



Inclusion Through Diversity

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ONE PAGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tompkins County Achieves National Recognition for its Use of Green Power

Tompkins County government has achieved recognition by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a *Green Power Partner*. The designation recognizes the County's efforts to reduce the risk of climate change through the use of green power.

The County is recognized for its offset of 100% of its electrical energy use through purchase of *Green-e*-certified wind power-based Renewable Energy Credits (RECs), and also for its generation of more than 84,000 kilowatt hours per year of green electricity, through the 147 kW solar photovoltaic (PV) system installed 15 years ago on the roof of the County Library.

"This recognition from the U.S. EPA acknowledges the important role that County government can play in leading by example," said County Commissioner of Planning Ed Marx. "The County Legislature and Administration continue to take proactive steps to reduce County government emissions and play a leading role in efforts to combat climate change."

Tompkins County government over the past 15 years has taken an active role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and energy costs, setting emissions reduction goals and tracking both County government and community emissions. The County's Comprehensive Plan commits to reducing 2008 emissions levels by at least 2% per year to achieve a 20% reduction by 2020, and at least an 80% reduction by 2050.

Among the County's many other initiatives to reduce energy use in its government facilities and operations:

- Installation of solar panels on nearly all County facilities through long-term lease agreements, helping Tompkins County and its municipalities to lead the state in installed solar capacity in government facilities;
- Entering into energy performance contracts with Johnson Controls and making significant upgrades to the energy efficiency of County buildings;
- Adopting green fleet, green building, and other green government policies;
- Partnering to create the Municipal Electric and Gas Alliance, and piloting a program to provide long-term, price-certain electric energy to members from renewable sources;
- Transitioning to biodiesel for the County Highway fleet;
- Studying feasibility of creating a microgrid for resiliency of Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport and County emergency and health facilities in the event of a prolonged power outage; and
- Becoming a NYS Climate Smart Community.

"EPA's recognition of our success in achieving what had once seemed out of reach strengthens our resolve to set our goals high and our confidence that we can achieve them," said County Administrator Joe Mareane.

Tompkins County's section of the EPA's Green Power Partnership website may be viewed at <http://www.epa.gov/greenpower/partners/partners/tompkinscountyny.htm>.

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