

Climate Smart Communities Profile



Town of Niskayuna

March 2014

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 the Town of Niskayuna 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: 2011

CSC Pledge Elements Addressed: 8 out of 10

Total Actions Completed: 15

Government Type: Town

County: Schenectady County

Region: Capital District

Population: 21,781

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
Conservation Advisory Committee serves as task force	Completed	In 2013, the Niskayuna Conservation Advisory Council agreed to serve as the Climate Smart Communities Task Force. A "roadmap" was created to provide guidance on next steps to address the Pledge Elements.
Adopted CSC Pledge	Completed	The Town adopted the Climate Smart Communities pledge in 2011.

Pledge Element 3: Decrease Energy Demand for Local Government Operations

Action	Status	Description
Conduct Energy Audit	Completed	The Town conducted an energy audit of all municipal buildings in 2010.
Implement Energy Efficiency Measures	Completed	The Town received a grant from NYSERDA to upgrade equipment through the Buy Green/Save Green program. They upgraded computers, and copiers.
Implement Energy Efficiency projects in Town Hall	Completed	In 2009 the Town put in a system to automate the air handling system to align with building occupancy. In 2007 the Town put in motion sensors for rooms, restrooms, and hallways to automate lighting fixtures. In 2011 the Town started publicly displaying energy usage on a monitor at Town Hall to show how much progress has been made. The energy display system is part of a pilot program administered by the State and includes a revolving array of graphs and data on electricity usage.

Pledge Element 4: Encourage Renewable Energy for Local Government Operations

Action	Status	Description
Installed Solar Panels	Completed	Niskayuna Town Hall receives electricity through its free-standing solar panels. Monolith Solar Associates set up the panels at no cost to the Town, with the project partially funded through NYSERDA. The Town is receiving 30 percent of the electricity produced from the panels, but the remaining 70 percent is sold back into the grid by Monolith. Also installed solar panels at the wastewater treatment plant and highway garage.
Adopted a Wind Energy Facilities Ordinance	Completed	In 2010, the Town adopted a Wind Energy Facilities Ordinance to guide the construction and operation of small and large wind energy facilities in the Town of Niskayuna.

Pledge Element 5: Realize Benefits of Recycling and Other Climate Smart Solid Waste Management Practices

Action	Status	Description
Single-Stream Recycling Program	Completed	The Town accepts co-mingled items, metals and C&D, and electronics.
Hazardous Household Waste Collection Days	Completed	The Town participates in the County's Hazardous Household Waste Collection Days.

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

Action	Status	Description
Tree Planting Plans	Completed	The Town requires that a Tree Planting Plan be submitted with site plans.
Sidewalks or multi-use path requirement for new developments	Completed	All new developments are required to install a sidewalk or multi-use path.
Comprehensive Plan includes climate component	In progress	The Town is updating their Comprehensive Plan to include climate issues. The plan is being developed through a volunteer committee.

Pledge Element 7: Plan for Adaptation to Unavoidable Climate Change

Action	Status	Description
Conducted Vulnerability Assessment of WWTP	Completed	The Town conducted a vulnerability assessment of the WWTP and adopted measures to address major storms. The Town also participates in the Mohawk Emergency Management Group to address future issues along the Mohawk River.

Pledge Element 9: Inform and Inspire the Public

Action	Status	Description
Manage a Stormwater Information Booth during Niska-Day	Completed	The Town manages a booth at the annual Niska-Day event in May to educate the public about stormwater management.
Earth Hour Resolution	Completed	The Town adopted an Earth Hour Resolution, along with Schenectady County, asking all residents to join together and turn off all non-essential lighting, appliances, and electronics from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m. for the event.

Pledge Element 10: Commit to an Evolving Process

Action	Status	Description
Member of Schenectady County Water Quality Coordinating Committee	Completed	The Town serves on the Schenectady County Water Quality Coordinating Committee.

For more information about the Town of Niskayuna's climate protection efforts, please contact: Matthew Miller at (518) 386-4529



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.