



## Community Solar: Frequently Asked Questions

### OVERVIEW

#### ***Who is Sustainable Westchester?***

Sustainable Westchester is a local nonprofit based in Mount Kisco, New York. Its members include 44 municipalities (cities, towns, and villages) in Westchester, plus the County itself. Sustainable Westchester offers environmentally and fiscally sound solutions to build resilient communities. Many programs focus on achieving a clean energy environment, including community energy, building decarbonization, and clean transportation. Community Solar is one of Sustainable Westchester's community energy programs.

### COMMUNITY SOLAR

#### ***What is community solar?***

Community solar is a subscription to a community solar project that provides you with savings of up to 10% on your monthly electricity bills. This program is regulated by the New York State Public Service Commission, and Sustainable Westchester helps to subscribe community members to community solar projects.

#### ***How are savings guaranteed?***

New York State mandates that community solar projects provide savings to subscribed participants. Community solar helps to increase sources of renewable energy and direct solar benefits to communities.

#### ***Who can participate?***

Almost anyone can participate in community solar! All homeowners, houses of worship and faith institutions, businesses, and nonprofits can participate. Those on Budget Billing or Time of Use rates may enroll, as well as those participating in ESCOs or Westchester Power.

#### ***Do I need to install or purchase solar panels?***

No! Community solar is designed to benefit those who are unable to install solar panels on their property.

#### ***What are the benefits of community solar?***

- Save up to 10% on your monthly electricity bills!
- No need to install solar panels on your own property!
- Remain enrolled in your utility assistance programs!
- Pay your electricity bills the same way, and keep your electricity deliverer and supplier.
- No cost to join and you can cancel at any time without penalties or fees.
- Support local renewable energy development! Community solar projects generate local clean energy jobs, decrease fossil fuel use and improve long-term air quality.

### HOW DOES IT WORK?

#### ***How do participants earn savings on their electricity bills?***

By participating you will be allocated a portion of a community solar project based on your historic annual electricity usage. Once your project begins generating energy, the following will take place each month:

1. The electricity generated by your portion of the project earns you a solar credit of monetary value.

2. 90% of the solar credit goes back to the community solar project and the utility as a subscription fee.
3. **You keep 10% of the solar credit as savings**, which is applied directly to your monthly electricity bill!

***Do I need to pay two separate bills?***

No. You will continue to pay your monthly electricity bill as you do now. Your utility (e.g. ConEd, NYSEG, Central Hudson) will ensure that you receive savings on your electricity bill.

***Will my savings amount be the same each month?***

The savings you receive will vary because the energy generated by the project will vary each month based on time of year and weather, etc. For example, your credits are likely to be higher in the summer than in the winter. You are guaranteed to save money equal to 10% of the solar credit you receive on your bill.

***Will I lose electricity when my community solar project is not generating electricity?***

No. If the project to which you are subscribed is not producing electricity (after a snow storm, etc.), your home will still get electricity because it comes from the utility (e.g., ConEd, NYSEG, Central Hudson) grid. Participation in community solar does not change how you receive electricity; it simply provides savings on your electricity bill. As always, please contact your utility in the event of any electricity service interruption.

## **PARTICIPATION**

***How do I enroll?***

Enrollment takes about seven minutes, and you will need to provide your: Service Address, Utility Account Number, and NYSEG customers must also provide the Point of Delivery (POD) ID number found on the 3rd page of your NYSEG bill as well). Sign up now at <https://sustainablewestchester.org/solar/#benefits>

***What happens if I do not want to participate?***

You may cancel your subscription with no penalties or fees by contacting Sustainable Westchester at [communitysolar@sustainablewestchester.org](mailto:communitysolar@sustainablewestchester.org) or calling 914-242-4725. Please be aware that once you are subscribed, ConEd, NYSEG or Central Hudson may need two to three billing cycles to process your cancellation request. Additionally, if you cancel your subscription, you may request to rejoin, but there are no guarantees of immediate re-enrollment due to limited availability of community solar projects.

***What if I'm subscribed to Community Solar and I move away?***

If you move, you may be able to transfer the benefit of your subscription to your new location. Please contact Sustainable Westchester approximately three (3) months prior to the move.

***May I participate in Community Solar if I have solar panels on my property?***

No. Due to New York State rules, you will not be able to earn solar credit savings if you already have solar panels installed.

### **Have other questions?**

Please contact Sustainable Westchester by emailing [communitysolar@sustainablewestchester.org](mailto:communitysolar@sustainablewestchester.org) or call 914-242-4725 (Para llamadas en español use ext. 2).