



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

July 2, 2015

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Erica Ringewald
518-210-9903 Erica.Ringewald@gmail.com

NEW YORKERS GO SOLAR, 'DECLARE ENERGY INDEPENDENCE'

NYS OFFERS TIME-LIMITED INCENTIVES TO MAKE SOLAR EASY, AFFORDABLE & SUPPORT STATE ENERGY PLAN GOALS

(Livingston Manor, NY) – To celebrate Independence Day, make real New York's goal of generating half of the state's using clean technologies, and promote new financial incentives for New Yorkers looking to go solar, nonprofit community solarize campaigns are helping people in the Mid-Hudson Valley and Southern Tier declare their energy independence. Solarize campaigns in Goshen, Warwick, Woodstock, Beacon and Rosendale and counties-wide campaigns in Broome, Tioga, Chenango, Delaware, Otsego, and Steuben, are launching to help home and small businesses install solar easily and affordably by partnering with installers to offer a group-purchase discount. The discounts expire this fall.

As more home and small business owners sign up, installers increase the discount, which ranges from 10 to 20 percent. In 2013, New York had the fourth highest average electricity prices in the United States; solar homeowners see significant long-term savings on their utility bills.

"We are proactive when it comes to developing and implementing ways to control spending while supporting our local businesses and strengthening our infrastructure. Alternative energy, such as solar, will cause Newark Valley to be more financially independent while preserving our way of life. Securing our energy from the sun reduces our reliance on energy sources imported from overseas. This is a way to declare our energy independence," said Newark Valley Mayor Jim Tornatore.

In July, community solarize campaigns will launch throughout Broome, Tioga, Chenango, Delaware, Otsego counties by Southern Tier Solar Works (a project of the Binghamton Regional Sustainability Coalition), and Solarize Goshen, Warwick, Woodstock, Beacon, and Rosendale will be rolled out in partnership with Solarize Hudson Valley (a project of Sustainable Hudson Valley). The solarize campaigns are supported by RenewableNY with funding from the New York State Energy Research & Development Authority (NYSERDA).

Thousands of New Yorkers are expected to benefit from the group purchase discount. Plans to connect hundreds of New Yorkers with training and jobs in the clean energy field are underway, too.

“Going solar is a natural choice for us. We’ve done the research and looked at installers but the timing and the numbers didn’t add,” said Gregg Swanzey, Director of the City of Kingston’s Office of Economic Development & Strategic Partnerships. “Thanks to Solarize Hudson Valley and the tax credits available, the incentives are lined up the right way, right now.”

In a poll conducted earlier this year by Clarity Campaign Labs, 77 percent of New Yorkers expressed support for renewable energy and 10 percent indicated they already use clean energy in some capacity. Sixty percent of New Yorkers polled said they would like to use renewable energy in their daily lives.

“I look at it this way—for the past 15 years I’ve been promoting green buildings and renewable energy and even so it took me until two years ago to implement an energy retrofit on my house. People with busy lives and kids need to understand how great the potential savings are in order to act. Add to that the recent storms, Sandy, Lee and Irene, made folks realize climate change is real and already upon us. Now people are really paying attention to renewable energy,” said Manna Jo Greene, Environmental Action Director of Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, located in Beacon. “That’s where Solarize can step in and help people make the transition to solar easily and affordably.”

The New York State Energy Plan, released on June 25, sets a goal of generating half of the state’s power from clean, renewable sources by 2030. NYSERDA’s NY-Sun initiative and Community Solar NY are investing \$1 billion in solar over the next decade to encourage and ease the transition. The resulting solarize campaigns are organized by local nonprofits and aimed at getting a critical mass of area homes and businesses to install solar. Solarize campaigns include community outreach and education, competitive installer selection, and a limited-time offer to bring more customers to solar and provide significant cost savings.

“New York’s \$1 billion investment in solar is significant—and it will help thousands of home and small business owners go solar this year alone,” said Betta Broad, Energy & Climate Program Manager for Catskill Mountainkeeper. “A solar powered energy system isn’t the future. It’s now. And it’s for everyone—not just New Yorkers who care about the environment. It’s for families who want to save money on their utility bills and anyone who wants to declare their energy independence.”

According to Bloomberg News, the sun has outpaced shale as the fastest-growing source of U.S. electricity. Solar capacity surged 30 percent in 2014 to more than 20 gigawatts and will more than double by the end of 2016, according to the Washington-based Solar Energy Industries Association. That’s enough to power 7.6 million U.S. homes, up from 360,000 in 2009. Most importantly, New York is among the states expected to make the biggest gains.

###

Southern Tier Solar Works, Solarize Hudson Valley and Cornell Cooperative Extension are partners 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 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 expand solar installations statewide and help New York's solar industry become self-sustaining. Visit RenewableNY.org to learn more.