: Set Goals, Inventory Emissions, Move to Action

Action	Status	Description
Government GHG Inventory	In progress	Albany County collected energy data in anticipation of conducting a greenhouse gas emissions inventory for government operations.

Pledge Element 3: Decrease Energy Demand for Local Government Operations

Action	Status	Description
Energy Efficiency Upgrades	Completed	Albany County completed energy efficiency upgrades at 112 State Street, including a new boiler, upgrades at the Nursing Home, and is addressing the coolant at the Ice Rink
Upgrades to the TU Center	In progress	The County is working with NYPA on upgrades to the Times Union (TU) Center. Some of the work being considered includes: HVAC upgrade and an energy management system. The County is investigating a Green Bond to fund these improvements.
Recycling in County Offices	Completed	All County buildings have recycling receptacles to collect (segregated) tin, glass, and paper. The staff is excited about this program!
'Commuter Choices' Program	Completed	The Albany County "Commuter Choices" program offers employees a parking spot or discounted bus fares.
Adopted the State Electricity Reduction Goal	Completed	Albany County has adopted the New York State electricity reduction goal of reducing electricity use 15 percent by 2015.

Pledge Element 4: Encourage Renewable Energy for Local Government Operations

Action	Status	Description
Solar Panels on Hockey Facility	Completed	Albany County completed a solar installation on the hockey facility.

Pledge Element 6: Promote Climate Protection Through Community Land Use Tools

Action	Status	Description
Agricultural Protection Plan and Program	Completed	The Albany County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan was developed by the Albany County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board with assistance from Albany County Department of Economic Development, Conservation and Planning; Albany County Office of Natural Resources; Cornell Cooperative Extension of Albany County; Cornell University's Agricultural Industry Development, Enhancement, and Retention Program; and American Farmland Trust. The purpose of the plan was to develop goals and strategies to support and enhance Albany County's agricultural industry and agricultural resources. The County coordinates tax foreclosure property amongst the communities in Albany County to keep agricultural land in current use, preserve buildings, and redevelop properties.

Pledge Element 7: Plan for Adaptation to Unavoidable Climate Change

Action	Status	Description
Updating Emergency Management Plan and Program	In progress	The County is updating their Emergency Management Plan and entire program. They are working closely with the Department of Health on these updates.

Pledge Element 8: Support a Green Innovation Economy

Action	Status	Description
Sustainability Included in the Economic Development Plan	Identified	Economic Development efforts are being ramped up by the County. They are exploring sustainability measures and green innovation opportunities. New ED plan coming soon (as of January 2013).

Pledge Element 9: Inform and Inspire the Public

Action	Status	Description
Sustainability Outreach Website	Completed	Albany County has a sustainability website: www.greenalbanycounty.com .

Pledge Element 10: Commit to an Evolving Process

Action	Status	Description
Stormwater Coalition of Albany County	Completed	The County created a Stormwater Coalition in 2012 to provide education and outreach and coordinate stormwater projects throughout the County. The following entities are members of the Coalition: Member List: City of Albany, Town of Bethlehem, City of Cohoes, Town of Colonie, Village of Colonie, Village of Green Island, Village of Voorheesville, Town of Guilderland, Village of Menands, Town of New Scotland, City of Watervliet, Albany County, University at Albany – SUNY Uptown Campus.

For more information about the Albany County's climate protection efforts, please contact: Mike McLaughlin at 518-447-7040



The Climate Smart Communities Program is jointly sponsored by six New York State Agencies: the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), Department of State, Department of Environmental Conservation, Department of Health, Department of Transportation, and Public Service Commission.